Designing an Orphanage
Guadalajara, Mexico

Guadalajara is the second largest city in Mexico, with a population of more than four million people, and a great number of challenges for it’s inhabitants, among them, a large number of neglected and abandoned children. In a combined effort, government authorities and concerned citizens are working together to build a new orphanage in addition to the one already in use. The main idea behind this project consist of providing shelter and education to an all male population, some of them in their early teens, and to help them with the social and technical skills needed in order for them to be able to go find work, continue their education, or both.

The government has offered to donate a 5,000 square meters piece of land and assist with a percentage of the construction cost; benefactors will work together in order to find financial resources to complete the new facilities.

The program consists of:
1. Administrative area: Reception, offices, meeting rooms, health clinic, and areas for social workers.
2. Technical support: Storage, parking, maintenance, bathrooms, entrance security.
3. Dormitories, with bathrooms, closets and gathering spaces.
4. Social activities: Small auditorium, chapel, library, cooking and eating spaces.
5. Sports activities: soccer and basketball fields, swimming pool and dressing rooms.

Students taking this studio will gain experience designing for a community outside of the United States. We will explore ways to address the cultural, locational and technical conditions that affect the practice of architecture in Mexico. The studio will use various methods of distance communication to interact with SOJAriquitectos, the office currently in charge of the design of the new orphanage building. See: http://soaarquitectos.blogspot.com/