Terminal Studio Proposal

University of Oregon, Portland Center
Fall 2010 407/507 3 credits
Winter 2011 485/585 6 credits
Spring 2011 486/586 6 credits

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substance: potentials of sub-normative environments.

Theme:

Through our cities, we have long attempted to apply order and reason to our environments and our activities. The inherent complexity of urban environments has allowed us to not expect the “perfection” of the pastoral or the natural, but it has not kept us from attempting to control and leverage all facets of our urban life. Despite our best laid plans and time proven models, our cities are filled with spaces that are abandoned, disconnected, considered to be hindrances or fallow. These spaces are the refuse, traces and remainders that occur when our well thought out calculations are applied to complex or competing systems, both natural and man-made. These “sub-sites” are in no way unique to contemporary environments, but their relationship or potentials may be new.

The studio will focus on these sub-normative sites and try to understand their role and potential within our urban experience. The theme can serve as either a dominant or subordinate theme for each student, but will serve as a starting point for discussions.

Intent:

The studio will focus on the development of a clear process that assigns values to design criteria and justifies resolutions through precise arguments. Each student will be required to define a position based on a set of values and defend that position through visual, written and verbal presentations. It is the hope that the studio’s explorations and discoveries and transcend singular projects.
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Program and Site:

The student will be required to select and propose an architectural program. The program will only be limited by the requirement that it is appropriately complex enough to demonstrate competencies to satisfy the intent of the terminal studio process. The student will choose a site which will best test their positions. Students will be encouraged to select a site that is relatively local or within Portland. It is the instructor’s opinion that selecting a site familiar to other studio members and outside critics allows for a more useful and critical discourse.

Process:

Fall Quarter Seminar: Site and Systems

During the fall seminar, the studio will participate in weekly work sessions. These sessions will encourage broad conceptual discussions concerning contemporary urban conditions and their generative forces and systems. The discussions will focus on what we will term “sub-sites” and their impact on our experience of contemporary environments. The work sessions will rely on both instructor and student led discussions of historic precedents, contemporary case studies and relevant critical texts.

At the conclusion of the seminar, each student will have developed a fundamental understanding of a chosen site and will propose an architectural project with which to test their positions.

Winter Quarter Studio: Program and Intent

The initial studio term will focus on testing specific architectural programs and attitudes toward the chosen site, its conditions and influencing factors. This testing will rely on a disciplined iterative process that will allow discovery and development of each studio member’s intent. The studio process will challenge each student to critically explore methods of representation.

At the conclusion of the studio, each student will present a clear architectural proposal and define a stance/statement of intent.

Spring Quarter Studio: Architectural Development and Defense

In the final studio term, each student will manifest and defend their concepts through the refinement of the architectural proposal. Projects will achieve a high level of resolution appropriate for a terminal studio. The projects will demonstrate each student’s core competencies, broad understanding of design issues and ability to establish and critically defend a specific position.