INTENT OF THE STUDIO
The housing studio (aka "Housing Boot Camp") in this format was first introduced as an intense introduction to housing in Fall 2011. The intent of the studio is to examine creative solutions to current issues of affordability, density, sustainability, and new and emerging lifestyles.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
A series of short exercises, 9-12 days each, examining a different housing/site typology (e.g., single-family detached with accessory dwelling units, row houses, courtyard housing, mid-rise buildings or other), will serve as basic research and design for the development of a final project on a larger hypothetical site, utilizing one or a combination of housing typologies previously examined or a new one examined in greater depth.

STUDIO METHODOLOGY
This studio will be a highly structured, professionally oriented, demanding studio format. In order to achieve the most efficient educational objective of understanding issues associated with higher-density low-rise housing, programs for each type will be provided. Challenging current thinking is encouraged, if based on a sound set of intentions. The studio will also emphasize design process and developing meaningful intentions as a major component of the studio. Concurrent enrollment in ARCH 4/538 Housing Prototypes is highly encouraged, but not required. However, in response to former student course comments (see attached), each housing type problem will first be introduced with more rigorous precedent studies and will be a minimum of nine days in duration, instead of seven.

FIELD TRIPS
Field trips to Eugene and/or Portland may be scheduled.

NOTE
This studio is recommended for those with a sincere interest in housing design. However, it is VERY intense and time consuming with weekly design projects (thus former students refer to it as “Housing Boot Camp”). Not for those not willing to work hard. Attached comments may be useful to review.
Question 1: Please comment on the instructor's strengths and areas for possible improvement

"He was truly an amazing studio instructor. He is very experienced and knowledgable in housing design, which allowed him to critique my designs in a very realistic and practical point of view. Although he was extremely kind and understanding, he had very stern deadlines and expectations, which I appreciate."

"This studio would probably be my favorite design studio so far in my college education. As it was my first intermediate studio, was very nervous as to how it would be structured. I really enjoyed the higher level of independence, where what you got out of critiques is what you put in. I was also very nervous about the multiple 9-12 day design projects, rather than one 10-week project, but I really enjoyed the demanding, and quick production. I liked how we were able to explore many different housing typologies, rather than focusing on just one. I also liked how the instructor actually presented each project with some background and information of the housing type, which is surprisingly rare. I wouldn't change a single thing about this studio."

"I admire Michael's laid-back teaching style. From the beginning of the term, he made himself available all through studio and outside of studio, but we had to come to him for help, he wouldn't find us. No desk crits, but instead daily (usually optional) group check-ups, which were geared more at giving each other feedback than him giving us advice. I thought the independence he allowed us was great."

"I feel that I developed a rhythm of working and thinking in this studio that I was unable to develop in past studios. I loved the fast-paced work and the quick deadlines. I always knew that I loved housing design but this studio certainly affirmed it. What I admired most about this studio was how REAL it was. In my personal experience, most professors will spend weeks and weeks focusing on concept and scheme and the "idea" of what architecture can be, and they never really move into the realistic PHYSICAL execution of it, of the fine details of how people will use the space and feel in the space. This studio was much different. I loved the amount of realistic detail we worked in and the real-world problems we had to encounter and solve (garbage access, bike storage, compost bin locations, width of driveways, etc...). This studio was very refreshing."

"Michael gives great design advice without giving specific solutions. The way he critiques projects shows you a way of thinking rather than a specific solution. However, it can be hard to tell when you are actually doing good work and when you are doing just ok."

"This is one of the best studios I have taken. The fast pace helps you develop really great design skills. You learn to make decisions quickly and effectively, and to identify the most important moves in a project."

"Michael is really good with time management. He is able to finish the desk crits on time. Everyone in the studio works hard and with Michael high expectations, it really pushes me to do more."

"I really appreciated that Professor Fifield unlike some other professors in the architecture department has a great work ethic; he is very responsible and always on time to class. He truly cares about his students and their performance in the class. In class, he is a teacher and not a critic and doesn't simply tell his students how to design but rather leads them in the right direction."

"I think having outside architects come to reviews was one the strong aspects of this studio. It was very helpful to get a variety of perspectives on projects."

"Michael Fifield is very knowledgeable about housing and helped all of us through the basic problems in residential design."

"This class was very hard, but more than worth it. The amount of time for the projects was sufficient. I really liked getting semi-formals reviews several times over the term."

"There is very little left to improve. I enjoyed my conversations and interactions with Michael a lot."

"I really enjoyed getting to know Michael and learning from this studio."
“I really liked the guest people who came into studio and gave feedback and advice. All the reviewers who came had really great things to say and I think benefitted greatly from everyone's knowledge and encouragement through ought the term.”

“I really enjoyed the class! My only two comments are that: I would have liked to have a site for the final project, so that we could actually respond to specific context. In terms of the 9 day projects, I think adding one that deals with higher density would also be important.”

“Michael was always supportive and helpful in his critiques. Expectations were clear and realistic and he brought an element of fun to a challenging course.”

“The studio is a challenging one with high expectations for the timeline. nine days was a good amount of time to complete the projects. I also found the organization of the final reviews helpful, I liked having outside reviewers and being able to talk to them for the amount of time that is needed instead of what is scheduled. It was especially helpful because I received much more feedback from professionals as well as class mates.”

"He has an exceptional ability in managing the class and encouraging the students for a better work without forcing any stress to them." 

"group of four desk critic and also peer review as we had in this studio was the most beneficial option for me in getting enough feedback from the professor and peers."

**Question 2: Comment on the long range value of the studio.**

"Although every design studio is extremely valuable, I feel like this particular "Housing Bootcamp" was even more valuable. Instead of focusing on a single project for the term, we were able to explore many different housing typologies, so I have become more familiar with them. I plan to pursue a career in residential design, and so this studio made me even more excited for that endeavor, while totally preparing me for that."

“This was a great studio. I learned a lot, and feel like I know a lot more about design in general, not only housing.”

"This studio without doubt was one of the best studios I have taken. Besides learning a lot about housing, the studio polished my overall idea of design and how to approach a design problem as an architect." 

"This studio is great for those wanting to do residential design." 

"My architectural understanding of housing has been developed to a point where I am starting to feel comfortable designing many different types of homes." 

“Very helpful information gained about housing and design in general.”

Thanks you :)

"This course is extremely valuable since I would like to go into residential design. It gave me a good understanding of the different types of housing as well as the value of getting my ideas out fast and having the time to further develop those ideas." 

"Thanks for inviting outside reviewers as they were so helpful in improving our designs."

Also, **From Rate My Professor:**

“Michael was an excellent studio professor. While the "Housing Boot Camp" is intense in scope, Michael was very accommodating to questions by the students and the course is organized very well. Michael was always willing to help and lent excellent input to our work both in practicality and in meaning. He also tells really great stories.”

“Michael is easily one of my favorite professors. I took his housing studio (the "Housing Boot Camp") and it was my favorite studio of all time. He's super chill, and although he expects a lot, he will totally help you every step of the way. This class was very rewarding, and working with Michael was lots of fun.”

“He is the best professor I ever had in studio. He is a great reviewer and encourage you to work more without forcing any stress to you. He helps you to improve your design and teach you with all of his experience.”