Portland’s Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) encircles 400 square miles of city. Used to limit and guide the expansion of Portland, the UGB engenders unique urban forms and processes. As the boundary expands it facilitates the formation of new territory, replacing one “land use” with another. The city edge is a dynamic space where structure, form and program are radically transformed in the shift from rural to urban.

What are the unique physical and process-based qualities of Portland’s edge? How does an examination of the edge inform our understanding of the rest of the city? This seminar will investigate Portland’s unique processes of planned urbanism and its implications for urban design. The city’s edges will be explored from a variety of perspectives to expand the design dialogue surrounding the UGB. We will strive to link urban planning and theoretical abstractions with on-the-ground experience and design speculations.

Objectives/Learning Outcomes:
- Investigate Portland’s edges by examining their formative and material processes
- Gain experience in reading and analyzing cultural landscape and definitions of urban
- Visualize and represent the spatial qualities of the urban periphery
- Envision and explore new processes and forms for urban expansion
- Test and refine one’s own design processes and assumptions

Methods
The UGB will be explored through field work and a series of propositional exercises bases upon these experiences. The course will provide opportunities for exploration of the edge and the city through:
- Embodied experience. How we understand and design space is premised on how we experience and represent it. We will explore a variety of methods to read and interpret the unique terrain of the urban periphery
- Representation of spatial experience, knowledge and processes (closely tied to above)
- Discussion and dialogue via a variety of guest speakers with relevant expertise
- Readings
- Design exercises woven into all the above