Course Objectives. Vietnam is experiencing tremendous growth and is moving away from a command-driven state economy towards a more free market model where private development is becoming the norm. But how can Vietnam avoid the same developer-driven rush to sprawl and short-term thinking that the United States has experienced? How should land within a Vietnamese city be developed that follows a more sustainable model? What role can an international urban design studio play in the development process? How can urban designers from the United States prepare effective plans for a site that is on the other side of the Pacific Ocean?

In this urban design studio, we will explore these questions and propose a sustainable approach for development of a 2,000-hectare site in Quy Nhon, Vietnam. This beautiful coastal city in central Vietnam is transitioning away from an agricultural economy to one based on services and tourism. Possible program elements include commercial and housing neighborhoods, a mixed-use center with museums and other cultural uses, and a tourist zone adjacent to the beach. The project is for an actual client in Vietnam who has asked three universities to prepare concept urban design plans for three sites in Quy Nhon. The goal is to provide fresh thinking that can address development challenges facing Vietnam. In addition to the University of Oregon, students from Cal Ply San Louis Obispo and the Frank Lloyd Wright School in Taliesin will craft plans for the two other sites.

Course Assignments. Working in small teams, students will prepare urban design plans for our Quy Nhon site. Students will first research Vietnam’s complicated history as it pertains to planning and development. We will then take a studio field trip to visit models of sustainable urbanism in the Pacific Northwest. Students will then conduct a virtual site analysis in conjunction with students from the other two schools. Following this, students will prepare a master plan vision with clear goals and measurable objectives. Then they will develop design alternatives for the site and evaluate those alternatives against the vision. Finally, they will focus on the detailed preparation of a preferred alternative that will include illustrative plans, renderings, and a form-based code with regulating plans, street sections, building envelope studies.

Course Structure. Instruction will include regular class discussions, small group reviews, and desk crits. Required texts are Sustainable Urbanism and Growing Cooler. The studio is open to Landscape Architecture and Planning, Public Policy, and Management students on a preapproved basis - please contact the instructor if you are interested. Students will be expected to participate in the field visit scheduled for 9-12 January 2012.