Placemaking (v): a multi-faceted approach to the planning, design and management of public (and in this studio private) spaces that leverages a community’s assets to create sustainable public (and private) spaces.

Process (n): a set of structured activities or tasks to produce a specific service or product.

Mt. Bachelor and downtown Eugene may appear to have little in common. Mt. Bachelor is the second largest, single mountain ski resort in the United States, behind Vail, Colorado. Eugene vies with Salem as the second largest city in Oregon. Unlike Vail, however, Mt. Bachelor is not a real resort. It has no housing, limited services, and nearly empties each night. Every day the “resort” is open, skiers and staff must drive 20 to 30 miles each way to get to the impressive mountain. And unlike Salem, which has benefited from a boom in downtown housing and new parks, Eugene’s downtown is filling up with more bars and offices. To access the amenities of the downtown, many people resort to driving in from the suburbs. In both cases, these are ultimately not sustainable solutions from an environmental, economic, or social perspective. In this terminal studio, we will challenge the conventional wisdom and propose to remake both Mt. Bachelor and the core of downtown Eugene. Students will explore ways in which these places can become 10-minute districts where people can live, work, and play within a 10-minute walk. For Mt. Bachelor, this means adding restaurants, hotels, guest condos, affordable staff housing, and other appropriate services in a way that is sensitive to the ecology of the area. For Eugene, this means stepping away from the focus on commercial uses and integrating a variety of housing, parks, retail, and related uses into the core of downtown.

To do this we will focus on sustainable placemaking and on design process. In the winter term, we will begin with a field survey to Vancouver, British Columbia and Whistler-Blackcomb to learn how these places address sustainable development in a downtown and at a ski mountain (8-12 Jan 2014 - the UO Urban Design Lab will fund travel costs). We will then work in two teams to collaboratively develop an urban design and a form-based code for each district (Mt. Bachelor and downtown Eugene). This will include illustrative and regulating plans, and standards for buildings and streets. We will use a process that begins with precedent studies and site analysis, continues with the creation of a clear vision, goals, and planning principles, crafts and evaluates alternatives, and ends with a preferred urban design alternative and development standards as well as program documents for selected building types within the urban design plan. In the spring term, students will select a building site and program and individually prepare a schematic design for a sustainable building in one of the districts that follows the code prepared the previous term. In order to quantify the benefits to their designs, students will forecast the impacts of their designs in terms of farmland preservation, reduction of vehicle miles traveled, return on investment, carbon dioxide emissions, and per household savings. Students will also analyze their proposals using LEED-ND and LEED-NC criteria and they will develop policy language to implement their ideas. Required texts are Jonathan Levine’s Zoned Out, Dan Parolek’s Form-Based Codes, and Alison Kwok’s Green Studio Handbook.