

Type of Course: ARCH 51000 Advanced Studio
Class Meetings: M/TH 2:00-5:50pm
Office Hours: M/TH 11:00am-12:00pm via Zoom
Instructor: Professor Dexter Ciprian with Chat Travieso
Location: Rm 317; some sessions on Zoom
Semester/Year Spring 2022

DEFIANT BODIES: DISABILITY JUSTICE AND ARCHITECTURE*

*This course is part of [Dark Matter University](#)

OVERVIEW

This advanced studio will delve into the intersections of disability justice, crip theory, anti-racism and architecture. In the course students will be encouraged to question the western medical model which sees the disabled body as flawed, and instead posit that society and its built environment is flawed and has failed to care for different bodies. Without the choice of designing a stair, a bipedal able-bodied person would be disabled from accessing a landing/platform ten feet in the air. Stairs are not neutral spaces. Students will be asked to consider why design and technologies that are tailored for the able-bodied are seen as natural extensions of design, but those designed for disabled bodies are seen as expensive, unnecessary and a burden on society. Given the urgency posed by Covid, which revealed existing structural inequities and ableist systems that disproportionately affected Black and brown people, the course will look at issues of disability justice and design as inextricably linked to other forms of oppression. Through assigned readings, research, design exercises and community engagement, students will consider: How can design and architecture be in conversation with abolitionist movements to envision new forms of care that cultivate community resilience, mutual aid and joy? How can accessibility in design and architecture move beyond ramps towards a more just design that is imaginative, expansive and liberatory? How can we reimagine form making and representation to prefigure crip anti-racist futures?



SITE

This studio is collaborating with community partner OPEN DOORS, an arts and justice initiative that invests in the creativity and leadership of Black and brown people who use wheelchairs and inspires action for safer, more just communities. As current or former residents of Coler Rehabilitation and Nursing Care Center in Roosevelt Island, members of OPEN DOORS have been fighting for those living and working in long-term care, particularly

facilities housing predominantly Black and brown people, which saw twice the amount of Covid deaths as their white counterparts. Situated on the northern tip of the island, Coler is home to over 500 residents who require intimate care 24/7. After a series of initial research assignments exploring disability justice in architecture, the final studio project will re-envision the long-term care facility on the island. Students will look at the history of congregate living facilities and contemplate a future in which we reimagine, reform or abolish nursing homes. More broadly, students will also examine the history and legacy of Roosevelt Island as a site where the city housed its so-called “undesirables”: the poor, sick, criminal and disabled.

PROGRAM

The program will consist of a long-term care and rehabilitation center which will include residences, rehabilitation and recreational wings, library/reading room, cafeteria and day rooms. Students are encouraged to see this facility as not just a place to keep bodies alive and instead envision spaces where folks flourish and thrive. Students will have the option of altering/expanding on the existing structure/footprint, or proposing a new building.

RESEARCH

Over the course of several research assignments, students will combine theory and practice to absorb key concepts surrounding disability justice, intersectionality, anti-racism, participatory design and alternative modes of representation. They will then apply this knowledge towards their final design project. Students will gain an understanding of the social-relational model in disability studies in which disability is framed as a constructed system upheld and reproduced by institutions, laws, and the built environment that favors certain bodies and minds over others. These ideas will be situated within an intersectional lens in which ableism is inseparable from white supremacist capitalist heteropatriarchal structures. It is through the act of politicizing the built environment that students will be able to envision a liberatory future informed by abolitionist values and grounded in joy and care. Furthermore, this studio takes the phrase “nothing about us without us,” popularized by the disability justice movement in the 1980s and 90s, as its starting point. The course asks students to actively listen to, co-imagine with, and center the lives of OPEN DOORS members, residents of Coler Rehabilitation and Nursing Care Center, and Coler staff. Students will not only learn about the theories and methods of participatory design, they will also implement these ideas in the real world. Along the way, students will be challenged to critically consider the limits of good intention in producing actual good, how power and privilege operate, how their actions as designers further (or not) larger goals around equity and justice, how their work advances these values and uplifts past and present community efforts, how their process is mutually beneficial and non-extractive, and how their project is sensitive and responsive to the history and culture of the site and the people who inhabit it.

METHODOLOGY

Part 01

Research Assignment I: Students will be introduced to various texts on the history of disability justice and design, crip theory, intersectionality, and identity. These readings will lay the theoretical foundation for the course. Students will then form groups of two and create presentations and analytical drawings on one of the texts.

Part 02

Midterm Project: Students will meet with OPEN DOORS members and survey the Spitzer building and surrounding areas to identify spaces that exclude people with disabilities. Students will then, in pairs (different from Part 01),

propose and install temporary small-scale site-specific interventions that address accessibility both practically and poetically.

Part 03

Research Assignment II: Site analysis/historical research. Students will be introduced to the site and various texts that contextualize the history of Roosevelt Island, the impact of Covid on long term care facilities, and current critiques and reimaginings of nursing homes—reform vs abolition.

Part 04

Research Assignment III: In groups of two (different from Parts 01 and 02), students will design and deploy at least one community engagement tool that allows them to connect with, listen to, and gather input from OPEN DOORS members and Coler residents and staff.

Part 05

Final Project: In the same teams as Part 04, students will apply the insights from their community engagement tools to imagine what a visionary nursing home/care center can be.

READINGS

Disability Justice, Crip Theory, and Intersectionality

["Time for Disability Studies and a Future for Crips" by Alison Kafer](#)

["The Disordinary Architecture Project" by Jos Boys](#)

["The Curb-Cut Effect" by Angela Glover Blackwell](#)

["The Promise of Empathy: Design, Disability, and Knowing the 'Other'" by Cynthia L. Bennett and Daniela K. Rosner](#)

["Understanding the Policing of Black, Disabled Bodies" by Vilissa Thompson](#)

["What is Disability Justice?" by Sins Invalid \(pp. 10-20\)](#)

The Institutionalization of Disabled Bodies: Roosevelt Island, Policing, and Nursing Homes

Damnation Island: Poor, Sick, Mad & Criminal in 19th Century New York by Stacy Horn

["It's Time to Abolish Nursing Homes" by Sara Luterman](#)

["The American Nursing Home Is a Design Failure" by Justin Davidson](#)

["Nursing Home Abolition: Prisons and the Institutionalization of Older Adult Care," by Eva Boodman](#)

Community Engagement and Participatory Design

["Design Practices: 'Nothing about Us without Us'" by Sasha Costanza-Chock](#)

["Architecture's Public" by Giancarlo De Carlo](#)

["The Negotiation of Hope" by Jeremy Till](#)

BIBLIOGRAPHY/ REFERENCES

["Inclusion by Design: Accessible Housing and Mobility Impairment" by Robin Paul Malloy](#)

["The story of the Americans with Disabilities Act is all about bridges" by Vilissa Thompson and David J. Johns](#)

[BlackSpace, "BlackSpace Manifesto"](#)

[Sasha Costanza-Chock, *Design Justice: Community-Led Practices to Build the Worlds We Need* \(Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2020\)](#)

[Design Justice Network, Design Justice Issue 3: Design Justice in Action](#)

Feminist Queer Crip by Alison Kafer

Beyond Ramps: Disability at the End of the Social Contract by Marta Russell

Capitalism & Disability: Selected Writings by Marta Russell

Disability Visibility: First-Person Stories from the Twenty-First Century by Alice Wong

Accessible America: The History of Disability and Design by Bess Williamson

[Doing Disability Differently by Jos Boys](#)

[Disability, Space, Architecture: A Reader, edited by Jos Boys](#)

[Skin, Tooth, and Bone: The Basis of Movement is Our People: A Disability Justice Primer by Sins Invalid](#)

["Crippling Architecture: Architecture's Place in Ontology"](#), Shaina Yang

"Imperfection is a Beautiful Thing" by Joan Tollifson

["MANIFESTO FOR MAINTENANCE ART, 1969! Proposal for an exhibition: "CARE", 1969" by Mierle Laderman Ukeles](#)

WEEKLY SCHEDULE, M/TH 2:00-5:50pm

Note: schedule below is subject to revision through the duration of the semester.

W1

Mon 01.31 **LOTTERY in Rm 107, followed by first studio meeting, including Hour SSA, development of Community Agreement, and Introduction of Research Assignment I (w/ Chat in person)**
Th 02.03 Studio / Desk Crit
Spitzer School Convocation @ 5:00pm – all students and faculty expected to attend

W2

Mon 02.07 Studio: **Research Assignment I Pin Up**
Introduce Midterm Project and Chat lecture (w/ Chat remote)
Th 02.10 OPEN DOORS Introduction / Spitzer Building Audit

W3

Mon 02.14 Studio / Desk Crit (w/ Chat in person)
Th 02.17 Studio / Desk Crit

W4

Mon 02.21 College Closed (Presidents' Day); no class
Th 02.24 Studio / Desk Crit

W5

Mon 02.28 Studio / Desk Crit (w/ OPEN DOORS)
Th 03.03 Studio / Desk Crit

W6

Mon 03.07 **MIDTERM: Studio:Midterm Project Review**
Introduce Research Assignment II (w/ Chat in person)
Th 03.10 Field Trip: Roosevelt Island / Coler Nursing Center

W7

Mon 03.14 Studio: **Research Assignment II Pin Up**
Introduce Research Assignment III and Chat lecture (w/ Chat remote)
Th 03.17 Studio / Desk Crit

W8

Mon 03.21 Studio / Desk Crit (w/ OPEN DOORS)
Th 03.24 Studio / Desk Crit
Mid-semester assessments & Hour SSA

W9

Mon 03.28 Studio: **Research Assignment III Pin Up**
Introduce Final (w/ Chat remote)
Th 03.31 Studio / Desk Crit

W10

Mon 04.04 Studio / Desk Crit (w/ Chat remote)
Th 04.07 Studio / Desk Crit

W11

Mon 04.11 **ADVANCED STUDIO SHARING Room 107, @ 2:00-3:30pm; Studio**
Th 04.14 **Studio : PIN UP**

04.15-04.22 Spring Recess, no classes

W12

Mon 04.25 Studio / Desk Crit
 Th 04.28 Studio / Desk Crit

W13

Mon 05.02 Studio / Desk Crit (w/ Chat remote)
 Th 05.05 Studio / Desk Crit

W14

Mon 05.09 Studio / Desk Crit

REVIEWS, week of May 11-17

Wed 11 May	Th 12 May	Fri 13 May	Mon 16 May	Tu 17 May
Advanced	Core Studio 2	Advanced	Core Studio 6	Core Studio 4
Haferd Dotan Sen Cunningham	Aydogan (coord)	Gebert Rojas Ciprian Brahmbhatt	Alspector (coord)	Wines (coord)

FINALS

Th 05.19 End of Semester Assessment (faculty only)
 Studio Clean Up day (students & faculty)

Mon 05.23 Final Meeting, **Exit interviews**
 Student Portfolios due for: Spitzer School Archive, etc. as directed by instructor

Fri 05.27 Final Grade Submission Deadline

TAKE NOTE: ALL personal effects in studios and student lockers to be entirely cleaned out for the summer by Friday May 27.

GRADING/ATTENDANCE POLICIES AND STUDIO CULTURE**Course Expectations:**

- That students will develop a high level of independent thought and rigor and a willingness to go beyond both basic project requirements and their own perceived limits and abilities.
- That students will successfully complete all project requirements. No make-up or postponed project submissions will be accepted except in the case of medical emergencies or other extraordinary circumstances. Excused absences and project delays must be officially cleared by professor in advance to be considered valid.

Community Agreement:

- During the first full studio meeting, the professor will make time for an *Hour* SSA session for a supportive open discussion among students.
- Studio members will work *together* to create a community agreement for interacting together over the semester. Definition: "A consensus on what every person in our group needs from each other and commits to each other in order to feel safe, supported, open, productive and trusting... so that we can do our best work." <https://www.nationalequityproject.org/tools/developing-community-agreements>
- *Hour* SSA will be repeated at the middle of the semester.

Methods of Assessment:

- Attendance and participation in class discussions and other activities: 10%
- Project development in response to semester schedule: 60%
- Project presentation, level of completion and resolution: 30%

Note: The research component of the studio will be weighed more heavily in assessment of graduate student work and class performance, in cases where graduate students are enrolled in the studio.

Key areas of Grading Assessment:

- **Studio performance & work habits:** Ability to respond to studio discourse & feedback in a consistent & clear manner throughout the semester as demonstrated in the evolution and development of design work.
- **Clarity of representation & mastery of media:** Ability to utilize both digital and manual drawing and model-making techniques to precisely and creatively represent architectural ideas.
- **Pre-design:** Ability to prepare a comprehensive program for an architectural project that includes such tasks as: an assessment of client and user needs; an inventory of spaces and their requirements; an analysis of site conditions (including existing buildings); a review of the relevant building codes and standards, including relevant sustainability requirements, and an assessment of their implications for the project; and a definition of site selection and design assessment criteria.
- **Research:** Understanding of the theoretical and applied research methodologies and practices used during the design process.
- **Integrated evaluations and decision-making design process:** Ability to demonstrate the skills associated with making integrated decisions across multiple systems and variables in the completion of a design project. This demonstration includes problem identification, setting evaluative criteria, analyzing solutions, and predicting the effectiveness of implementation.
- **Attendance:** Consistent level of preparation and on-time presence for each studio class and scheduled evening lectures.
- **Portfolio:** Completion of final portfolio or collection of studio work as directed by instructor and/or coordinator and attendance at all scheduled portfolio related events.

Grading Criteria:

- A (+/-)** Work meets all requirements and exceeds them. Presentations are virtually flawless, complete, and finely detailed. Work exhibits professional, “museum quality” level of craft. Student has developed an individual design process that shows a high level of independent thought and rigor. Work shows evidence of intense ambition and effort to go beyond expectations, and beyond the student’s own perceived limits of their abilities.
- B (+/-)** Work meets all requirements. Presentations are complete and finely detailed. Work exhibits professional level of craft. Student has developed an individual design process that shows a high level of independent thought and rigor.
- C (+/-)** Work meets minimum requirements. Deadlines are missed. While presentations may be somewhat complete, student has struggled to develop an individual design process and/or is lacking in craft or design resolution.
- D** Work is below minimum requirements. Presentations are incomplete, student has struggled to develop an individual design process and/or is lacking in craft or design resolution.
- F** Work is well below minimum requirements. Student does not develop adequate design process, and/or does not finish work.
- INC** Grades of “incomplete” are not given under any circumstances unless there is evidence of a medical or personal emergency. In such cases, instructor and student develop a contract to complete work by a specified date, as per CCNY policy. Classes and/or work missed due to illness must be explained with a physician’s note.

Notes:

D is the lowest passing grade for B. Arch students.

Working in teams does not guarantee the same grade for each team member; grades are based on a range of criteria for each individual student.

For more information on grading guidelines and other CCNY policies and procedures, consult the current CCNY academic bulletins: <https://www.ccny.cuny.edu/registrar/bulletins>

Office Hours:

Each studio faculty member schedules 30 regular office hours over the semester, as posted at the top of the syllabus. If a student needs to speak in private with a studio critic, they should ask or email in advance to request a specific meeting time. Students may seek office hour appointments to discuss any matters of concern including personal, private matters and general inquiries about course related work, grading, assessment and content.

Probation & Dismissal: for program specific information related to grades, academic standing, probation and dismissal, please see your program academic advisors:

Undergrad: Michael Miller mmiller@ccny.cuny.edu
Amy Daniel adaniel@ccny.cuny.edu

Studio Culture:

Working collaboratively and respectfully on studio assignments, with and alongside others, is an expectation in studio. Studio culture is an important part of an architectural education, and it extends to expectations for Faculty and the School's Administration as well. Please see the Spitzer School of Architecture Studio Culture Policy, which can be accessed on the SSA website here: <https://ssa.ccny.cuny.edu/about/policies/>.

Absence & Lateness:

Arriving more than ten minutes late to class will constitute an absence. Two unexcused absences will result in a whole letter grade deduction from a final grade; more than four will result in a failing grade. It is expected that all students will participate in all scheduled working, midterm and final reviews and contribute constructively to the discussions.

Absences due to Religious Observances:

Students who will miss any class sessions, exams, presentations, trips, or the like due to a religious observance should notify the instructor at the beginning of the semester so that appropriate adjustments for observance needs can be implemented. This could include an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirement that is missed because of an absence due to a religious observance on any particular day or days.

Readings & Journals:

Students are expected to keep a journal or sketchbook throughout the duration of studio to document their thought process & take notes of any texts, books, terms or references that are mentioned by either the studio critic or fellow classmates and to selectively follow up on these and any other assigned readings before the next class.

Academic Integrity:

As a student you are expected to conduct yourself in a manner that reflects the ethical ideas of the profession of architecture. Any act of academic dishonesty not only raises questions about an individual's fitness to practice architecture, but also demeans the academic environment in which it occurred. Giving or receiving aid in examinations, and plagiarism are a violation of an assumed trust between the school and the student.

Plagiarism, i.e. the presentation as one's own work of words, drawings, ideas and opinions of someone else, is as serious an instance of academic dishonesty in this context as cheating on examinations. The submission of any piece of work (written, drawn, built, or photocopied) is assumed by the school to guarantee that the thoughts and expressions in it are literally the student's own, executed by the student. All assignments must be the student's original work. Any copying, even short excerpts, from another book, article, or Internet source, published or unpublished, without proper attribution will result in automatic failure of the entire course.

The CCNY Academic Integrity Policy: <https://www.ccny.cuny.edu/about/integrity>

For citations, the Chicago Manual of Style is recommended:
http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html

AccessAbility Center (Student Disability Services):

The AccessAbility center (AAC) facilitates equal access and coordinates reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments, and support services for City College students with disabilities while preserving the integrity of academic standards. Students who have self-identified with AAC to receive accommodations should inform the instructor at the beginning of the semester. (North Academic Center 1/218; 212-650-5913 or 212-650-6910 for TTY/TTD). For further information, go to <http://www.ccny.cuny.edu/accessability/> or email disabilityservices@ccny.cuny.edu

Health And Wellness Support:

City College's Office of Health and Wellness Services offers free and confidential counseling. Contact: Health and Wellness Services, Marshak Science Building, room J-15: counseling@ccny.cuny.edu.

Gender Based Violence Resources

City College has resources to support you if you have experienced sexual violence, intimate partner/domestic violence, gender-based discrimination, harassment or stalking. For confidential support, you can contact the Student Psychological Counselor: Confidential Advocate at (212) 650-8905 or the Gender Resources Program at (212) 650-8222. If you would like to report sexual misconduct, you can contact the Chief Diversity Officer and Title IX Coordinator, Diana Cuzzo, at 212-650- 7330 or dcuzzo@ccny.cuny.edu. If there is an emergency on campus, you can call Public Safety at 212-650-777 and off campus call 911. <https://www.ccny.cuny.edu/affirmativeaction>

Library:

The school's library is a shared resource that is necessary supplement to all research and design work. Please direct questions to the library staff or the Architecture Librarian Nilda Sanchez-Rodriguez:
nsanchez@ccny.cuny.edu

NAAB (National Architectural Accrediting Board):

The National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB) is the sole agency authorized to accredit US professional degree programs in architecture. Since most state registration boards in the United States require any applicant for licensure to have graduated from a NAAB-accredited program, obtaining such a degree is an essential aspect of preparing for the professional practice of architecture. While graduation from a NAAB-accredited program does not assure registration, the accrediting process is intended to verify that each accredited program substantially meets those standards that, as a whole, comprise an appropriate education for an architect.

More specifically, the NAAB requires an accredited program to produce graduates who: are competent in a range of intellectual, spatial, technical, and interpersonal skills; understand the historical, socio-cultural, and environmental context of architecture; are able to solve architectural design problems, including the integration of technical systems and health and safety requirements; and comprehend architects' roles and responsibilities in society.

The following student performance criteria from the 2014 NAAB Conditions are addressed in this course:

Realm B: Building Practices, Technical Skills, And Knowledge. Graduates from NAAB-accredited programs must be able to comprehend the technical aspects of design, systems, and materials and be able to apply that comprehension to architectural solutions. In addition, the impact of such decisions on the environment must be well considered.

B.1 Pre-Design: ability to prepare a comprehensive program for an architectural project that includes an assessment of client and user needs; an inventory of spaces and their requirements; an analysis of site conditions (including existing buildings); a review of the relevant building codes and standards, including relevant sustainability requirements, and an assessment of their implications for the project; and a definition of site selection and design assessment criteria.

Realm C: Integrated Architectural Solutions. Graduates from NAAB-accredited programs must be able to

demonstrate that they have the ability to synthesize a wide range of variables into an integrated design solution.

C.1 Research: understanding of the theoretical and applied research methodologies and practices used during the design process.

C.2 Integrated Evaluations and Decision-Making Design Process: ability to demonstrate the skills associated with making integrated decisions across multiple systems and variables in the completion of a design project. This demonstration includes problem identification, setting evaluative criteria, analyzing solutions, and predicting the effectiveness of implementation.

Students should consult the NAAB website www.naab.org for additional information regarding student performance criteria and all other conditions for accreditation.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Dexter Ciprian [waiting on CCNY email]