

Type of Course: ARCH 61100, Architecture Studio 1.1
Unit 21
Class Meetings: M/TH 2:00–5:50 p.m. (See schedule for in-person/remote)
Office Hours: M/TH 6:00–7:30 p.m. (or by request)
Instructor: Professor Paul Ruppert (pruppert1@ccny.cuny.edu)
Location: Spitzer School of Architecture, Room 217; [Zoom](#)
Semester/Year: Fall 2022



"The co-op way of life . . .," promotional materials for Co-op City, New York.

After Individualism: From / to We

"The story of the American experiment . . . is one of a long upswing toward increasing solidarity, followed by a steep downturn to increasing individualism."¹ Never has such a claim felt truer than at present, following the dissociated isolation of the COVID-19 pandemic and our ongoing return to life outside, together again. A return slowly, precariously, and in fits and starts to a world in which rhetorics of unbridled self-interest and a capricious emotivism have been further entrenched. A world where shouts of "Let me call my own shots," "My body, my choice," "My life is my own," and other individualist credos are loudly proclaimed . . . and then soundly ignored.

¹ Robert D. Putnam and Shaylyn Romney Garrett, *The Upswing: How America Came Together a Century Ago and How We Can Do It Again* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2020), 18.

At the same time, the involution of home and work spaces into one—that is, into a kind of uncategorizable space for accessing placeless “meeting rooms”—has both accelerated social media isolation and further stressed the so-called third spaces of communal life, or our in-the-flesh places for togetherness.

The impacts of these cultural shifts on our spatial environments cannot be overstated. So-called *greedflation*, in combination with preexisting housing shortages, has driven rents even higher. (For example, close to half of the residential units available for rent in Manhattan are on the market only after pricing out 2020 and 2021 tenants, many of whom entered leases in attempts to negotiate a life confined to one space.) Outside the home amidst recent limitations on public life, demolition and redevelopment of Lower Manhattan third spaces has continued unabated despite community protests. (One might look to the demolition of East River Park, supertall construction in the Two Bridges Large Scale Residential District, or groundbreaking of a new 40-storey “Chinatown Jail.”) Refusing any passive acceptance of such unchecked individualism, this studio will work to create an emergent, equitable, social alternative. In searching for alternatives to increasingly individualist spaces, collective attention will be turned toward historic types of and for living together. Or, put differently, toward landmark American experiments on spaces of solidarity. Often spatially distributed across and operating in concert with the land, these rural, horizontally sprawling communes, co-ops, and intentional communities will frame a fundamental understanding of social, sited dwelling—a social “rugged communalism” against isolationist individualism and the so-called god of “I.”

Building on the close reading and representation of such diverse architectural precedents around living together, students will be asked to define and diagram community toward the design of a commons for Lower Manhattan. Categorizations framed around sole-proprietorship and individual ownership like *private* and *public* will be abandoned in favor of the more elemental *I* and *We*. Communal *We* spaces of the city will be documented and drawn. Collective strategies for non-urban living will be rethought for the metropolis. Horizontal spatial organizations will turn toward the vertical, the sky. Collective studio thinking and making will be multimedia and multi-format; investigations into written polemics, idealized diagrams, communal contracts and co-op handbooks, policy proposals, dreamweaving visualizations, and post-occupancy fictions, and more will occur alongside professional drawing and modeling techniques.

In such a society the individual demands an aesthetic compensation in the contemplation of free individuals who go out into the world and settle their problems by free activity and individualistic methods. In these perpetual isolated wars free individuals are pitted against free individuals, live grandly and boldly. What they want, they go for. [They] get what they want, trying it for a while, then are killed.

— C. L. R. James, *American Civilization* (1933)

“Individualism” . . . was unknown to our ancestors, for the good reason that in their days every individual necessarily belonged to a group and no one could regard himself as an isolated unit.

— Alexis de Tocqueville (1856)

[T]he goal of a genuinely new left should be not be to take over the state but to subordinate the state to the general will. This involves, naturally, resuscitating the very concept of a general will, reviving - and modernizing - the idea of a public space that is not reducible to an aggregation of individuals and their interests. The 'methodological individualism' of the capitalist realist worldview . . . regards notions such as the public as 'spooks', phantom abstractions devoid of content. All that is real is the individual (and their

families). The symptoms of the failures of this worldview are everywhere—in a disintegrated social sphere in which teenagers shooting each other has become commonplace, in which hospitals incubate aggressive superbugs—what is required is that effect be connected to structural cause. Against the postmodernist suspicion of grand narratives, we need to reassert that, far from being isolated, contingent problems, these are all the effects of a single systemic cause: Capital.

— Mark Fisher (2009)

It is important for this country to make its people so obsessed with their own liberal individualism that they do not have time to think about a world larger than self.

— bell hooks (1999)

Site: Various (Precedent Research); Lower East Side/Chinatown, New York, NY (Local Research & Commons).

Program: A small-scale Community or “We” Space. Specific uses to be determined through synthesis of precedent research and local community documentation/recording.

Research: Working individually, students will begin with close reading and representation of a diverse set of architectural precedents engaged with ideas of communal/co-operative living. Particular attention will be paid to a series of concerns/concepts including:

- The legal and contractual pragmatics of these forms of living, as economic reality.
- The political contexts and intents of these works.
- The social organizations of life within these structures.

Students will be asked to search out and diagram the architectural instantiations of these intents—organizational structures, efficiencies (or lack thereof), spatial connections and reconfigurations, etc. under the framework of *I* and *We* space. Students will search out moments in these precedents where vestiges of individualism, ownership, authority, and self-interest or individual will remain. Will some effort, spatial logics of property, (sub)division, (dis)possession, allotment, and more will reveal themselves.

Following this historical research, students will be asked to define and diagram *community* via their own lived experience and those of their fellow citizens. Questions will abound, but include: Who owns communal space? Where is it owned and where is it rented? Is it ever free—financially and otherwise? What are the histories of these communal structures? Family structures and dynamics informed by entrenched individualism will be recognized but deferential to so-called “fictive” kinship to congregational networks, *compadrazgo*, urban tribes, friend-keepers, and all those families we choose.

Methodology: As outlined above, studio thinking and making will be organized around an intellectual and representational engagement with living-in-common across formats. While significant effort will be directed toward developing core competencies of architectural work including drawings and models of all types—at times loosely sketched or carefully measured, emotive or pragmatic, digital or analog, etc.—attention will likewise be paid to other recordings

and representations of *We*. Students are encouraged to develop ways of working and produce work aligned with their own understanding of community, but some examples include: Utopian polemics recorded in any media; “instruments” of/for communal relationships; idealized diagrams; paperwork like communal contracts and handbooks, equity guidelines, and economic policies; promotional visualizations or dreamweaving for presenting a version of life together; post-occupancy narratives; and much more.

Design developments of this lower Manhattan “commons” will be paired with a series of readings and collective discussions. (Lectures outlining representational techniques and architectural tools will also occur, as necessary.) Deliverables will be carefully organized into a collective document/presentation ahead of both midterm and final reviews.

Deliverables:

- Precedent Research
 - Simplified Redrawing (Floor Plans, Section) of Precedent and
 - I-We Spatial Analysis as 1) Overdrawings/Collages and 2) Physical Solid-Void Model
 - Representing Community
 - Simplified, 2-D Diagram (Site Plan/Floor Plan or Elevation or Section) or Axonometric Drawing/Visualization of Community Space
 - I-We Spatial Analysis as 1) Overdrawings/Collages and 2) Physical Solid-Void Model
 - Figure Drawings/Spatial Fragments documenting community/communities
 - Architectural Proposal (Commons)
 - Community Narrative and/or Contract—or, written/recorded concept.
 - I-We Concept Model (Digital or Physical), Solid versus Void
 - Drawings: Floor Plans (1/4"=1'0" Scale), Exterior Elevations (Two at 1/4"=1'0" Scale), Section (Transverse or Longitudinal, 1/4"=1'0" Scale)
 - Cut-away Section/Axonometric Drawings of Commons “Fragments” with Figures Drawn
 - Exterior Axonometric
 - Final Physical Model, Scale TBD
-



Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, Cénobie, Ideal City of Chaux, France, 1780.

A working list of precedents . . .

Note: The architectural works listed here should be understood varyingly as models and/or warnings. Students are expected to assess these works within the context of their historical context, but also consider the ways in which these works spatialize problematic hierarchies, consider geometric equality as lived equality, and so on.

Claude Nicolas Ledoux, Cénobie, Cité idéale de Chaux (Ideal City of Chaux), France (1780).

Shaker Communities, USA (late 18th c.–20th c.)

Charles Fourier, Phalanstère (1822). See also: the numerous constructions indebted to Fourier's idea, proposed or built in the centuries following his work.

Robert Owen, New Harmony (1825).

J. B. Godin, Familistère, Guise, France (1859–1968).

Deganya Aleph, Israel (1910). See also: *Kibbutzim*.

Hannes Meyer, Freidorf Housing Estate, Muttenz, Switzerland (1919–1921).

Bruno Taut and Martin Wagner, Hufeisensiedlung (1925).

Springsteen & Goldhammer, Amalgamated Dwellings (Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America), Cooperative (Co-op) Village, New York, NY (1927–). See esp. [Co-op Handbook and Income/Equity Guidelines](#).

Herman J. Jessor, Seward Park Cooperative, Cooperative (Co-op) Village, New York, NY

(1960).

Real Great Society/Uptown Planning Studio, New York, NY (est. 1964).

Various back-to-the land and “hippy” communes, 1967–.

Herman J. Jessor, Cooperative (Co-op) City, Bronx, NY (1968–1973).

Westbeth Artists Housing, New York, NY (1968–).

MOVE, Philadelphia, PA (1972–).

Álvaro Siza, SAAL Bouça, Porto, Portugal (1973–1977).

Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, Boston, MA (1985–). Watch: *Holding Ground: The Rebirth of Dudley Street*, dir. Leah Mahan and Mark Lipman, 1996.

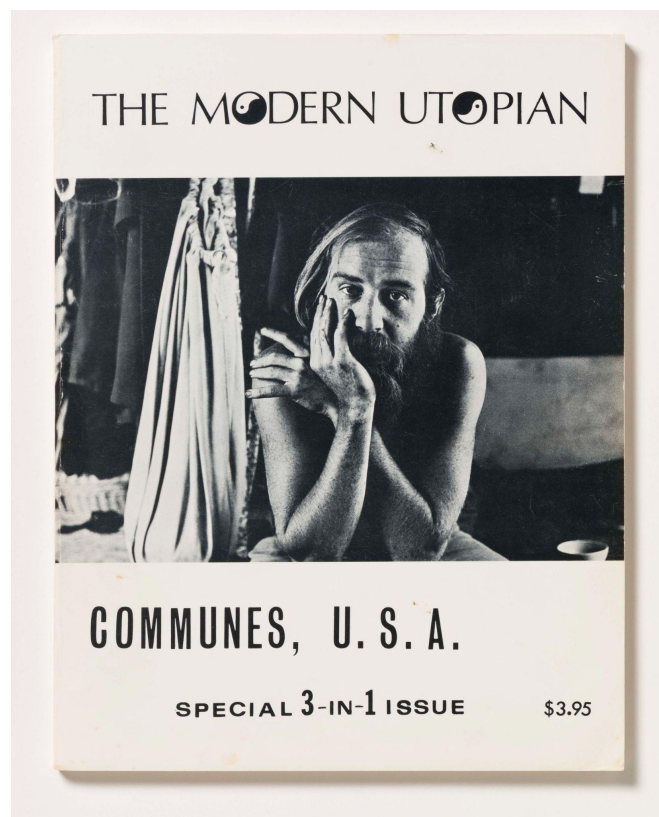
Damoin Rich, Red Lines Housing Crisis Learning Center, 2007.

Peter Märkli, Im Gut Housing (Les Hiboux), Zurich, Switzerland (2012).

ifau und Jesko Fezer + Heide & von Beckerath, R50 Baugruppen (Cohousing), Berlin, Germany (2013).

REAL Foundation, REAL Homes (Ongoing).

Bishan Commune, Anhui, China (Ongoing).



A special three-in-one issue of The Modern Utopian, 1971.

A working list of readings . . .

Note: Like with the architectural works above, the texts listed here should be understood varyingly as points or counterpoints. Students are expected to assess positions friendly and adversarial to I and We.

On Individualism & Alternatives . . .

John Dewey, *Individualism Old and New* (New York: Minton Balch & Co., 1930; Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1999).

Ayn Rand, “The Soul of an Individualist” and “The Soul of A Collectivist” in *The Fountainhead*, repr. In *For the New Intellectual: The Philosophy of Ayn Rand* (1961).

Robert Nisbet, *The Quest for Community: A Study in the Ethics of Order and Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1953).

C. L. R. James, *American Civilization* (1993) and *Mariners, renegades, and castaways* (1953).

Herbert G. Gutman, *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom, 1750–1925* (New York: Vintage Books, 1976).

Jane Fishburne Collier and Sylvia Junko Yanagisako, “Toward a Unified Analysis of Gender and Kinship,” in *Gender and Kinship: Essays Toward a Unified Analysis* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987).

Kath Weston, *Families We Choose: Lesbians, Gays, Kinship* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991).

Ignasi de Solà-Morales, “Difference and Limit: Individualism in Contemporary Architecture,” in *Differences: Topographies of Contemporary Architecture*, ed. Sarah Whiting, trans. Graham Thompson (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1997)

Bell hooks, *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 2003) and “Simple Living: An Antidote to Hedonistic Materialism” in *Black Genius: African American Solutions to African American Problems*, ed. Walter Mosley et al. (New York: W. W. Norton, 1999).

Mark Fisher, “Marxist Supernanny” in *Capitalist Realism: Is there no Alternative* (New York: Zero Books, 2009), 71–81.

Robert D. Putnam and Shaylyn Romney Garrett, *The Upswing: How America Came Together a Century Ago and How We Can Do It Again* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2020), 18.

On Communes, Community, and Collective Living . . .

Edward Deming Andrews, *The people called Shakers* (1953).

Charles Fourier, “*The Phalanstery*” (1822).

Henry Quintana and Charles Jones, “Black Commune in Focus,” *Perspecta* 12 (1969): 39–42.

Dolores Hayden, *Seven American Utopias: The Architecture of Communitarian Socialism, 1790–1975* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1979).

Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, *Feminism Without Illusions: A Critique of Individualism* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1992).

David Larkin and June Sprig, *Shaker: Life, Work and Art* (1994).

Philip Bess, “Communitarianism and Emotivism: Two Rival Views of Ethics and Architecture,” *Inland Architect* 5/6 (May/June 1993): 74–83. Repr. in Kate Nesbitt, ed., *Theorizing a*

New Agenda for Architecture: An Anthology of Architectural Theory 1965–1995 (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996).

Foster Stockwell, *Encyclopedia of American Communes, 1663–1963* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1998).

Jessica Gordon Nembhard, *Collective Courage: A History of African American Cooperative Economic Thought and Practice* (University Park: Penn State Press, 2014). See esp. “A Continuous and Hidden History of Economic Defense and Collective Well-being,” introduction.

Susanne Schmid, Dietmar Everle, and Margaret Hugentobler, *A History of Collective Living: Models of Shared Living* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 2019).

WEEKLY SCHEDULE, M/TH 2:00–5:50 p.m.

Note: schedule below is subject to revision through the duration of the semester. Spitzer School of Architecture lectures and events are an important part of your architectural education; attendance and participation is strongly recommended.

PRE-TERM

Mon	08.15	Last day to upload proof of COVID-19 vaccination to CUNYFirst
W	08.24	Last day to apply for ePermit Last day to drop with a 100% refund Last day for Initial Registration

W1

Th	08.25	First day of classes Studio Spitzer School of Architecture Convocation @ 5:30 p.m., Aaron Davis Hall
----	-------	--

W2

Mon	08.29	Studio
		Hour SSA
W	08.31	Last day to apply for Audit Option Last day to drop class with a 75% refund and/or without a grade of “WD” Last Day to add a class
Th	09.01	Studio

W3

Mon	09.05	College Closed (Labor Day), no classes scheduled
W	09.07	Last day to drop with a 50% refund
Th	09.08	Studio SSA Lecture: Ana María León @ 06:00 p.m., Rm. 107

W4

Mon	09.12	Studio
Th	09.15	Studio SSA Lecture: Gabriel Díaz Montemayor @ 06:00 p.m., Rm. 107

W5

Mon	09.19	Studio
W	09.21	SSA Lecture: Claudio Lomnitz @ 06:00 p.m., Rm. 107
Th	09.22	Studio

W6

Mon 09.26
Th 09.29

No Course Meeting
No Course Meeting, Classes follow a Monday Schedule
Lunchtime Lecture: Ahu Aydogan @ 01:00 p.m., Rm. 107

W7

Mon 10.03
Th 10.06

Studio
Studio
SSA Lecture: C. J. Alvarez @ 06:00 p.m., Rm. 107

W8

Mon 10.10
Tu 10.11
Th 10.13

College Closed (Columbus/Indigenous Peoples' Day); no class
Lunchtime Lecture: Ruo Jia @ 01:00 p.m., Rm. 107
Studio
SSA Lecture: Lynn Lopez @ 06:00 p.m., Rm. 107

W9

Mon 10.17
Th 10.20

Studio
Mid-semester assessments & Hour SSA
SSA Lecture: Paul Farber @ 06:00 p.m., Rm. 107

W10

Mon 10.24
Tu 10.25
Th 10.27

Studio
Lunchtime Lecture: TBD @ 01:00 p.m., Rm. 107
Studio
SSA Lecture: William Brinkman-Clark @ 06:00 p.m., Rm. 107

W11

Mon 10.31
Th 11.03
F 11.04

Studio
Studio
SSA Lecture: Miguel Rábago @ 06:00 p.m., Rm. 107
Last day to file for a P/NC option

W12

Mon 11.07
T 11.08
Th 11.10

Studio
Lunchtime Lecture: TBD @ 01:00 p.m., Rm. 107
Studio
SSA Lecture: Loreta Castro and Gabriela Carrillo @ 06:00 p.m., Rm. 107

W13

Mon 11.14
Th 11.17

Studio
Studio
SSA Lecture: Arturo Ortiz @ 06:00 p.m., Rm. 107

W14

Mon 11.21
Th 11.24

Studio
College Closed (Thanksgiving); no class

W15

Mon 11.28

Studio

Th 12.01 Studio

W16

Mon 12.05 Studio

FINAL REVIEW & END-OF-TERM SCHEDULE

Wed 12.07 Foundation Unit Reviews, Session 1 (Ruppert; Zhang)

Fri 12.09 Foundation Unit Reviews, Session 2 (Kirsimagi)

Mon 12.12 Last Day of Classes

Tu 12.13 Last Day of Classes

W 12.14 End of Semester Assessment (faculty only)

Last day to drop with a grade of "W"

Th 12.15 Final Course Meeting, Exit interviews

Mon 12.20 Student Portfolios due for: SSA/CCNY Archive, etc. as directed by instructor

Tu 12.27 Final Grade Submission Deadline

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:

C is the lowest passing grade for M. Arch I and M.S. Arch students. D is the lowest passing grade for B. Arch students. No C- or D grades may be given to graduate 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.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:

Graduate: Hannah Borgeson hborgeson@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.ccnycuny.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.ccnycuny.edu/about/integrity>

For citations, the Chicago Manual of Style is recommended:

http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html

