

TYPE OF COURSE:	Graduate Studio + Research Workshop/Design Seminar M.Arch 3 rd yr: ARCH 85100 Architecture Studio V (6 cr) + ARCH 85200 Research Workshop (3 cr) MLA 3 rd yr: LAAR 65100 Research Studio I (6 cr) + LAAR 64150 Research Workshop (3 cr)
CLASS MEETINGS:	Research Workshop M 9:30-12:20; Studio M/TH 2:00-5:20pm
OFFICE HOURS:	Please send email to Schedule
INSTRUCTORS:	Gonzalo Cruz and Valeria Cedillos (Seminar)
LOCATION:	SSA324
SEMESTER/YEAR:	Fall 2026

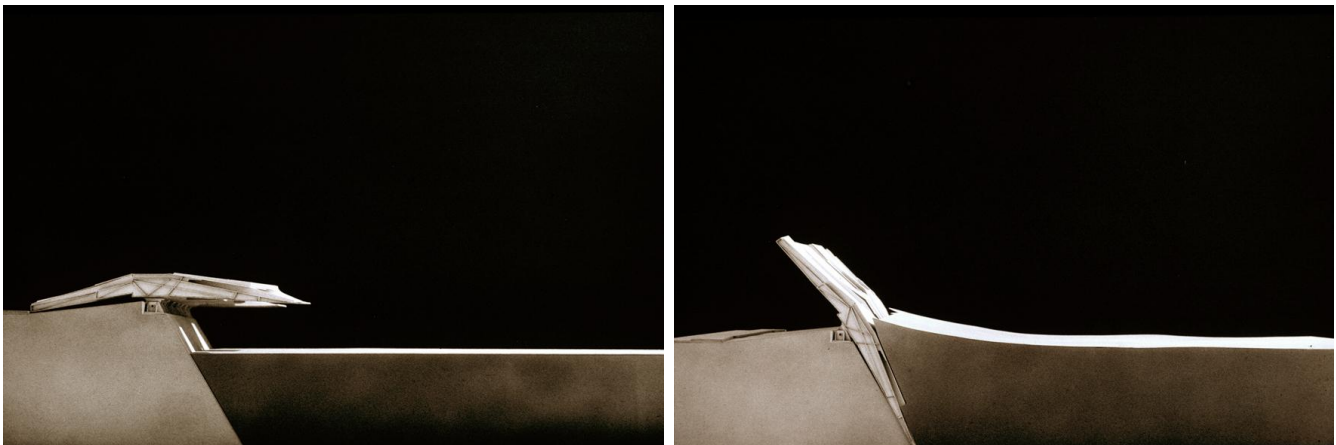
GENERAL DESCRIPTION

STUDIO

This advanced studio develops landscape and architectural projects through extended design research and in-depth propositions for New York City's South Shore beaches in Staten Island. The studio examines coastal protection, ecological systems, public space, mobility, concessions, and cultural programming as interconnected design problems. Students will analyze and synthesize environmental, social, spatial, infrastructural, and temporal forces, translating research into a coherent coastal framework and site-scale design proposition.

RESEARCH WORKSHOP

This required seminar supports and broadens the design studio through readings, precedent research, analytical drawing, discussion, and student-led presentations. The seminar will focus on representation as research, coastal adaptation, and landscape and architectural programming, with particular attention to how infrastructure can become a civic and ecological armature.



Woods, Lebbeus (2010), *On the Malecon* - Model

THE COASTAL APPARATUS:

A New Framework for New York City's South Shore Beaches

OVERVIEW

Can a city be designed around the memory and optimism of summer rather than its duration? Can an apparatus for coastal storm surge protection become the foundation for an extraordinary public landscape? Can the systems designed to protect New York City from coastal flooding also redefine how the city experiences its most vulnerable edge?

This option studio develops the Coastal Apparatus as a design framework for New York City's South Shore beaches. More than a singular piece of infrastructure, the apparatus is understood as a layered system of coastal protection, ecological succession, public space, mobility, architecture, and cultural programming operating across multiple spatial and temporal scales.

Rather than separating engineering from design or protection from public life, the studio positions coastal infrastructure not as a barrier to the city, but as the civic armature through which New York's South Shore beaches are experienced, inhabited, and transformed.

If the Coastal Apparatus defines the operative framework of the studio, Eternal Summer defines its cultural ambition. It is not a climatic condition, nor a nostalgic image of leisure, but a design proposition: to extend the openness, vitality, and collective rituals associated with summer into a public realm that remains active, welcoming, and ecologically productive throughout the year.

Within this framework, the South Shore becomes the setting for redefining how vulnerable coastal conditions are understood—not as constraints to overcome, but as the very qualities that shape public life, ecological performance, and civic identity.



Aronofsky, Darren (2000), *Requiem for a Dream* – Film Still

SPECIFIC DESCRIPTION

The studio asks students to treat the coastal edge as a complex public system rather than a line between land and water. The Coastal Apparatus is conceived as a framework in which protective infrastructure, landscape processes, public life, mobility, architecture, and cultural programming can operate together.

The design challenge is therefore not simply to make a beach more resilient. It is to imagine how the infrastructure required for coastal protection can generate new forms of public space and civic identity. Students will investigate how systems of protection can be made spatially legible, socially generous, ecologically productive, and capable of changing over time.

The studio will work across multiple scales—from territorial and coastal systems to the public realm, landscape, architectural elements, and details. Students are expected to establish relationships between long-term coastal processes and the everyday rituals of public life.

THREE AREAS OF INVESTIGATION

- *Representation* — Drawing and model-making as instruments of design research through analog experimentation, digital workflows, mapping, sectional studies, diagrams, and physical models.
- *Climate Adaptation* — Integration of hard infrastructure and nature-based systems into a coherent coastal apparatus capable of addressing storm surge and sea level rise while generating meaningful civic space.
- *Landscape + Architectural Programming* — Choreography of recreation, ecology, culture, mobility, and public amenities into a unified coastal framework that can support year-round public life.

THE DESIGN CHALLENGE

Students will define a new civic paradigm for New York City's South Shore beaches in which coastal protection, ecology, and public life are conceived as a single, integrated system. The final work should demonstrate how the Coastal Apparatus can operate simultaneously as protective infrastructure, public landscape, ecological system, and cultural armature.



Cruz, Gonzalo (2018), *Pink Flood for BMCR* – Edition of 2, mixed media

SITE

The studio site is New York City's South Shore beaches in Staten Island. The South Shore is understood not as a single project parcel but as a coastal territory whose vulnerable edge provides the setting for testing relationships among storm surge protection, sea level rise, ecological succession, public access, recreation, mobility, architecture, and cultural life.

Students will establish a precise site of intervention within this broader framework through research and analysis. Site selection should be supported by evidence of compelling coastal conditions and an opportunity to demonstrate how protective infrastructure can redefine the public realm.

SITE QUESTIONS

- *Where can coastal protection become a civic armature rather than a barrier?*
- *How can hard and nature-based systems work together across time?*
- *How can public access, recreation, ecology, and protection be choreographed rather than separated?*
- *How can the public realm remain active, welcoming, and productive beyond the traditional summer season?*
- *How might a coastal apparatus express change, succession, and adaptation rather than conceal them?*



Old Staten Island Archive (oldstatenisland.org), Midland Beach

SPECIFIC LEARNING GOALS / OUTLINE OF ASSIGNMENTS

STUDIO PORTION

- Situate design work in a larger intellectual context by engaging in theoretical, historical, environmental, and contemporary issues related to coastal urbanism and public space.
- Establish an understanding of the spatial, ecological, social, and infrastructural implications of coastal adaptation across multiple scales.
- Develop visual and conceptual clarity through mapping, diagramming, drawing, model-making, and iterative analog and digital workflows.
- Interpret coastal conditions through environmental, cultural, socioeconomic, spatial, and temporal lenses.
- Develop a rigorous and iterative design process that tests multiple strategies for integrating protection and public life.
- Work collaboratively and contribute constructively to studio discourse, critiques, pin-ups, and collective research.

Phase 1: Site Analysis + Coastal Observations

Working in teams and independently, students will develop a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the South Shore through a selected site lens. Mapping, sectional analysis, film, photographic observation, environmental analysis, precedent research, and field documentation will identify the forces that shape the coastal edge and establish the basis for design.

Phase 2: Principles + Coastal Apparatus Frameworks

Working both collaboratively and independently, students will develop a set of guiding principles and spatial systems in response to their site analysis. These principles will organize a strategic coastal framework and parti, supported by drawings, diagrams, and physical or digital models. The framework should establish relationships among protection, ecology, public space, mobility, architecture, and programming.

Phase 3: Design Development

Once the overall framework has been established, students will work across scales to develop systematic cultural, material, ecological, and infrastructural strategies. Formal design concepts at the site scale will translate the framework into a cohesive proposal for a year-round public realm intended to protect this coastline from sea level rise and storm surge.

RESEARCH WORKSHOP / SEMINAR PORTION

The research component will be organized around the same three areas of investigation as the studio. The first phase will examine representation as a form of design research. The second will investigate coastal adaptation and the integration of protective and ecological systems. The third will examine landscape and architectural programming, with emphasis on public space, recreation, culture, mobility, and year-round civic life.

- Representation: analytical drawing, mapping, physical models, film, digital workflows, and visual narratives.
- Climate Adaptation: coastal systems, storm surge protection, engineered mechanisms, architectural protective mechanisms, sea level rise, nature-based strategies, and infrastructure as public realm.
- Landscape + Architectural Programming: public life, recreation, ecology, culture, mobility, amenities, and seasonal/temporal programming.

Readings & References to be uploaded.

PHASE 1 — SITE ANALYSIS + OBSERVATIONS

The first phase establishes the evidence base for the studio. Students will work from the South Shore territory toward a specific site of intervention. Analysis should reveal not only existing conditions but also relationships, conflicts, opportunities, and processes operating over time.

POTENTIAL ANALYTICAL LENSES

- Coastal exposure and storm surge conditions
- Topography, landform, edge conditions, and water relationships
- Ecological systems and succession
- Public access, circulation, mobility, and connections
- Recreation and patterns of public use
- Seasonality, temporal occupation, and year-round activity
- Existing infrastructure and protective systems
- Cultural identity, memory, and civic rituals
- Architectural and landscape character
- Opportunities for public programming and civic space

DELIVERABLES

- Site documentation and observational record
- Analytical maps and layered mappings
- Sections and spatial transects
- Precedent studies
- Quantitative/qualitative analysis
- Site narrative and design opportunities
- Initial physical and/or digital model

PHASE 2 — PRINCIPLES + COASTAL APPARATUS FRAMEWORK

The second phase moves from analysis toward an operative design framework. Students will define the principles that organize their Coastal Apparatus and demonstrate how those principles produce spatial relationships.



NYC LAUD (2021), *BMCR: A Mechanically Operated Landscape* – Digital Collage [Under Construction]

KEY QUESTIONS

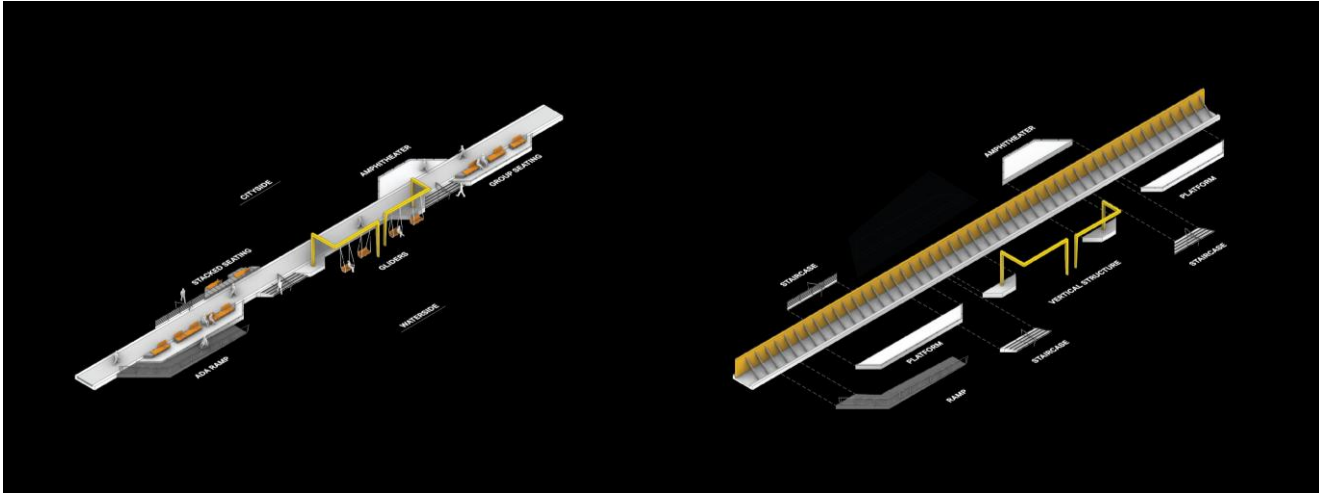
- What must the apparatus protect, and what can it generate?
- Where should infrastructure be visible, inhabited, or transformed into landscape?
- How can protective systems accommodate ecological succession?
- How can the apparatus support public life beyond summer?
- How can mobility and access become integrated with protection?
- What spatial and temporal relationships should organize the framework?

DELIVERABLES

- Set of guiding principles
- Coastal apparatus diagrams
- Strategic master plan / framework
- Parti and spatial sequence
- Systems diagrams
- Physical or digital model
- Preliminary program and phasing strategy

PHASE 3 — DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

The final phase develops the framework into a resolved public-realm proposition. Students will translate the Coastal Apparatus into a specific site design that demonstrates how infrastructure, landscape, architecture, ecology, and programming operate as an integrated system.



NYC LAUD (2021), *BMCR: A Placemaking Apparatus* – Animation Still [Under Construction]

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

- Site-scale master plan
- Detailed public-realm design
- Sections through protective and public systems
- Landscape and ecological strategies
- Architectural and infrastructural elements
- Material and spatial strategies
- Mobility and accessibility
- Seasonal and year-round programming
- Phasing, succession, and adaptation over time
- Physical and/or digital models
- Final representational narrative

FINAL PROJECT

The final proposal should make a clear argument for how coastal storm surge protection can redefine the public realm along New York City's beachfronts. The project should demonstrate a coherent relationship between territorial strategy and site-scale design, and between technical performance and civic experience.

FINAL REVIEW EXPECTATIONS

- Clear design thesis and argument
- Coherent relationship between analysis, framework, and final design
- Legible integration of coastal protection and public space
- Demonstrated ecological and temporal thinking
- Strong drawings, diagrams, sections, and models
- Clear communication to both design and non-design audiences

READINGS + REFERENCES

The supplied project brief establishes the conceptual framework for the studio but does not include a reading list or bibliography. A final reading list should be developed to support the three areas of investigation: representation, climate adaptation, and landscape/architectural programming.

Recommended course readings, precedents, and guest lectures should be added here once the instructor's selections are confirmed. This section is intentionally left open rather than importing readings from the reference syllabus without confirmation.

[IN PROGRESS]

WEEKLY SCHEDULE, M 9:30am-12:20pm, M/TH 2:00-5:20pm

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

		Research Workshop (morning)	Studio (afternoons)
W1			
Mon	08.31	Grad Studio Lottery @ 9:00am, Room 107 , followed by first Research Workshop	First studio meeting
Th	09.03		Studio Convocation @5:00pm, location TBD
W2			
Mon	09.07	College Closed (Labor Day), No classes	No classes
Th	09.10		Studio, Hour SSA, Draft Community Agreements (in studio) 2-3pm Colloquium: Why Design Matters? In Favor of Urban Public Space. CCCB Exhibition Opening Reception, Design Matters: In Favor of Urban Public Space.
W3			
Mon	09.14	Research Workshop	Studio
Th	09.17		Studio PMCI Symposium "Reimagining the Archive: Black Memory as Design Praxis" Keynote Speech
W4			
Mon	09.21	No classes	No classes
Th	09.24		Studio
W5			
Mon	09.28	Research Workshop	Studio
Th	10.01		Studio ACSA-AIA Intersections Conference Keynote Speech
W6			
Mon	10.05	Research Workshop	Studio

Th	10.08		Studio CCCB Colloquium: Why Care Matters
W7			
Mon	10.12	College Closed (Columbus Day / Indigenous Peoples' Day), No classes	No classes
Tue	10.13	Research Workshop, Classes follow a Monday schedule	Studio, Classes follow a Monday schedule
Th	10.15		Studio
W8			
Mon	10.19	Research Workshop	Studio
Th	10.22		Studio – Midterm Reviews SSA Awards Ceremony and Alumni Open House
W9			
Mon	10.26	Research Workshop	Studio
Th	10.29		Studio – Mid-semester assessments
W10			
Mon	11.02	Research Workshop	Studio CCCB Colloquium: Why Housing Matters
Th	11.05		Studio
W11			
Mon	11.09	Research Workshop	Studio
Th	11.12		Studio
W12			
Mon	11.16	Research Workshop	Grad Sharing Session Studio
Th	11.19		Studio
W13			
Mon	11.23	Research Workshop	Studio

Th	11.26		College Closed (Thanksgiving), No classes
W14			
Mon	11.30	Research Workshop	Studio
Th	12.03		Studo
Mon	12.07	Workshop	Studio
Th	12.10		Final Reviews
Fri	12.11		Urban Design / Urban Studies Joint Capstone Project Presentations

FINAL REVIEWS, Dec 8-14

Tue 08 Dec	Wed 09 Dec	Thu 10 Dec	Fri 11 Dec	Mon 14 Dec
Foundation	Foundation	Grad Studios	Grad Studios	Grad Studios
Leadon Ruppert Kirsimagi	Birkeland Harris	Rickenbacker Ebo Volkmann	Cruz Salcedo (Lab III)	Salcedo (Lab III)

FINAL EXAMINATIONS, Dec 16-22

Tu/Wed 12.15/16	Clean-up Days (all materials, projects, and any other items must be removed from studio)
Wed 12.16	Student Portfolios due for: SSA/CCNY Archive, etc. as directed by instructor
Wed 12.16	End of Semester Assessment, Undergraduate Studios (faculty only)
Th 12.17	End of Semester Assessment, Graduate Studios (faculty only)

FINAL GRADES

Mon 12.28	Final Grade Submission Deadline (faculty)
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FINAL REVIEW + DELIVERABLES

- Final site plan / master plan
- Key plans and spatial sequences
- Longitudinal and/or transverse coastal sections
- Detailed sections demonstrating the relationship between protection and public space
- Systems and ecological diagrams
- Program and temporal/seasonal diagrams
- Physical and/or digital models
- Perspective / experiential views
- Process drawings demonstrating iteration

- Final written project statement
- Final portfolio documenting the semester

GRADING/ATTENDANCE POLICIES AND STUDIO CULTURE

Learning Outcomes

- Apply design research methods to test and evaluate innovative approaches to coastal adaptation and public-space design.
- Develop and apply a design process that integrates multiple factors and scales, from coastal systems to site-scale public space.
- Critically evaluate infrastructure as a spatial, cultural, ecological, and civic framework.
- Synthesize analysis into guiding principles, strategic frameworks, partis, and design propositions.
- Propose design solutions that integrate environmental performance, material systems, ecological processes, and social infrastructure.
- Clearly articulate design intent through drawings, diagrams, models, and verbal presentations.
- Use mapping, sectional analysis, precedent research, and model-making to translate research findings into spatial strategies.

Course Expectations

- Students will develop a high level of independent thought, rigor, curiosity, and willingness to test ideas beyond initial assumptions.
- Students will arrive prepared for each studio meeting with work in progress and questions for discussion.
- Work is expected to remain iterative, self-driven, reflective, and responsive to critique.
- Students are expected to contribute to a respectful, collaborative studio culture.

Community Agreement

Studio members will work together to establish a community agreement for interacting over the semester. The agreement should articulate what each person needs from the group and what each person commits to in order to create a safe, supported, open, productive, and trusting learning environment.

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

Coursework will be evaluated based on the engagement, thoughtfulness, rigor, and evolution of the research and design process, as well as the student's ability to communicate and resolve the project. Midterm evaluation will assess progress and identify areas requiring additional attention.

STUDIO (6 cr)	
Site Observation + Analysis Phase	25%
Principles + Coastal Apparatus Framework Phase	25%
Design Development Phase	30%
Participation + Attendance	10%
Final Portfolio — completion + submission	10%

RESEARCH WORKSHOP / SEMINAR (3 cr)	
Representation + Design Research	25%
Climate Adaptation + Infrastructure Research	30%
Landscape + Architectural Programming Research	25%
Participation + Attendance	10%
Final Research Portfolio / Journal	10%

GRADING ASSESSMENT

A (+/-): Work meets all requirements and exceeds them. The project demonstrates exceptional rigor, ambition, clarity, craft, and independent thought. Presentations are complete, highly resolved, and communicate a compelling design argument.

B (+/-): Work meets all requirements. The project demonstrates strong independent thought, design development, research, and professional-level communication.

C (+): Work meets minimum requirements but lacks sufficient resolution, rigor, craft, or consistency. Deadlines may be missed or portions of the work may remain underdeveloped.

F: Work is below minimum requirements and/or the student does not develop an adequate design process or complete required work.

GRADING SCALE

A+ Exceptional | A 93–97 | A– 90–92 | B+ 87–89 | B 83–86 | B– 80–82 | C+ 77–79 | C 70–76 | F 69 or below

Teamwork does not guarantee the same grade for each team member; grades are based on individual contribution, engagement, process, and final work.

ATTENDANCE, STUDIO CULTURE + COURSE POLICIES

ABSENCE & LATENESS

Attendance and preparation are essential to an advanced studio. Students should arrive on time and prepared to participate in critiques, pin-ups, discussions, workshops, and lectures. If you are sick, do not come to class; notify the instructor before the class begins. Specific absence and lateness thresholds should follow the current CCNY/Spitzer School of Architecture policy and the instructor's final course policy.

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

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the ethical responsibilities of the design professions. All submitted work must be the student's own. Sources, references, collaborations, and any use of AI tools must be appropriately acknowledged according to current CCNY policy.

ACCESSABILITY CENTER / STUDENT SUPPORT

The Access Ability 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 accommodation 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

LIBRARY + RESEARCH RESOURCES

The Spitzer School of Architecture library and City College research resources should be used as shared resources supporting the studio's analytical and design work. Please direct questions to the library staff:

Nilda Sanchez-Rodriguez, Chief Architecture Librarian/Associate Professor: nsanchez@ccny.cuny.edu

Taida Sainvil, Library Coordinator: tsainvil@ccny.cuny.edu

Riley Mang, Architecture Librarian: rmang@ccny.cuny.edu

COURSE POLICIES

The final syllabus should be read together with the current CCNY academic bulletins, Spitzer School of Architecture policies, and official university policies governing attendance, grading, academic integrity, accommodations, and student support.

OFFICE HOURS:

Each studio/unit faculty member schedules 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/unit 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.

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 Learning, Teaching, and School Culture Guidelines, which can be accessed on the SSA website here: <https://ssa.ccny.cuny.edu/about/policies/>.

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.

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

NAAB CRITERIA ADDRESSED ([2020 Conditions for Accreditation](#))

Program Criteria (PC): These criteria seek to evaluate the outcomes of architecture programs and student work within their unique institutional, regional, national, international, and professional contexts, while encouraging innovative approaches to architecture education and professional preparation.

Student Criteria (SC): Student Learning Objectives and Outcomes A program must demonstrate how it addresses the following criteria through program curricula and other experiences, with an emphasis on the articulation of learning objectives and assessment.

(Primary evidence)

PC.2 Design—how the program instills in students the role of the design process in shaping the built environment and conveys the methods by which design processes integrate multiple factors, in different

settings and scales of development, from buildings to cities.

PC.5 Research & Innovation—How the program prepares students to engage and participate in architectural research to test and evaluate innovations in the field.

SC.5 Design Synthesis—how the program ensures that students develop the ability to make design decisions within architectural projects while demonstrating synthesis of user requirements, regulatory requirements, site conditions, and accessible design, and consideration of the measurable environmental impacts of their design decisions.

(Secondary evidence)

PC.6 Leadership and Collaboration—How the program ensures that students understand approaches to leadership and multidisciplinary teams, diverse stakeholder constituents, and dynamic physical and social contexts, and learn how to apply effective collaboration skills to solve complex problems.

LAAB (Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board)

SUPPORT OF PROGRAM'S MISSION, GOALS, AND CORE VALUES

LAAB is recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) as the official accrediting body for first professional programs in landscape architecture. LAAB is a member of the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors (ASPA). CHEA reviews LAAB accreditation standards and procedures to ensure that the policies and procedures meet proper standards. For more information, visit: <https://www.asla.org/accreditationlaab.aspx>

LAAR 6 5100 Landscape Architecture Studio 5 is part of the Curriculum's course sequence in Landscape Architecture. This course introduces the disciplinary skills and thinking processes necessary for a student preparing for a career as a professional landscape architect. This course supports the mission of the Graduate Program in Landscape Architecture at the Bernard and Anne Spitzer School of Architecture of the City College of New York, which asserts that landscape architecture plays an essential role in connecting social justice to environmental design and the planning of landscape systems in the urban realm. The Graduate Program prepares students to be leaders in the field of landscape architecture through innovative research and practice in urban ecological design, planning, and policymaking. This studio addresses issues of increasing globalization, expanding urbanization, promoting social and environmental justice, transforming land management practices in response to diminishing natural resources, and resilient adaptation to climate change. The studio's scope and exercises are designed to instill the Core Values defined by LAAB: 1) Environmental Health, Sustainability, Resilience, and Stewardship; 2) Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; 3) Human and Community Health and Safety; 4) Professional Ethics and Responsibility; 5) Leadership and Innovation; 6) Application of the Sciences to the Design of Natural and Built Landscapes.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Gonzalo Cruz, Studio Lead
Adjunct Lecturer
[Email]

Valeria Cedillos, Research Seminar
Adjunct Lecturer
[Email]

ETERNAL SUMMER — The Coastal Apparatus: A New Framework for New York City's South Shore Beaches