Spitzer The Bernard & Anne Spitzer School of Architecture

COURSE DETAILS

Type of Course:	Graduate Design Studio + Research Workshop
M.Arch 2nd yr:	ARCH 73100 Architecture Studio III (6 credits) + ARCH 73501 Research Workshop (3 credits)
M.Arch 3rd yr:	ARCH 85100 Architecture Studio V (6 credits) + ARCH 85200 Research Workshop (3 credits)
MS Arch:	ARCH 91102 Architecture Studio (6 credits) + ARCH 91202 Research Workshop (3 credits)
MLA 3rd yr:	LAAR 65100 Research Studio I (6 credits) + LAAR 65500 Research Workshop (3 credits)
Class Meetings:	Workshop M 9:30-12:20; Studio M/TH 2:00-5:20 pm
Office Hours:	Ifeoma Ebo: M/TH 1:00—2:00 pm SSA 250MA or by appointment Shahab Albahar: M 12:30—1:30 pm or by appointment
Instructor(s):	Professor Ifeoma Ebo + Professor Shahab Albahar
Location:	SSA 219 + 2M11A
Semester/Year:	Fall 2026

LIVING GROUND: Housing, Ancestral Ecologies, and Civic Landscapes of East Harlem

Ville Fantôme, 1996. Paper, paperboard, plastic and various other materials, 120 × 570 × 240 cm. CAAC – the Pigozzi Collection, Geneva. © Bodys Isek Kingelez / photo by Maurice Aeschimann. Courtesy CAAC – the Pigozzi Collection

COURSE OVERVIEW

East Harlem is a living civic ecology, a territory shaped by movement, memory, and continual reinvention. Long before the Manhattan grid was extended across this ground and the neighborhood emerged as *El Barrio*, Lenape communities inhabited and stewarded the territory through practices attuned to its land, water, food systems, and seasonal ecologies. Successive and overlapping generations—including Italian, African American, Puerto Rican, Mexican, West African, and East

African communities—have continually remade its landscape, extending habitation beyond the confines of the home into stoops, sidewalks, community gardens, churches, murals, botanicas, public housing grounds, and networks of mutual care. These spaces and practices connect housing to the broader civic and ecological systems that sustain everyday life.

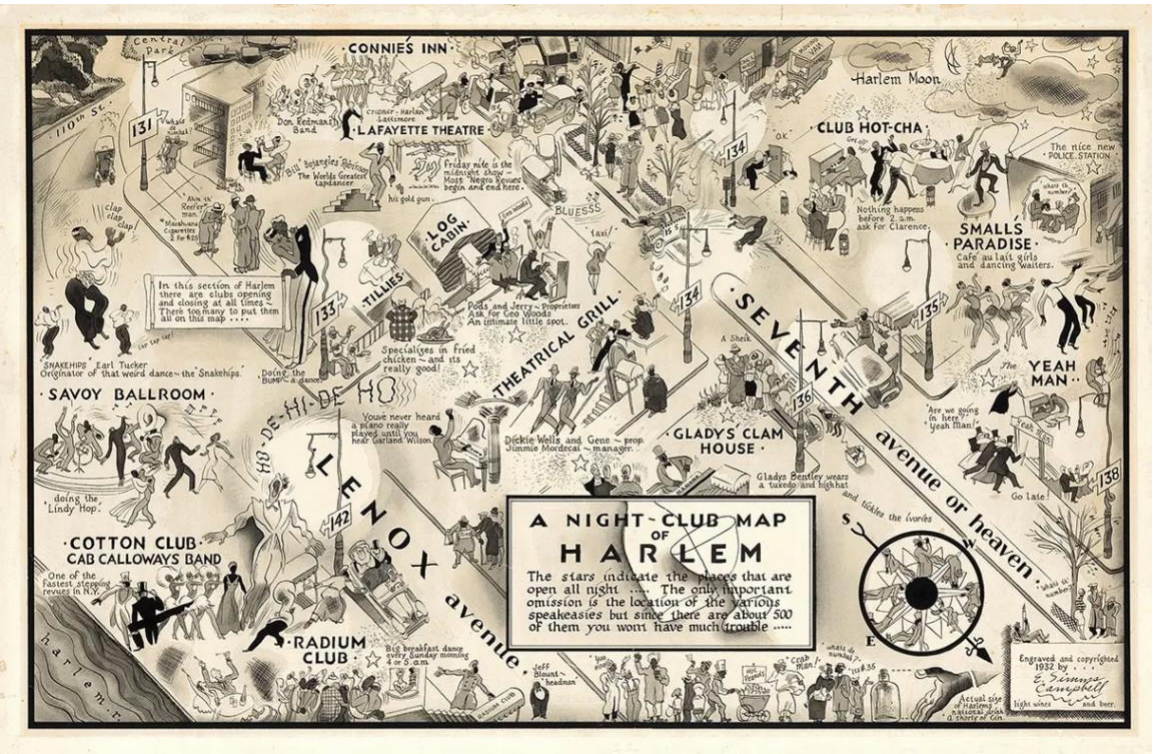
That civic ecology now faces compounding housing and climate pressures. Through the municipal *Block by Block* plan, New York City has committed to producing 200,000 new affordable homes and preserving another 200,000 over the next decade. This citywide mandate will take material form in neighborhoods such as East Harlem. Housing production is frequently evaluated through quantitative measures such as units, density, and development capacity. Essential as these measures are, they cannot alone account for how development reorganizes landscape, public space, institutions, environmental conditions, and collective life. The paired Research Workshop and Design Studio therefore ask:

> *How can the integrated design of housing and landscape strengthen, reorganize, or extend civic and ecological capacities beyond the individual building—and for whom?*

The curriculum approaches housing and landscape as mutually constitutive. Drawing on Anne Whiston Spirn, students understand the city as a landscape produced through interacting human and environmental processes—hydrology, vegetation, microclimate, ground, infrastructure, movement, and habitation. Landscape organizes the ground and ecological processes through which housing is situated; housing, in turn, produces landscape by redirecting water, modifying microclimate, structuring movement and thresholds, and enabling particular forms of collective life.

These relationships are political as well as spatial. Environmental vulnerability, housing conditions, and access to civic resources reflect histories of racialization, disinvestment, urban renewal, and public policy. Black ecologies and environmental justice scholarship provide frameworks for tracing how these inequalities are produced while attending to the knowledge, stewardship, organizing, and care through which residents sustain and reshape their environments. Students therefore evaluate how affordable-housing proposals redistribute environmental benefits, civic resources, and burdens: what they strengthen or repair, whose practices they support, and who bears the costs of transformation.

SITE: EAST HARLEM



Campbell, E. Simms, Cartographer and Publisher, Dell Publishing Company. *A night-club map of Harlem*. [New York, N.Y.: Dell Publishing Company, Inc., © 1932] Map. Retrieved from the Library of Congress.

East Harlem occupies the northeastern edge of Manhattan, bounded approximately by East 96th Street to the south, Fifth Avenue to the west, East 142nd Street to the north, and the East and Harlem Rivers to the east. From the higher ground near Fifth Avenue toward the low-lying waterfront, changes in elevation intersect shifts in infrastructure, housing type, public space, and environmental exposure. Along this gradient, the FDR and Harlem River Drive corridor, NYCHA superblocks, tenement and rowhouse blocks, commercial corridors, institutional precincts, and recent high-rise development form a varied urban fabric.

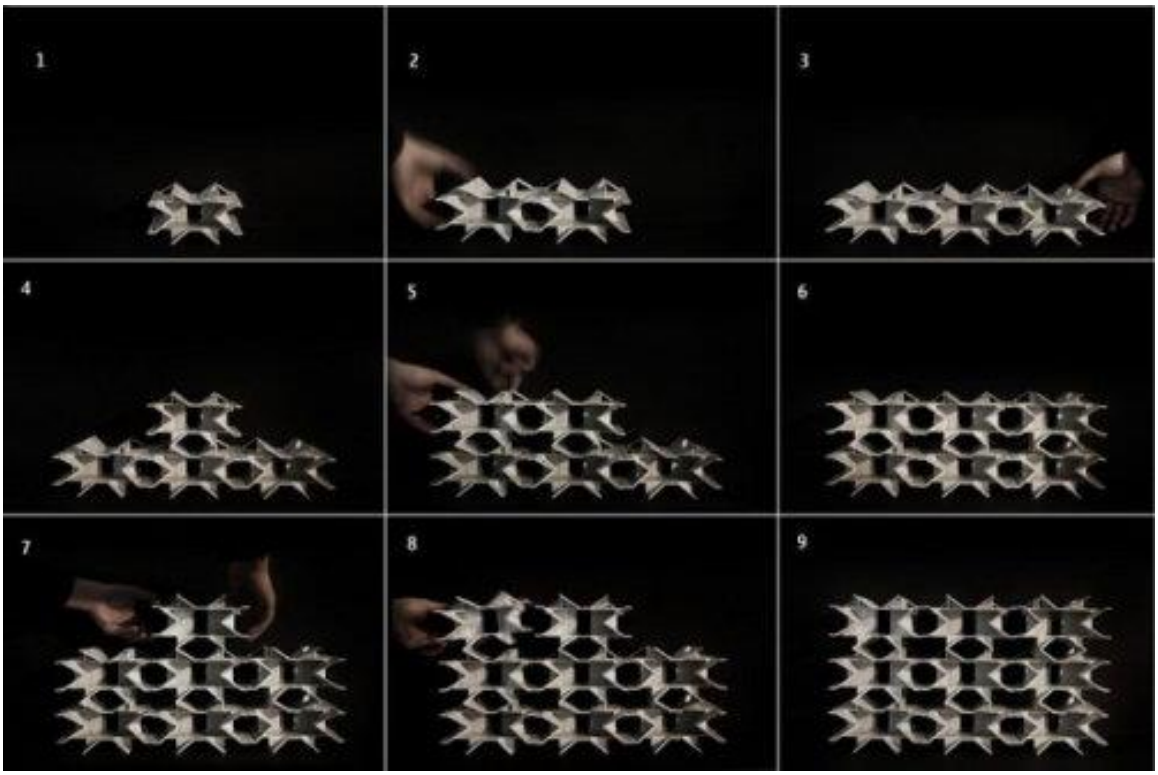
Read across time, this territory becomes legible as an urban palimpsest, its landscape registering shifting relationships among land, water, property, housing, and public investment. Harlem Creek and adjoining tidal marshes once conveyed water from Manhattan's interior toward the Harlem River. As the city expanded northward, the creek and marshes were filled, and engineered drainage and sewer infrastructure displaced much of the area's surface hydrology. The street grid and transit system reorganized the lowlands into buildable blocks and dense residential districts. Traces of this buried hydrology remain legible in the neighborhood's topography and resonate with its present exposure to stormwater and coastal flooding.

During the twentieth century, redlining and discriminatory lending translated racial prejudice into enduring patterns of investment and neglect. Clearance and modernist public-housing construction replaced many fine-grained blocks with superblocks, while transportation infrastructure reinforced large spatial edges and restricted access to the waterfront. The 1967 East Harlem uprising exposed

tensions surrounding police violence, racism, poverty, and neighborhood neglect. Beginning in 1969, the Young Lords organized around housing, health, sanitation, policing, and unequal public services. Residents and community organizations later transformed vacant land and deteriorated housing through rehabilitation, community gardens, and neighborhood stewardship. The 2017 East Harlem Rezoning marked another phase of transformation, increasing allowable density along selected corridors, applying Mandatory Inclusionary Housing, and enabling taller building types amid continuing concerns about affordability and displacement.

For the purposes of the semester, neighborhood-scale research encompasses East Harlem as a whole, while design representation and situated fieldwork concentrate on a series of east–west transects across its northern portion. Each transect extends from Fifth Avenue to the Harlem River, registering shifts in topography, ground, housing, infrastructure, public space, institutions, and environmental exposure. Within each transect, students identify a focal site where mapped relationships and field evidence converge, diverge, or reveal a consequential condition. Students approach this focal site as part of the larger transect rather than as an isolated parcel.

DESIGN PROPOSITION: HOUSING AS CIVIC INFRASTRUCTURE



© Student Work, *Landscape Design Principles Studio*, 2013, RISD

Conceiving affordable housing as civic infrastructure entails treating residential capacity as one component of a larger civic and ecological landscape. Each proposition begins by identifying existing relationships among housing, ground, water, vegetation, public space, institutions, infrastructure, and care practices. Students determine what to sustain, reinforce, repair, adapt, or transform, then develop an intervention whose consequences can be traced beyond the focal site. Strategies may include

infill; adaptive reuse; additions to or transformation of existing housing; development on public or institutional land; the aggregation or transfer of unused development rights; and selective redevelopment.

Regardless of strategy, the completed proposition may not produce a net loss of affordable housing. Where existing civic, public, or institutional functions are present, the proposition must maintain their continuity, replace their capacity, or strengthen them. Students must address temporary interruptions through phasing and implementation.

The focal site serves as a design probe within the larger transect, not an isolated parcel. The final proposition must explain: *Why intervene here and now? Why this housing capacity and massing? Why this ground and landscape operation? What civic and ecological capacities does it sustain, strengthen, or produce? How does it change over time? Who benefits, who bears its burdens, and who will govern and maintain it?*

SHARED DESIGN PARAMETERS

The proposition is developed and evaluated through four interdependent dimensions: housing capacity and public interface; civic capacity; landscape and environmental performance; and time, implementation, and stewardship.

1. HOUSING CAPACITY & PUBLIC INTERFACE

Proposals must establish credible affordable-housing capacity and demonstrate how housing massing affects the surrounding landscape and public realm. At a conceptual level, students must identify the households or constituencies the housing is intended to serve, its proposed tenure, and its affordability assumptions.

The required architectural resolution is calibrated to the semester's questions. It includes estimated unit count and mix, gross floor area, massing and building envelopes, access and entry, accessible circulation, ground-floor organization, public thresholds, and relationships among housing, landscape, civic programs, and collective space. Proposals must retain a legible structural and tectonic logic developed from the modular systems tested during the semester. Resolved dwelling layouts, repeated residential floor plates, comprehensive servicing, and building-scale construction detailing are outside the required scope.

Housing capacity should be estimated using the following unit mix and approximate net dwelling areas:

Unit Type	Target Proportion	Approximate Area
Studio	5—10%	400 sf
1 bedroom	30—40%	575 sf
2 bedroom	40—50%	775 sf
3 bedroom	10—20%	950 sf

Note: Selected percentages must total 100 percent. Adjustments may be proposed where evidence concerning household composition, affordability, accessibility, or constituency supports them. Capacity calculations must account for circulation, cores, shared spaces, services, and nonresidential uses through a clearly stated grossing or efficiency assumption. These standards guide capacity and massing rather than prescribe individual dwelling design.

2. CIVIC CAPACITY

Each proposal should identify existing civic capacities within its area, such as institutions, community gardens, cultural spaces, informal gathering spots, public programs, care networks, and stewardship efforts. Using observable, documented evidence, students should analyze who these capacities serve, how they are accessed, governed, and maintained, and whether they are secure, vulnerable, fragmented, or under-resourced. The proposal must show how housing and landscape features preserve, expand, connect, or create civic capacity. New programs should respond to specific needs and communities with clear explanations of access, governance, maintenance, and stewardship. Furthermore, proposals should recognize current residents and institutions as vital for the site's future, viewing community resources as assets to be maintained or improved rather than barriers to redevelopment.

3. LANDSCAPE & ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE

The proposition's principal spatial and environmental resolution occurs at the interface of housing and landscape. Design development concentrates on the ground plane and section; public, collective, and private thresholds; topography; hydrology; vegetation and canopy; microclimate; movement; collective use; material systems; and change over time.

Each proposal must establish site-specific environmental priorities from the evidence developed through research. It must explain how water moves, collects, infiltrates, or is reused; how vegetation contributes to shade, habitat, or productive capacity; and how its ground and built form respond to the flood, stormwater, heat, or other environmental exposures consequential to the site. Building massing is evaluated as a landscape operation because it redirects water, casts shade, alters microclimate, structures movement, and reorganizes relationships among public, collective, and private space. Housing and landscape must therefore be developed reciprocally, with each shown to alter what the other can do.

The proposition must also address occupation, seasonality, succession, maintenance, and stewardship. Environmental performance must be communicated through resolved ground plans and sections supported by hydrological, vegetation, microclimate, material, and temporal studies.

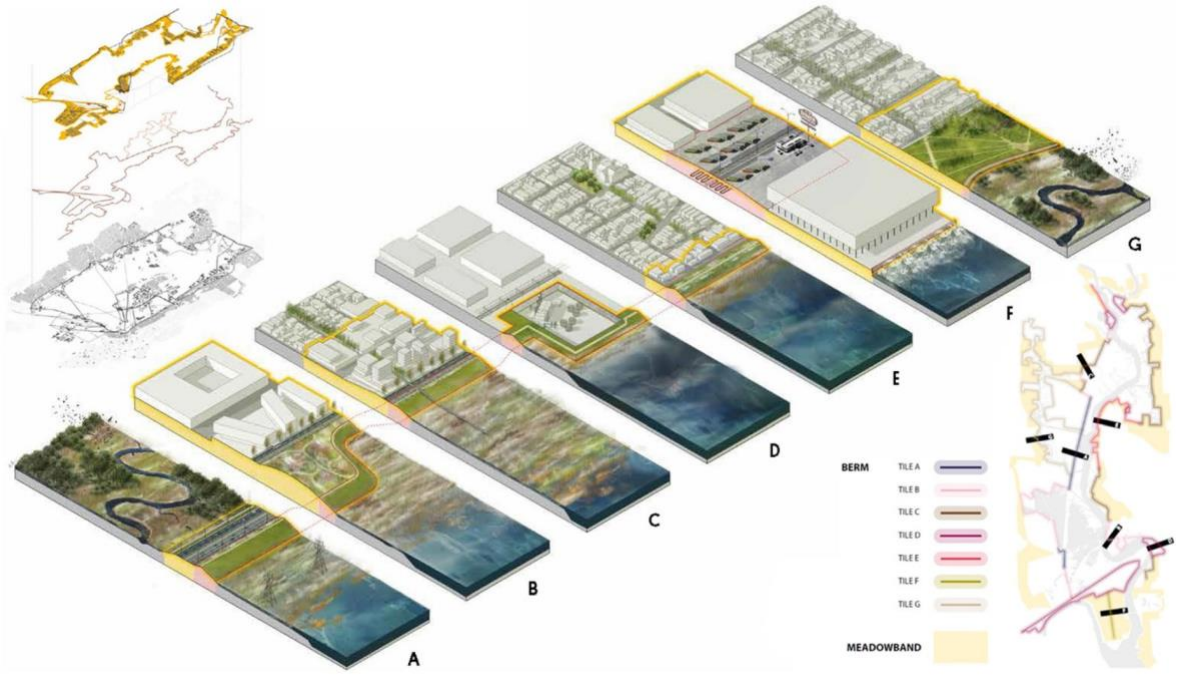
4. TIME, PHASING, & STEWARDSHIP

Each proposition must show how housing, landscape, civic functions, and patterns of occupation change through implementation and over time. Where an intervention affects existing housing or civic functions, phasing must demonstrate how their continuity is protected and involuntary displacement is avoided. If temporary relocation is unavoidable, students must indicate how residents or programs could be accommodated and return.

The proposal must respond to the ownership, zoning, and development conditions identified through the Research Workshop and illustrate a plausible sequence of intervention. It must also identify how shared spaces and landscape systems might be maintained and stewarded over time.

METHODOLOGY

> *"Landscape has become a lens through which the contemporary city is represented and a medium through which it is constructed"*
>
> - Charles Waldheim, *Landscape as Urbanism: A General Theory*.



© Transects for the *New Meadowlands* project (MIT, CAU, ZUS, and De Urbanisten, 2014)

The Research Workshop and Design Studio employ complementary but distinct modes of inquiry. The Research Workshop produces and tests spatial, historical, situated, and regulatory knowledge. The Design Studio uses representation, precedent analysis, modeling, and iterative design to develop and test spatial propositions. Neither course operates as a linear precursor to the other: research questions are revised through design, while design assumptions are tested against additional evidence.

RELATIONAL & MULTISCALAR INQUIRY

East Harlem is studied through three related units of analysis: the neighborhood, the transect, and the focal site. The neighborhood reveals distributions, disparities, and connections among systems; the transect examines how those relationships change across space and become materially present; and the focal site tests the consequences of intervention while remaining connected to a larger territory.

Students move among these scales throughout the semester rather than progressing through them in a one-way sequence from large to small.

MAPPING, ARCHIVE, & REPRESENTATION

Drawing on traditions of critical cartography, maps, archival sources, collages, and models are treated as selective and argumentative research instruments rather than neutral records. Students evaluate the origin, date, scale, categories, and limitations of their sources and use historical evidence to investigate how contemporary conditions were produced, altered, displaced, or erased. Representation does not merely illustrate conclusions reached elsewhere; through selection, abstraction, juxtaposition, and material interpretation, it helps construct and test spatial arguments.

TRANSECT-BASED SITUATED INQUIRY

The transect operates as a method of comparative spatial inquiry, connecting neighborhood-scale patterns to the material organization of ground, buildings, infrastructure, vegetation, public space, and environmental exposure. Situated observation and measurement supplement existing datasets by documenting variations that aggregated information may conceal. Shared protocols enable comparison across the class, while focused lines of inquiry allow each team to respond to the particular conditions it encounters and to confirm, complicate, or revise earlier spatial claims.

PRECEDENT, SYSTEM, & ITERATIVE TESTING

Students study precedents as systems of relationships rather than forms to be reproduced, identifying how housing units, circulation, structure, built form, ground, and open space interact. They then transform selected principles into modular systems that can generate and compare different relationships among mass, void, density, access, and collective space. Alternative configurations, site deployments, capacity studies, and regulatory scenarios make tradeoffs visible. Property and zoning conditions are translated into spatial parameters, while engagement with a particular site modifies the system's organization rather than merely determining where a preformed system can fit.

COLLABORATIVE DESIGN

Students work collaboratively across the scales of dwelling, building, ground, public space, infrastructure, and territory. Housing organization, massing, structure, circulation, water, vegetation, microclimate, collective space, civic program, and public realm are treated as interdependent components of a shared proposition rather than divided into separate disciplinary packages. Team members draw on their respective knowledge without relinquishing collective authorship, demonstrating a traceable relationship among evidence, representational choices, formal rules, comparative tests, and design decisions.

SELECTED DATA & TECHNICAL RESOURCES

- NY Flood Hazard Mapper
- NYC Stormwater Resiliency Plan
- NY Quality Affordable Housing

- NYCHA Development Interactive Map
- The Welikia Project
- NYCHA Design + Sustainability Resources
- NYC Public Design Commission resources
- Land Inventory Fast Track (LIFT)

COURSE & ASSIGNMENT SEQUENCE

The semester unfolds through three shared acts. Each act contains one cumulative Research Workshop assignment and two Design Studio assignments. The sequence below identifies the progression of work and the principal points of exchange between the courses. Separate assignment briefs and the course calendar detail weekly milestones, deliverables, and evaluation criteria.

SHARED SEMESTER STRUCTURE

Act	Research Workshop	Design Studio	Point of Exchange
Act 1	Assignment 1: Relational Mapping	Assignment 1.1: Archival Transect Collage Assignment 1.2: Interpretive Transect Model	**10/08 — Preliminary Review**
Act 2	Assignment 2: Situated Fieldwork	Assignment 2.1: Precedent Analysis Assignment 2.2: Modular Tectonic System	**10/26 — Midterm Review**
Act 3	Assignment 3: Regulatory and Strategic Frameworks	Assignment 3.1: Site Deployment Plan Assignment 3.2: Core and Shell Development	**12/10 — Final Review**

ACT 1 — RELATIONAL MAPPING & TRANSECT REPRESENTATION

Act 1 establishes a neighborhood-scale research framework and a set of individual and collective interpretations of the assigned transects.

RESEARCH WORKSHOP

ASSIGNMENT 1 — RELATIONAL ATLAS

Working within assigned thematic lenses, students formulate provisional spatial questions about East Harlem and assemble an evidence base from spatial datasets and historical sources. They evaluate the origin, date, scale, unit of analysis, and limitations of their sources before mapping relationships among different conditions. Through successive mapping studies and a focused historical comparison, students identify significant correspondences, disparities, concentrations, absences, and discontinuities. Students revise initial questions as new patterns and contradictions emerge. The assignment culminates in a collective relational atlas composed of evidence-based territorial claims and refined spatial questions. It establishes what can be understood at the neighborhood scale and what requires closer investigation.

DESIGN STUDIO

ASSIGNMENT 1.1 — ARCHIVAL TRANSECT COLLAGE

Each student independently constructs an archival collage of the transect assigned to their pair. Drawing on historical maps, photographs, ecological reconstructions, cultural archives, planning documents, and contemporary documentation, students investigate how inherited conditions and processes continue to shape the territory. The collage uses layering, montage, transparency, juxtaposition, and shifts in scale to advance a visual argument rather than present a chronological history. The two collages by both team members establish distinct interpretations that then inform the shared physical model.

ASSIGNMENT 1.2 — INTERPRETIVE TRANSECT MODEL

Working in pairs, students construct a physical model derived from a bounded slice of the shared class Rhino model. Each transect extends from Fifth Avenue to the Harlem River and contains two consecutive east–west streets and the urban blocks immediately north of each street. Together, the models form a continuous field from 104th to 118th Street. The Rhino model provides a shared 3D representation of existing massing and ground conditions. Each pair materially interprets and "dresses" its model using relationships identified through the individual collages and representational strategies drawn from Bodys Isek Kingelez and other artists. Produced at a common scale and within coordinated boundaries, the paired models assemble into a collective physical model of the territory.

At the preliminary review, the Relational Atlas is presented alongside the archival collages and assembled transect model, establishing questions for situated investigation.

ACT 2 — SITUATED INQUIRY & MODULAR SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

Act 2 moves from neighborhood-scale evidence and territorial interpretation to field investigation, precedent analysis, and the exploration of housing–landscape systems.

RESEARCH WORKSHOP

ASSIGNMENT 2 — SITUATED FIELDWORK: THE TRANSECT AS RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

Pairs conduct systematic observation, documentation, and measurement along the same transects represented in the Design Studio. A shared inventory produces comparable information across the

class, while each pair develops a focused line of inquiry responsive to the conditions it encounters. Students map how spatial, material, environmental, and temporal conditions vary and intersect across their transects. Field evidence may confirm neighborhood-scale patterns, reveal differences concealed by aggregated data, or expose relationships not visible in existing sources. The assignment culminates in a situated transect atlas combining mapped observations, measurements, sections, photographs, temporal studies, and interpretive findings. Each pair identifies consequential transitions, existing capacities, and conditions warranting further investigation or transformation.

DESIGN STUDIO

ASSIGNMENT 2.1 — PRECEDENT ANALYSIS: HOUSING, BUILT FORM, AND OPEN SPACE

Working in pairs, students investigate a housing precedent that demonstrates a distinct formal relationship among dwelling units, building organization, circulation, structure, and open space. Plans, sections, figure-ground studies, and analytical axonometrics examine the precedent from the scale of the housing unit and unit cluster to that of the building, ground, and larger site. Students identify relationships among unit arrangement, aggregation, massing, circulation, structural organization, and the distribution of private, collective, and public space. The assignment concludes by extracting a set of formal operations and organizational principles that can be transformed through the modular system developed in Assignment 2.2.

ASSIGNMENT 2.2 — MODULAR TECTONIC SYSTEM: MASS, VOID, & AGGREGATION

Students translate principles identified through precedent analysis into a modular tectonic system composed of repeatable housing, structural, circulation, ground, and open-space components. Teams construct a reconfigurable physical kit and use it to develop multiple mass–void configurations. Each configuration tests different relationships among housing capacity, aggregation, access, ground coverage, height, orientation, circulation, collective space, and public realm. Open space is treated as a defined spatial component—such as a court, passage, garden, terrace, commons, or public route—rather than as the residual area between buildings. The system is tested against contrasting conditions within the assigned transect without committing to a final site. The assignment culminates in a physical system model, comparative configurations, coordinated plans and sections, and diagrams documenting the system's components and rules.

At the midterm review, preliminary field evidence and precedent findings are considered alongside the emerging modular systems. The completed Situated Transect Atlas subsequently informs system revision and the identification of focal conditions for Act 3.

ACT 3 — STRATEGIC FRAMEWORKS & SITE DEPLOYMENT

Act 3 connects the spatial arguments, situated evidence, and modular systems developed in Acts 1 and 2 to the property, regulatory, institutional, environmental, and site conditions governing intervention.

RESEARCH WORKSHOP

ASSIGNMENT 3 — REGULATORY & STRATEGIC FRAMEWORKS

Students investigate the property, regulatory, environmental, institutional, and development conditions governing their focal sites. Research addresses ownership, zoning, development capacity, development rights, affordable-housing requirements, public-space obligations, and other conditions affecting intervention. Students translate these findings into maps, sections, envelopes, and capacity studies. Students establish as-of-right capacity and construct comparative scenarios examining what might need to be retained, combined, transferred, negotiated, or modified. The assignment culminates in a strategic framework that identifies the spatial and institutional conditions necessary to support intervention and positions the focal site within the larger transect.

DESIGN STUDIO

ASSIGNMENT 3.1 — SITE DEPLOYMENT PLAN

Teams deploy and adapt their modular systems across selected sites. Comparative scenarios test relationships among housing capacity, massing, existing buildings and uses, access, public and collective space, ecological systems, civic functions, and the larger transect. Students select and refine a deployment strategy through a coordinated site plan, ground-floor and public-realm plan, and block-scale studies. The proposal should demonstrate how site conditions modify the system rather than simply showing that the system can fit.

ASSIGNMENT 3.2 — INTEGRATED SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

Teams refine their site propositions through the integrated development of housing, structure, circulation, accessibility, ground, water, vegetation, microclimate, civic program, and public realm. At scales appropriate to each proposition, plans, sections, models, and system studies demonstrate how these components interact and how their interfaces establish a coherent spatial, tectonic, and environmental logic. Development concentrates on consequential relationships rather than comprehensive building-scale resolution.

The final submission brings the Workshop's territorial, situated, and strategic research into direct dialogue with the Studio's site-specific proposition, testing how affordable housing and landscape might operate together as civic infrastructure.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE – FALL 2026

Research Workshop Meeting Times: Mondays 9:30 am-12:20 pm (unless otherwise noted)
Location: SSA 219 (or SSA 2M11A when specified)

Studio Meeting Times: Mondays & Thursdays, 2:00-5:20 pm (unless otherwise noted)
Location: SSA 219

Note: *the schedule below is subject to revision throughout the semester.*

W1		**RESEARCH WORKSHOP (MORNING)**	**STUDIO (AFTERNOON)**
Mon	08.31	**Grad Studio Lottery @ 9:00am, SSA 107** **RW1: Act 1—Relational Mapping** —Begin Assignment 1.1	**DS1: Introduction** (IE + SA) —Syllabus review —Begin Assignment 1.1 *—Convocation @ 5:00pm, location TBD*
Th	09.03		**DS2: Act 1—Archival Collage** (IE) —Hour SSA – Draft Community Agreement (in studio) 2—3pm —Desk Crits
W2			
Mon	09.07	Labor Day—No Classes	
Th	09.10		**DS3: Act 1—Archival Collage** (TBD) *—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	**RW2: Act 1—Relational Mapping** —Readings 1 Discussion —Workshop 1: ArcGIS mapping (GIS Foundations & Cartographic Thinking) —Begin Assignment 1.2	**DS4: Act 1—Archival Collage** (IE) —Site Visit: East Harlem—NYCHA developments walk Long Island City—Archives
Th	09.17		**DS5: Act 1—Site Model** (IE) —Assignment 1.1 Due —Desk Crits —Begin Assignment 1.2 *—PMCI Symposium: "Reimagining the Archive: Black Memory as Design Praxis" Keynote Speech*
W4			
Mon	09.21	No Classes (College Closed)	
Th	09.24		**DS6: Act 1—Site Model** (IE) —Desk Crits
W5			
Mon	09.28	**RW3: Act 1—Relational Mapping** —Readings 2 Discussion —Workshop 2: ArcGIS mapping (Topography, Hydrology & Environmental Systems) —Begin Assignment 1.3	**DS7: Act 1—Site Model** (IE + SA) —Desk Crits
Th	10.01		**DS8: Act 2—Precedent Analysis** (IE)

			—Assignment 1.2 Due —Desk Crits —Begin Assignment 2.1 *—ACSA-AIA Intersections Conference Keynote Speech*
W6		**RESEARCH WORKSHOP (MORNING)**	**STUDIO (AFTERNOON)**
Mon	10.05	**RW4: Act 1—Relational Mapping** —Assignment 1 Due —Workshop 3: ArcGIS mapping (Georeferencing & Census Data)	**DS9: Act 2—Precedent Analysis** (IE) —Desk Crits
Th	10.08		**DS10: Act 2—Precedent Analysis** (IE) **—Preliminary Review (Act 1)** *—CCCB Colloquium: Why Care Matters*
W7			
Mon	10.12	Indigenous Day—No Classes	
Tue	10.13	**RW5: Act 2—Situated Inquiry** —Readings 3 Discussion —Workshop 4: ArcGIS mapping (Producing & Importing Data) —Begin Assignment 2.1	**DS11: Act 2—Tectonic Systems** (IE + SA) —Assignment 2.1 Due —Desk Crits —Begin Assignment 2.2
Th	10.15		**DS12: Act 2—Tectonic Systems** (IE) —Desk Crits
W8			
Mon	10.19	**RW6: Act 2—Situated Inquiry** —Lecture 2: Data Collection & Visualization —Begin Assignment 2.2	**DS13: Act 2—Tectonic Systems** (IE) —Desk Crits
Th	10.22		**DS14: Act 2—Tectonics Systems** (IE) —Desk Crits *—SSA Awards Ceremony & Alumni Open House*
W9			
Mon	10.26	**RW7: Act 2—Situated Inquiry** —Readings 4 Discussion —Workshop 5: TBD —Begin Assignment 2.3	**DS15: Act 2—Tectonics Systems** (IE + SA) **—Midterm Review (Act 2)** —Assignment 2.2 Due
Th	10.29		**DS16: Act 3—Site Deployment** (IE) —Begin Assignment 3.1
W10			
Mon	11.02	**RW8: Act 2—Situated Inquiry** —Begin Assignment 2.4	**DS17: Act 3—Site Deployment** (IE) —Desk Crits *—CCCB Colloquium: Why Housing Matters*
Th	11.05		**DS18: Act 3—Site Deployment** (IE) —Desk Crits
W11			
Mon	11.09	**RW9: Act 3—Regulatory & Strategic Frameworks**	**DS19: Act 3—Site Deployment** (IE + SA) —Desk Crits

		—Assignment 2 Due —Readings 5 Discussion —Workshop 6: TBD —Begin Assignment 3.1	
Th	11.12		**DS20: Act 3—Site Deployment** (IE) —Desk Crits
W12			
Mon	11.16	**RW10: Act 3—Regulatory & Strategic Frameworks** —Lecture 3: TBD	**DS21: Act 3—Integrated System Development** (IE) —Assignment 3.1 Due —Desk Crits —Begin Assignment 3.2 *—Grad Sharing Session*
Th	11.19		**DS22: Act 3—Integrated System Development** (IE) —Desk Crits
W13		**RESEARCH WORKSHOP (MORNING)**	**STUDIO (AFTERNOON)**
Mon	11.23	**RW11: Act 3—Regulatory & Strategic Frameworks** —Assignment 3.1 Due —Readings 6 Discussion —Workshop 7: TBD —Begin Assignment 3.2	**DS23: Act 3—Integrated System Development** (IE + SA) —Desk Crits
Th	11.26	Thanksgiving – No Classes	
W14			
Mon	11.30	**RW12: Act 3—Regulatory & Strategic Frameworks**	**DS24: Act 3—Integrated System Development** (IE) —Desk Crits
Th	12.03		**DS25: Act 3—Integrated System Development** (IE) —Assignment 3.2 Due —Desk Crits
W15			
Mon	12.07	**RW13: Act 3—Regulatory & Strategic Frameworks** —Assignment 3.2 Due	**DS26: Final Preparation** (IE + SA) —Desk Crits
Th	12.10		**DS27: FINAL REVIEW (Act 3)**

FINAL REVIEWS, DEC 8—14

Tue 12.08	Wed 12.09	Thu 12.10	Fri 12.11	Mon 12.14
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

Tue	12.15	**Clean-up Day I (all materials, projects, and any other items must be removed from studio)**
Wed	12.16	**Clean-up Day II (all materials, projects, and any other items must be removed from studio)**

		Student Portfolios due for SSA/CCNY Archive, etc. as directed by instructor **End of Semester Assessment, Undergraduate Studios (faculty only)**
Thu	12.17	**End of Semester Assessment, Graduate Studios (faculty only)**

FINAL GRADES

Mon	12.28	**Final Grade Submission Deadline (faculty)**

GRADING/ATTENDANCE POLICIES AND STUDIO CULTURE

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the semester, students will be able to:

- Apply research methods including spatial mapping, archival inquiry, situated field observation, precedent analysis, and regulatory research to investigate relationships across urban, ecological, landscape, and architectural scales; *(NAAB PC.5; LAAB Core Values 2, 6)*
- Synthesize multiple forms of evidence to construct a defensible spatial argument and identify consequential opportunities for intervention; *(NAAB PC.5; LAAB Core Values 4, 5)*
- Develop an iterative design process linking territorial interpretation, landscape and architectural experimentation, system development, site deployment, and spatial resolution; *(NAAB PC.2; LAAB Core Values 1, 5)*
- Integrate social, ecological, programmatic, regulatory, landscape, and architectural systems across multiple scales, understanding their reciprocal effects on urban form, environmental performance, and collective life; *(NAAB PC.2; LAAB Core Values 1, 2, 3)*
- Synthesize user needs, site conditions, regulatory requirements, accessibility, civic program, housing, and landscape within an integrated affordable housing proposition; *(NAAB SC.5; LAAB Core Values 2, 3, 4)*
- Analyze and design with environmental processes—including hydrology, stormwater, heat, vegetation, habitat, topography, and resource flows—to strengthen ecological performance, resilience, and human well-being; *(NAAB SC.5; LAAB Core Values 1, 3, 6)*
- Communicate research findings, spatial arguments, landscape and architectural systems, and design propositions through appropriate forms of mapping, drawing, modeling, and visual representation. *(NAAB PC.2; LAAB Core Values 5, 6)*

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to:

- Develop independent judgment, methodological rigor, and intellectual curiosity, and test assumptions beyond the minimum requirements of each assignment.
- Arrive prepared to participate actively in discussions, workshops, desk critiques, pin-ups, reviews, site visits, and collaborative work.
- Maintain steady and cumulative progress across both the Research Workshop and Design Studio, incorporating feedback through revision rather than treating assignments as isolated submissions.

- Complete all required work by the stated deadlines. Late or postponed submissions will be accepted only in documented medical emergencies or extraordinary circumstances and must be cleared with the instructor in advance whenever possible.
- Contribute responsibly to collaborative research and design work, recognizing that shared production does not eliminate individual accountability.

COMMUNITY AGREEMENT

At the beginning of the semester, students and instructors will collaboratively develop a Community Agreement establishing expectations for respectful dialogue, critique, collaboration, accountability, and shared studio culture. The agreement will be revisited midway through the semester and revised as needed in response to the course's evolving needs.

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

Evaluation across the paired Design Studio and Research Workshop values process and resolution. Students are expected to approach research and design as iterative practices involving investigation, experimentation, reflection, comparison, and revision.

Assessment considers not only the quality of final drawings, maps, models, and proposals, but also the rigor of the questions posed, the appropriateness of the methods employed, the quality of evidence and interpretation, the development of design criteria, responsiveness to critique, and the extent to which research and design materially inform one another over the course of the semester.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

1. **Research Rigor, Design Intent, and Argumentation — 25%**
    - Clarity and significance of the research question or design agenda
    - Appropriateness and rigor of methods, sources, and evidence
    - Ability to distinguish observation, interpretation, claim, and proposition
    - Ability to translate research findings into a clear spatial or architectural position
2. **Representation, Craft, and Communication — 25%**
    - Precision and quality of drawings, mappings, models, diagrams, and other representational work
    - Graphic and verbal clarity, including hierarchy, annotation, captions, legends, and citation practices
    - Selection of representational methods appropriate to the question or condition under investigation
    - Ability to communicate spatial relationships and arguments clearly to others
3. **Process, Iteration, and Evidence of Learning — 20%**
    - Willingness to test alternatives, question assumptions, and revise work in response to evidence and critique
    - Demonstrated development through comparative analysis, scenario testing, iterative drawing, modeling, and refinement of claims
    - Steady and cumulative progress across the semester
    - Evidence that later work builds critically upon earlier research and design decisions

4. **Site, Systems, and Contextual Responsiveness — 20%**
    - Ability to situate research and design within broader social, ecological, historical, regulatory, and political contexts
    - Responsiveness to site conditions and relationships among coupled architectural, landscape, civic, and environmental systems
    - Coherence between building organization, thresholds, ground plane, public realm, and larger territorial conditions
    - Ability to identify the consequences of design decisions across multiple scales
5. **Participation, Professionalism, and Collaborative Culture — 10%**
    - Consistent attendance, preparation, and timely completion of assignments and reading responses
    - Active engagement in discussions, workshops, desk critiques, pin-ups, reviews, and site visits
    - Responsible participation in collaborative work and shared research production
    - Contribution to a constructive, rigorous, and respectful learning environment

GRADING ASSESSMENT

Final grades are based on the cumulative quality of work produced across the semester, including research, design development, representation, participation, and completion of required final submissions.

RESEARCH WORKSHOP (3 CREDITS)

Assignment 1	25%
Assignment 2	25%
Assignment 3	25%
Reading Responses	10%
Attendance & Participation	10%
Final Research Submission	5%

DESIGN STUDIO (6 CREDITS)

Assignment 1.1	10%
Assignment 1.2	10%
Assignment 2.1	15%
Assignment 2.2	15%
Assignment 3.1	15%
Assignment 3.2	20%
Attendance & Participation	10%
Final Portfolio*—completion & submission	5%

LETTER GRADE DESCRIPTORS

A (+/—)	Work demonstrates a consistently high level of rigor, independence, and resolution. Research questions and design intentions are clearly articulated and supported by appropriate methods, evidence, and spatial reasoning. Representations are precise, well crafted, and communicate complex relationships effectively. The work shows substantial development through testing, critique, and revision and exceeds the expectations of the assignment in both intellectual and spatial depth.
B (+/—)	Work meets the requirements of the assignment at a strong and competent level. Research and design intentions are clear, methods and evidence are appropriate, and representations are generally precise and complete. The work demonstrates thoughtful development, responsiveness to critique, and a coherent design or research process, though some aspects may remain less fully resolved or ambitious.
C (+)	Work meets the minimum requirements of the assignment but demonstrates limited development, rigor, or resolution. Research questions, methods, spatial arguments, or design intentions may remain unclear or only partially substantiated. Representations may be incomplete, inconsistent, or insufficiently developed, and the work may show limited evidence of sustained iteration or responsiveness to critique.
F	Work does not meet the minimum requirements of the assignment or course. Research, design development, representation, or required deliverables are substantially incomplete, inadequately supported, or unresolved.
INC	An Incomplete may be granted only in accordance with CCNY policy and in cases involving documented medical or personal emergencies. Where approved, the student and instructor will establish a written plan and deadline for completion of outstanding work.

Notes:

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

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

For more information on grading guidelines and other CCNY policies and procedures, consult the current CCNY Academic Bulletins.

GRADING SCALE

LETTER GRADE	PERCENTAGE RANGE	GRADE POINT (4.0 SCALE)
A+	97—100%	4.0

A	93–96%	4.0
A–	90–92%	3.7
B+	87–89%	3.3
B	83–86%	3.0
B–	80–82%	2.7
C+	77–79%	2.3
C	73–76%	2.0
C–	70–72%	1.7
D+	67–69%	1.3
D	63–66%	1.0
D–	60–62%	0.7
F	<60%	0.0

OFFICE HOURS

Regular office hours are listed at the beginning of the syllabus. Students are encouraged to use office hours to discuss course content, research and design development, grading and assessment, or other concerns that may be better addressed in private than in class.

Students should contact the relevant instructor in advance when possible to request a specific meeting time.

PROBATION AND DISMISSAL

For program-specific information regarding grades, academic standing, probation, and dismissal, students should consult the current CCNY Academic Bulletin and contact their program academic advisor.

Director of Graduate Affairs:

Hannah Borgeson
hborgeson@ccny.cuny.edu

LEARNING, TEACHING, AND SCHOOL CULTURE GUIDELINES

Collaborative and respectful engagement is expected of both the Design Studio and the Research Workshop. Studio culture extends beyond individual project work to include how students and faculty participate in critique, share space and resources, collaborate, and contribute to the broader academic environment.

Students should consult the Spitzer School of Architecture Learning, Teaching, and School Culture Guidelines for the school's current expectations and policies.

ABSENCE AND LATENESS

Attendance and punctuality are required in both the Design Studio and Research Workshop. Arrival more than 10 minutes late may be counted as an absence.

- **Design Studio:** two unexcused absences may result in a full letter-grade deduction; three or more may result in failure.
- **Research Workshop:** one unexcused absence may result in a full letter-grade deduction; two or more may result in failure.
- Missing a required pin-up, midterm, final review, or other scheduled presentation without an approved excuse may result in an additional full letter-grade deduction.

Excused absences must comply with CCNY policy and should be documented where required. Students should notify instructors as soon as possible. Multiple excused absences may require a meeting to review academic standing and course completion.

ABSENCES DUE TO RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

Students who anticipate missing a class meeting, presentation, review, site visit, examination, or other required course activity due to a religious observance should notify the instructor as early as possible, preferably at the beginning of the semester. Reasonable arrangements will be made, consistent with college policy, to allow students to complete work or requirements affected by the absence.

READINGS AND JOURNALS

Assigned readings are an integral part of both the Research Workshop and Design Studio. They introduce theoretical frameworks, research methods, historical perspectives, and design approaches that should inform class discussion and the development of student work.

Students are expected to maintain a journal or sketchbook throughout the semester as a record of their evolving research and design process. The journal may include reading notes, key terms, questions, diagrams, site observations, references, methodological reflections, and ideas generated through critique or discussion.

Students should use the journal selectively and critically: not simply to record information, but to identify connections among readings, research methods, field observations, and design decisions. Assigned readings should be completed before the relevant class session, and students should be prepared to discuss how each text informs the course's larger questions.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are expected to conduct all academic work in accordance with the ethical standards of the university and the profession of architecture. Academic dishonesty—including plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, fabrication, or misrepresentation of authorship—undermines both the integrity of the course and the trust on which academic work depends.

Plagiarism includes presenting another person's words, drawings, images, ideas, data, or other work as one's own without appropriate attribution. All submitted work—written, drawn, modeled, or

otherwise produced—must clearly distinguish the student's original contribution from material derived from external sources. Sources should be cited consistently using an accepted academic citation system; the Chicago Manual of Style is recommended.

Use of generative AI or other computational tools must be transparent and consistent with each assignment's requirements. AI-generated material may not be submitted as if it were wholly authored by the student. Where such tools are permitted, students remain responsible for critically evaluating, revising, and verifying all generated content.

If generative AI is used in the production of submitted work, students must disclose that use and document, where applicable:

- the tool or platform used;
- the purpose for which it was used;
- the relevant prompt or query;
- the date of use;
- the extent to which the generated material was revised, interpreted, or incorporated into the final work.

AI tools cannot assume authorship or responsibility for submitted work. Students remain fully accountable for the accuracy, originality, citations, ethical implications, and disciplinary appropriateness of all material they submit.

Violations will be addressed in accordance with the CCNY Academic Integrity Policy and applicable course and program procedures.

*PORTFOLIO

At the end of the semester, students are required to submit a final portfolio documenting the development of their studio work across the semester. The portfolio should present the progression of the design process, including research, drawings, diagrams, models, studies, and other relevant artifacts.

The portfolio is evaluated as a complete and organized record of the semester's work. Attendance at scheduled portfolio workshops, reviews, and submission events is required.

STUDENT DISABILITY SERVICES

The AccessAbility Center (AAC) coordinates reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments, and support services for City College students with disabilities. Students registered with the AAC who require accommodations should notify their instructors at the beginning of the semester or as soon as accommodations are approved. The AAC is located in the North Academic Center, Room 1/218. Students should consult the current CCNY AccessAbility Center website for up-to-date contact information and procedures.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS SUPPORT

CCNY provides confidential health and counseling resources for students who need support during the semester. Students are encouraged to contact the Office of Health and Wellness Services for current information about counseling, wellness services, and related resources.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE RESOURCES

Support is available for students who have experienced sexual violence, intimate partner or domestic violence, gender-based discrimination, harassment, or stalking. For confidential advocacy, contact the Student Psychological Counselor at (212) 650-8905 or the Gender Resources Program at (212) 650-8222. To report misconduct, contact the Chief Diversity Officer and Title IX Coordinator, Diana Cuozzo, at (212) 650-7330 or dcuozzo@ccny.cuny.edu. In emergencies, call Public Safety at (212) 650-7777, or dial 911 off campus. For more information, please visit CCNY's Affirmative Action website.

LIBRARY

The school's library is a shared resource and a valuable supplement to all research and design work. Please direct questions to one of the library staff members:

- 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

NATIONAL ARCHITECTURAL ACCREDITING BOARD (NAAB)

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 licensure applicants to have graduated from an NAAB-accredited program, obtaining such a degree is an essential part of preparing for professional practice in architecture. While graduation from an NAAB-accredited program does not guarantee registration, the accreditation process is intended to verify that each accredited program substantially meets the standards that collectively constitute 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 capable of solving 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 at www.naab.org for additional information on student performance criteria and all other accreditation conditions.

NAAB CRITERIA ADDRESSED (2020 CONDITIONS FOR ACCREDITATION, AUGUST 2026 REVISED EDITION)

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.

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURAL ACCREDITATION BOARD (LAAB)

The Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board (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

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