INTRODUCTION

Focusing on the subjects of ownership and exclusion that underlie measures of spatial equity in the city, this experimental seminar and travel studio surveys historic and contemporary precedents where collective ownership has emerged from intended, unintended, regulatory, and activist patterns of organization. The course is conceived to simultaneously offer analytical tools, guidelines, and tactics to help students in architecture, landscape architecture, urban planning, design, and the humanities critically confront the complex legal, financial, and economic mechanisms that shape exchange and collective experience. Its objectives are threefold: first, to introduce students to new social and economic development models currently in place. Second, to establish the criteria with which to evaluate and decipher novel and tested strategies of collective ownership based on quantitative and philosophical questions around resilience, public ethics and sustainability. Finally, to develop a set of working guidelines for emergent practitioners and critical thinkers, which tested against both speculative and project-based frameworks of learning, will contribute to expanding each student’s projected impact and agency in the collective environment.

COMPARATIVE APPROACH & FORMAT

The courses frames an understanding of important concepts related to property, ownership and the built environment by engaging students in multiple interrelated modes of research and learning. In the first phase situated in Detroit, students working in groups will produce a comparative, typological catalogue of emergent and established property ownership models that confront and challenge long accepted conventions of exchange. Traditional models of property ownership including cooperatives, eminent domain, time-shares and leases, coupled with new variations on these themes, such as land trusts, land banks, public-private partnership, sharing economies, temporary urbanisms, and autonomous entities will be considered in relation to issues of financial modeling, social governance, stakeholder financing, and ethical networks. In the process, students will question strategies around easements, covenants, licenses, permits, deeds, and squatting, among other terms of both formal and informal exchange. These broad themes, introduced critically and conceptually through a wide range of domestic and international case study examples, will translate into graphic and textual analysis. The research material compiled over the course of the semester will contribute to a publication and a tactical manual for application. In parallel, students will participate in intensive comparative fieldwork, composed of site visits, interviews, and documentation. Conversations with architects, lawyers, urban advocates, policy-makers, residents, activists, and community leaders whose work represents innovative models of ownership will offer
students first-hand experiences as well as a more nuanced understanding of the issues at stake. Site visits will be orchestrated in Detroit then Rio de Janeiro — offering a rich comparative structure between urban dispersal and density. A multi-faceted and complex urban place and experience is common to both cities, providing rich material to draw connections and learn lessons in furtherance of understanding the full range of possibility of ownership through comparative issues such as density, culture, and institutions. The course culminates in the development of project proposals for a community organization in Detroit, where students are challenged to critically apply their knowledge and experiences abroad towards a radical reconceptualization of property ownership beyond currently known models.

GOALS

• To increase expertise in assessing complex and contingent urban conditions in order to understand multiple, heterogeneous, and simultaneously changing cultural, social, political, and economic systems;

• To link abstract theories and applicable legal doctrines and frameworks, as well as theories of social, economic and cultural networks and institutions with the physical attributes, histories and geographies of both shrinking and growing urban contexts in order to better understand the material, geographical, and infrastructural constraints that inform design decisions, as well as the value and limitations of legal solutions in light of such factors;

• To learn from direct field experience and engagement with contemporary scholarship in law, sociology, and geography, in order to more amply critique — through a reconfiguration of their approach to design problems — the structural inequalities, ideological biases, and social disparities that have historically served to impede equitable urban development.

• To interrogate, develop and articulate the meaning of a discipline-specific and interdisciplinary commitment to egalitarianism and the responsibility to promote justice, and recognize the presence of such values in hypothetical practice situations.

Pedregulho public housing by Alfonso Reidy, completed in 1947, recently privatized.
Owning It
property, agency, and the built environment

SCHEDULE

05.03  Introduction
      case studies assigned
      fieldwork attributed

05.04  Detroit Urban Condition
      Detroit site visit: Oakland Avenue Urban Farm
      9227 Goodwin, Detroit, MI 48202
      interlocutor: Jerry Hebron
      Detroit Urban Condition
      //read:

workshop: Moral Investment

05.05  Dirt, Ground, Land and Datum
      Detroit site visit: MUFI
      7432 Brush St, Detroit, MI 48202
      interlocutor: Tyson Gersh
      //read:
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workshop: mapping ownership
assignment 1 due

05.08 GRIT, RESILIENCE, CULTURAL CAPITAL
site visit: ONE Mile
7615 Oakland Avenue, Detroit, MI 48202
interlocutor: Bryce Detroit and Jean Louis Farges

//read:
Cities Building Community Wealth, Democracy Collaborative, November 2015, Seven Drivers that Build Community Wealth, pp. 17-18.

workshop: temporary urbanism

05.09 INFORMALISM
site visit: Detroit African Bead Museum
6559 Grand River Ave, Detroit, MI 48208
interlocutor: Olayami Dabls

//read:
Régis Debray, Transmitting Culture (NY: Columbia University Press,1997)
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workshop: squatting

05.10 Banking on it
site visit: Detroit Land Bank
500 Griswold St, Detroit, MI 48226
interlocutor: Frances Sims
//read:

workshop: MBAD

assignment 2 due

05.11 Assemblage
site visit: Powerhouse Production
1311 Klinger St, Detroit, MI 48212
interlocutors: Gina Reichert and Mitch Copeland
//read:

05.12 Parallel Institution
site visit: Zimbabwe Cultural Center of Detroit
12657 Moran St, Detroit, MI 48212
interlocutor: Chido Johnson
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//read:

05.15 Give and Take
site visit: Creative Many
400 Burroughs Street, Detroit, MI 48202
interlocutor: Cezanne Charles

read:
Antoine Picon, “Anxious Landscapes: From the Ruin to Rust,” Grey Room 01, Fall 2000, pp. 64–83.

05.16-05.18 FIELD WORK
intensive workshop in the field with assigned community partners

05.19 PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS
presentations of precedent and fieldwork studies

05.21 Arrive Rio de Janerio
International Airport Galeão
Hotel: Koriok, Rua Benjamin Constant, n80, Gloria, 20241-150
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05.22  Tour: Rio South City
Obra do Berço, Hospital Lagoa, Botanical Garden, Moreira Salle Institut (Olav Redig Capmos), Copacabana Palace, Museu da Imagem e do Som (Diller Scofidio)

05.23-24 Workshop: Privatization and the Pedregulho by Alfonso Reidy
Lead: Julien Dourgnon

05.25  Site visit: Federal University of Rio de Janeiro
Lecture: Vera Tangari

05.26  Tour: Rio City Renewal
Bhering Factory, Circuit of the African Heritage (Cais do Valongo, Pedra do Sal), MAR Museum of Arts Rio de Janeiro (Bernardes Architects), Museum of Tomorrow (Santiago Calatrava), Avendina Rodrigues Alves, Favela Providencia

05.27  Independent study

05.29-31 Workshop: Catalytic Communities
participatory redevelopment, ‘social interest’ zoning, affordable housing, Morar Cariocas and the Favela-Barrio program
Site visit: Cidade de Dios
Lead: Mattos Filho Advogados

06.01-02 Workshop: Mapping Informalism
Site Visit: Cantagola
Lead: Gabriel Duarte
06.04 Travel to Sao Paulo
Garoa Hosel, R. Guaiçui, 72, Pinheiros, Sao Paulo – SP, 05427-030

06.05 Site visit: SESC Pompeia, MASP, Sao Paulo Museum of Art
Interlocutor: Ana Paula Pimentel Walker

06.06 Independent study

06.07 Travel to Rio

06.08-10 Workshop: Cultural Capital
Cultural production and redevelopment
Site visit: Complexo da Mare
Lead: Mauro César de Oliveira Santos

06.11 Independent study

06.12 Travel Rio to Detroit

06.15 Final project presentations
Community House, Oakland Avenue Urban Farm, Detroit
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THE FINE PRINT
The seminar meets every Monday 9AM-noon. Occasionally, travel to site visits will require an earlier
departure time. All site visits will be confirmed within 48 hours of travel, require the completion of a travel
liability waiver, and are subject to slight alterations due to potential scheduling modifications.

Grading
A (Excellent Work): Work must reflect outstanding achievement in both content and execution. Work must
far surpass the given requirements.
B (Good Work): Work must reflect high achievement in both content and execution, and must excel beyond
the given requirements.
C (Adequate Work): Work simply meets the given requirements.
D (Poor Work): Work is less than satisfactory and minimally fulfills requirements.
E (Inadequate Work): Work fulfills few if any of the requirements and the studio must be retaken.
I (Incomplete Work): This grade is ONLY available due to health reasons or other emergency
circumstances.

evaluation criteria
Students are required to be in attendance during scheduled meeting times, and are expected to be
working on their projects and engaged in group discussions / workshops.

Participation in all field trips and group discussions is required for successful completion of the course.
Students must be in attendance for the class period each day. Excessive absences will result in a failing
grade.

General Policies
Students will be held to the academic policies of Taubman College.
Details can be found at: http://taubmancollege.umich.edu/students/academic_policies/general/

Attendance Policy
Students are required to attend all class sessions and to be well prepared. Participation in all reviews and
pin-ups is required. Students must be in attendance for the entire class or review session.

There is no make-up for missed classes. More than two unexcused absences will lead to the lowering
of the student’s final grade. Excused absences are family or medical emergencies and require official
documentation explaining the absence.

Accommodation
Please see your instructor in the first week of the seminar if you require special accommodations due
to learning disabilities, religious practices, physical requirements, medical needs, or any other reasons.
All efforts will be made to accommodate you. Some aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class
activities, and the way the course is usually taught may be modified to facilitate your participation
and progress. As soon as you make your professor aware of your needs, they can work with you and
the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office to help you determine appropriate academic
accommodations.

SSD typically recommends accommodations through a Verified Individualized Services and
Accommodations (VISA) form. Their office can be reached at 734-763-3000 or online at
http://ssd.umich.edu.

Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.

Assistance in Writing and Language
Students are encouraged to take advantage of the vast resources the University and Taubman College
have to offer for aid in writing and language. For multi-lingual students, Theresa Rohick (trohick@umich.
edu) offers office hours in our building.
Sweetland Center for Writing is available for both undergraduate and graduate students. They offer
classes, one-on-one assistance in a variety of modalities, and resource guides (lsa.umich.edu/sweetland).
Link to writing guides: http://www.lsa.umich.edu/sweetland/undergraduate/writingguides

Plagiarism Policy
Plagiarism is knowingly presenting another person’s ideas, findings, images or written work as one’s own by
copying or reproducing without acknowledgment of the source. It is intellectual theft that violates basic
academic standards. In order to uphold an equal evaluation for all work submitted, cases of plagiarism will
be reviewed by the individual faculty member and/or the Program Chair. Punitive measures will range from
failure of an assignment to expulsion from the University.

Course Evaluations
Students are strongly encouraged to fill out course evaluations at the end of the term.