Disproportionality: Reconciling Order, Change, and Diversity

ORDER AND MEANING

Throughout history, humans have created systems of meaning and objects of belief in order to understand the world around them. In architecture, proportional systems translated a priori values into spatial rules, geometries, ratios, scales, compositions, and organizations. These orders reflected the beliefs of comparatively monolithic pre-modern societies, were thought to represent truth and knowledge. In architecture, these systems collapse together an invisible world view with physical reality, including materiality, modes of construction / production, and technology. Proportional systems have encompassed wide ranging philosophies, religions, axioms, values, observations of nature, mathematics, science, astronomy, and anthropometric dimensions, including examples such as the Classical Orders, the Golden Ratio, Japanese Shaku, the Egyptian Canon of Proportions, Indian Vastu Purusha Mandala, Fibonacci Series, the Vitruvian Man, and Le Corbusier's Modular.

SPATIAL DISORDER

'The loss of 'canon' and of 'a single authoritarian voice' […] may well be a positive aspect. None the less this leaves us with an added difficulty when it comes to construct a clear vision for the upcoming city. We may be destined to ascertain only a fragmentary, kaleidoscopic collection of cautionary scenarios'.

'In dealing with such new realities one should overcome postcolonial dichotomies and indeed promote the crossbreeding of multiple knowledge and differentiated standpoints.'
Pedro Gadanho in 'Mirroring Uneven Growth: A Speculation on Tomorrow's Cities Today'

The contemporary neoliberal city flattens - it homogenizes and anonymizes. Our differences are simplified to lowest common denominators, with profit as the main motive. In many ways, the late capitalist city has failed us - there are serious injustices, inequalities, absurdities, and polarities that play out within the spatial structure of the city. Countless narratives, stories, myths, constructions, demographics, and communities are largely invisible, without any presence in our physical reality. Presences need to be reimagined.

Our requirement to act collectively is more urgent than ever, as we face highly complex and interwoven climate, social, and economic crises, and as we search for models and systems that offer shared meaning. And because the city is always incomplete, it offers us the possibility of making new orders, ones that reflect the differences, diversity, anomalies, exceptions, nuances, and spectrums that actually exist.

If an order, proportional or otherwise, suggests a meaning, then it can be an exclusive order. Who / what doesn't fit, and how / why? Ultimately, the studio will ask, can architecture have meaning today? How can architecture be meaningful today in an inclusive but specific way?

Acme Manifesto by SHIFT

APPROACH (OVERLAY)

"It is change, continuing change, inevitable change, that is the dominant factor in society today. No sensible decision can be made any longer without taking into account not only the world as it is, but the world as it will be."
*Isaac Asimov*

A projective approach to architecture simultaneously proposes and reflects on our current conditions. It interrogates who we are, and also who we want to be. This approach considers both context and content, and mirrors / reassembles / reconstitutes the components of our physical reality of today towards a different future. We will become fascinated by, and dive deeply, into context. In order to meaningful enact change on the city, we will endeavor to uncover the

patterns, rules and software that guide it. We will not be afraid to embrace ugliness, both as part of our current reality, and as an important part of the design process that prioritizes ideation and risk taking.

As a profession, architecture is often reactive; change happens and we are slow to respond. By developing a new spatial model for the near-future, we will not only think about design for the future, but designing the future itself. Students will be active in creating architectural scenarios that enact change to an existing system.

We will analyze the past and experiment with the present in order to design for the (near) future.
Inigo Minns, Ivan Morison, and Alexandra Daisy Ginsberg in 'Strategies for Change: From Speculation to Impact'

There are urgent issues that require our attention - students will be expected to develop architectural projects that engage meaningful with present issues that face our cities, and to intervene in a specific context in which an issue is embedded. Regardless of scale, projects developed will reflect on their relationship to the city, as a condition. Based on research and findings in Phase 1, students will propose a site and program to test and prototype ideas and architectural manifestations.
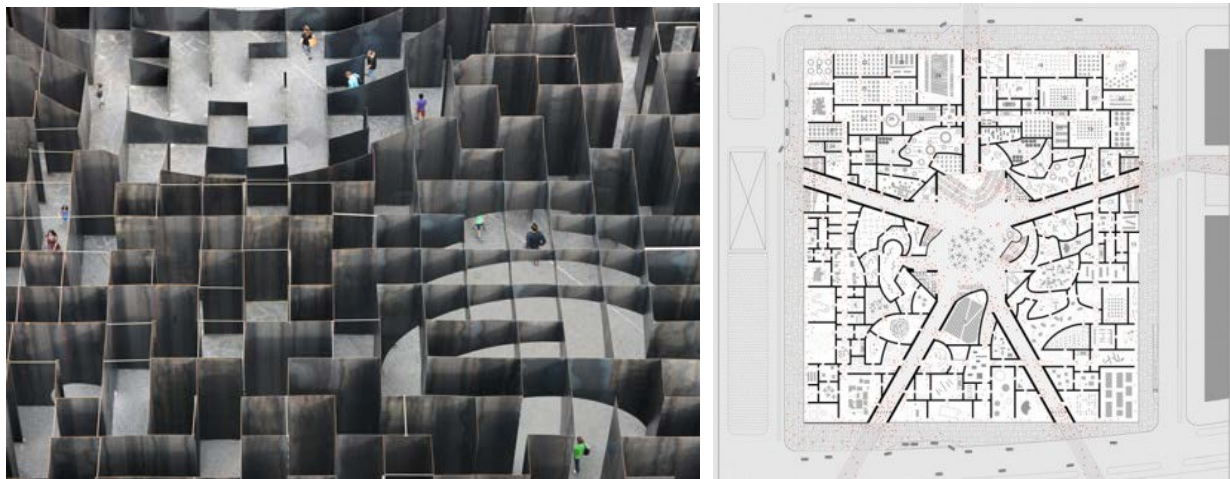
The Labyrinth by Gijs Van Vaerenbergh, National Art Museum of China by OMA

We will focus on how spaces, rooms, and people are composed, organized, related and connected. We will develop outcomes that prioritize the expression and facilitation of diversity through architectural organization. This architecture is less concerned with object and form than with the shaping of extant forces, logics, and technologies of our metropolitan condition towards new outcomes.

OBJECTIVES
1. To learn about and develop the ability to explore the inter-relationships between city-making, architecture and context (political, social, economic, physical, environmental).
2. To understanding biases embedded in our built reality, become cognizant of our own biases, and attempt to understand the other in both the process and content of design.
3. To engage in meaningful architectural speculation that imagines possible futures, explores architectural narratives and envisions architectural alternatives.
4. To design and execute a studio exhibition.
5. To iteratively design an architectural / urban project that creates a new order for diversity and responds to urgent issues.

Spatial Structure by Pezo Von Ellrichshausen

COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND MEANS OF EVALUATION
The studio will be conducted using desk reviews, as well as formal and informal reviews, sometimes with guests. Studio development will be based on the application of research, observations and exploratory technics. Students are expected to produce new work prior to each class for discussion and to present all deliverables for all reviews. Students are also expected to engage in an iterative design process, and to think critically. The course is studio based and as such, students will complete a series of projects that will be reviewed within the studio and serve as a basis for class discussion. More detailed assignments will be delivered prior to each phase.

COURSE SCHEDULE + PROJECT WEIGHTING *(Subject to Adjustment)*

Phase 1 Systems of Order (5 weeks, 30% of final grade)
Jan 13 - Feb 14
Phase 1 Review Feb 14

>>>Reading Week Feb 17 - 21<<<

Phase 2 Preliminary Design (2 weeks, 20% of final grade)
Feb 24 - March 6
Phase 2 Review March 6

>>>Block week March 9-13<<<

Phase 3 Final Design (6 weeks, 40% of final grade)
March 16 - April 23
Final Review TBD
Year End Show April 24 TBC

Monograph (10% of final grade)
Date TBD

READINGS
Readings will be provided with detailed project handouts.

GRADING SCALE
"Final grades will be reported as letter grades, with the final grade calculated according to the 4-point range."
"Assignment(s) will be evaluated by percentage grades, with their letter grade equivalents as shown."

Grade	Grade Point Value	4-Point Range	Percent	Description
A+	4.00	4.00	95-100	Outstanding - as evaluated by instructor
A	4.00	3.85-4.00	90-94.99	Excellent - superior performance showing comprehensive understanding of the subject matter
A-	3.70	3.50-3.84	85-89.99	Very good performance
B+	3.30	3.15-3.49	80-84.99	Good performance
B	3.00	2.85-3.14	75-79.99	Satisfactory performance
B-	2.70	2.50-2.84	70-74.99	Minimum pass for students in the Faculty of Graduate Studies
C+	2.30	2.15-2.49	65-69.99	All final grades below B- are indicative of failure at the graduate level and cannot be counted toward Faculty of Graduate Studies course requirements.
C	2.00	1.85-2.14	60-64.99	
C-	1.70	1.50-1.84	55-59.99	
D+	1.30	1.15-1.49	50-54.99	
D	1.00	0.50-1.14	45-49.99	
F	0.00	0-0.49	0-44.99	

At the discretion of the instructor, assignments submitted after the deadline **may** be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late.

Special Budgetary Requirements

Special budgetary requirements are limited to the optional purchase of course readings and, in specific courses, mandatory supplementary fees to cover certain expenditures, such as field trips. Mandatory supplementary fees must be approved by the University prior to implementation. Instructors are required to list and describe approved optional and mandatory supplementary fees for courses. This can include possible costs incurred for special materials, equipment, services, or travel. The $150 supplemental fees for all studio courses is charged to cover workshop costs of use and maintenance of hand tools, assorted power tools, CNC routers, laser cutters, 3D printers, and robotics.

CACB STUDENT PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
The following CACB Student Performance Criteria will be covered in this course:

A2 Design Skills; B1 Critical Thinking and Communications; B2 Architectural History; B4 Cultural Diversity and Global Perspectives

NOTES:
A student who receives a "C+" or lower in any one course will be required to withdraw regardless of their grade point average (GPA) unless the program recommends otherwise. If the program permits the student to retake a failed course, the second grade will replace the initial grade in the calculation of the GPA, and both grades will appear on the transcript.

Students are expected to complete all course assignments on time. There will be no final exam. Students must obtain an overall passing grade to pass this course, however, if a student fails any phase of the course worth 30% or more they will fail the course. A student who feels that a piece of graded term work (term paper, essay, test, etc.) has been unfairly graded may request to have the paper re-graded. The student shall discuss the work with the instructor within **fifteen days** of being notified of the mark or of the item's return to the class. More information can be found in the Graduate Calendar:
http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/grad/current/gs-o.html

University of Calgary Policies and Supports

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/. Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor. The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Most commonly plagiarism exists when: (a) the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work, (b) parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author, (c) the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source, and/or, (d) a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved. While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted. Plagiarism is an extremely serious academic offence. Any suspicion of plagiarism will be reported to the Dean, and dealt with as per the regulations in the University of Calgary Graduate Calendar.

For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please see the University of Calgary Calendar at http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html

COPYRIGHT LEGISLATION:

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright.pdf) and requirements of the copyright act (https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorised sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY

Student information will be collected in accordance with typical (or usual) classroom practice. Students' assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty. Private information related to the individual student is treated with the utmost regard by the faculty at the University of Calgary.

UNIVERSITY STUDENT APPEALS OFFICE: If a student has a concern about the course, academic matter, or a grade that they have been assigned, they must first communicate

this concern with the instructor. If the concern cannot be resolved with the instructor, the student can proceed with an academic appeal, which normally begins with the Faculty.
https://ucalgary.ca/student-appeals/

More student support and resources (e.g. safety and wellness) can be found here:
https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines