NEAR + FAR: a pause in the journey

The studio will embrace the notion of the peripatetic – *itinerant; traveling from place to place* – as a means to engage, and reveal, the environment. Our experiences moving across [a line or ray] the land, shape our conception of place [a point]. Yet, when we engage ‘site’ as architects, or designers, more broadly speaking, we often reduce our understanding of the environment to an abstract, planimetric array of fixed limits, scaled dimensions and immutable positions rather than an unfolding and variable trajectory fusing time, space and narrative.

As a transliteration of “of walking” or “given to walking about” [Greek], peripatetic is a word, derived from the covered walkways at the Lyceum and used initially to describe Aristotle’s followers. While we will not deeply focus on his philosophy in this studio, we should note that he engaged the world (and thought) through induction or a posteriori [empirical] conclusions. His epistemology is based on the study of things that exist or happen *in* the world. We will embrace this approach in the studio.

As Richard Serra seeks “a way of measuring oneself against the indeterminacy of the land” in his work [*Shift*, 1970–72], we will also empirically pursue an architecture, and landscape architecture, that mediates between the body and the land in the near and far simultaneously.
collaboration
The studio will collaborate with the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, a research unit of the School of Architecture that brings research, education and application to the design and planning of healthy landscapes and ecosystems. The WFC will provide an ecological design perspective throughout the semester. The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) will offer valuable insight into their vision for the Safety Rest Areas as we initiate the project and later provide feedback on the studio work. Richter Architects will share their perspective in designing and constructing Pecos County Safety Rest Area as well as provide insight into our proposals. The collaboration will provide a rare underpinning to an architecture studio with access to site research and background, diverse knowledge sets, "client" perspectives, and, moreover, design professionals.

https://www.wildflower.org
https://www.txdot.gov
http://www.richterarchitect.com

program/site
The studio will use a TxDOT proposal for a future Safety Rest Area located in Montague County, Texas, as a basis for our studio project. The selected site, which is an old highway rest area, is on Highway 287, equidistant (about 60 miles) between Ft. Worth and Wichita Falls. TxDOT’s vision for the Safety Rest Stop is to "reflect" the region—historically, culturally, geologically and so on—in addition to providing the expected amenities, including bathrooms, picnic tables and parking.

approach
Dialogue, an exchange of ideas/positions (through talking and making), will be at the core of our daily activities. Lectures, readings, site visits, critiques, precedents and field trips will help introduce an array of information and perspectives in regard to the project. Not only will we seek engagement with those outside the school but the "horizontal" structure of the studio will provide an open and supportive atmosphere. Like a "lab," the studio is a space for experimentation, observation and practice. It is a place of un-knowing.

"Failure is the only opportunity to more intelligently begin again." Henry Ford
"There is only one way to avoid criticism: do nothing, say nothing and be nothing." Aristotle

phases + grading
The semester will begin with a series of fast exercises, with limited scope yielding a range of outcomes, in order to provide an inductive foundation for the longer project. The majority of the semester, will be devoted to a slower and more deliberate pursuit of a design problem.

| LANDSCAPE_near + far | [approx. 1 wk] | 5% |
| SURFACE_1_water      | [approx. 1 wk] | 5% |
| SURFACE_2_light [wind]| [approx. 1 wk] | 5% |
| ASSEMBLY_picnic arbor| [approx. 1 wk] | 5% |
| MAP | MODEL_diagram    | [approx. 1 wk] | 5% |
| SYNTHESIS_safety rest stop | [approx. 8 wk] | 65% |

Improvement/Engagement 10%

Emphasis (as per the "Four Streams" model) will be in the following areas:
Ordering Systems: 20% - Human Factors: 20% - Construction: 10% - Contexts: 50%
Establishing grades for projects of a creative nature is a more complex matter than grading in other academic areas. While each project contains certain quantifiable elements by which it may be evaluated, a significant portion of each grade is derived from a broader, more subjective set of issues. Your work will be evaluated on its rigor and evolution over the semester.

Grading for studio courses is broken into three components: 1/3 grasp (ideas combined with an appropriate process of inquiry), 1/3 process (the consistent and rigorous development of ideas) and 1/3 resolution (the demonstration of competence, completeness and understanding evidenced in the representation of the project and its architectural implications).

A/ A- : excellent
Project surpasses expectations in terms of inventiveness, appropriateness, verbal and visual ability, conceptual rigor, craft, and personal development. Student pursues concepts and techniques above and beyond what is discussed in class. The work submitted surpasses required drawings and models in depth and/or scope.

B+/ B/ B- : above average
Project is thorough, well researched, diligently pursued, and successfully completed. Student pursues ideas and suggestions presented in class and puts in effort to resolve required projects. The work demonstrates potential for excellence and is complete.

C+/ C/ C- : average and below
Project meets the minimum requirements. Suggestions made in class are not pursued with dedication or rigor. The work submitted is incomplete in one or more areas.

D+/ D/ D- : poor
Basic skills including graphic skills, model-making skills, verbal clarity or logic of presentation are not level-appropriate. Student does not demonstrate the required competence and knowledge base. The project is incomplete.

F : failure
Minimum objectives are not met. Performance is unacceptable. Note that this grade will be assigned due to excessive unexcused absences. Project unresolved/incomplete.

X : excused incomplete
Given only for legitimate reasons of illness or family emergency. Incomplete assignments are not a cause for assigning this grade. An "X" is used only after consultation with the administration and must include an agreement for completion of outstanding work and deadline. Resolution of the incomplete must be prior to the commencement of the next semester.

ALL GRADES ARE SUBJECT TO DEDUCTIONS FOR UNEXCUSED ABSENces, LATE WORK + LATE ARRIVALS.

resources
The school and university provide an exceptional educational environment and you should attend the lectures, exhibits, talks, symposia, etc. These experiences are invaluable and significant in your architectural education. For a complete listing, please visit https://soa.utexas.edu/life-work/events. Additionally, make use of the Materials Lab, Build Lab [shop] and Technology Lab. If accessing Adobe software in SOA computer labs, you will be prompted to sign in with an Adobe ID. To create a free Adobe ID for this purpose, got to: https://accounts.adobe.com/

Training requirements may be required prior to your engagement.
https://wikis.utexas.edu/display/SoABuildLab/Build+Lab+Access+and+Training
**attendance**
Attendance is mandatory. Participation is expected. With three (3) unexcused absences, the student’s final grade for the course will be lowered by a full letter grade. Please contact the instructor prior to class if you expect to be late or miss class. Religious holy days sometimes conflict with class schedules. Please notify me prior (14 days) to the class dates you will be absent to observe a religious holy day. If you miss a work assignment, or other project due to the observance of a religious holy day you will be given an opportunity to complete the work missed within a reasonable time after the absence.

**academic integrity**
Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, visit the SJS website at [http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs](http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs) or call 471-2841.

**students with disabilities**
Students with disabilities who require special accommodations need to get a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students (471-6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). This letter should be presented to the instructor at the beginning of the semester and accommodations needed should be discussed at that time.

**security, safety and the studio**
The studio is an exceptional learning environment. Since it is a place for all, it necessitates the careful attention to the needs of individual. Please be considerate your classmates. All spraying of fixative, spray paint or any other substance must be done in the shop. Damages done to the facilities will not be tolerated by the School of Architecture.

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Security is a necessary component for a studio that is accessible to you and your colleagues 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Be smart. Be safe.