SYLLABUS
*This studio is open for Architecture students eligible for Advanced Design Studio (graduate and undergraduate), Urban Design students and Landscape Architecture students.

Introduction
Considered by many the highest achievement of civilization, cities embody the values and aspirations of the societies that create them. Cities are complex cultural artifacts where many forces come together. Austin is no different. The forces at play in the debate over Austin’s growth tend to be polarizing views about the critical issues that shape our city: those in favor of more roads vehemently oppose those in favor of mass transit like commuter rail, those in favor of higher density collide with neighborhoods that resist change, condo dwellers preach against suburban sprawl, environmentalists clamor against developers, developers clamor against Austin notoriously difficult regulatory environment, and so on.
At the heart of these polarizing views there are two different types of ways to think about the city that must be acknowledged as we plan the future growth of Austin.

The Landscape City: The American Model
Austin has been and still is fundamentally a Landscape City: a limitless, low-density city where the majority of people live in single-family houses. The Landscape City model is rooted in a strong American tradition and we must accept that people like it. Austin in particular is an example of a successful Landscape City. In fact, the overall beautiful integration of the city within its natural landscape has been an important attraction for people moving here.

The Compact City: The European Model
On the other hand, there is a model of city that emphasizes higher density, pedestrian-oriented developments and multi-family housing. This Compact City model has gained
momentum in Austin and for good reasons: there is more mainstream awareness about the perils of our dependence on fossil fuels and there is, not only in Austin but across United States, a more cosmopolitan population that is discovering the benefits of compact urban life. The potential for a viable alternative to the Landscape City in the central core of Austin is undeniable and is, right now, being realized.

Can we have it both ways?
Ultimately, cities are the result of a continuous balance between ambition and compromise—lofty desires are many times scaled down, ambitious goals get cut back—but the most successful cities maintain the aspirations that define their identity while managing to adapt to new circumstances. Here in Austin, as a city we must aspire to preserve and continue to create the best Landscape City possible, adjusting this model of development as necessary so it can sustain the balance between nature and human habitation. We must also commit ourselves to continue to support a viable alternative: a Compact City that thrives, not only in the central core, but also in nodes around the city and the transit corridors that connect them. As Austin continues to grow, we must embrace the virtues of these two models and find ways to mesh them together successfully.

Learning from the Compact City
How can Austin’s growth incorporate successfully the Compact City model? The answer to this question is at the heart of the investigations of this studio. What can we learn from Compact Cities in Spain? What can we learn from researching and understanding the Landscape and the Compact city models?

We will travel to Spain to visit two different cities: Madrid and Bilbao. Both are examples of successful Compact Cities: they have vibrant street life, efficient and accessible public transportation and great architecture—all traits sought after by many cities. We will learn about their history, planning strategy, their people and their vibe. We will meet with architects, academics and administrators. We will visit people’s apartments to see how they live. These cities will serve as ideal places to explore the mechanism behind a successful compact city. Why are these cities the way they are?

Madrid and Austin occupy approximately the same amount of land but Madrid is almost 5 times denser than Austin. During our time in Madrid we will visit different housing types, high profile architectural projects and one of the most ambitious urban interventions in Europe in recent times: the Madrid Rio project. In Bilbao, the largest city in the Basque region of Spain, we will visit the successful redevelopment of the the city’s waterfront, that includes the world renowned Guggenheim Museum as well as the island of Zorrozaurre, a large tract near the city center that was master planned by the late Zaha Hadid.
In our research in Austin and during our visits in Spain we will study three critical components of the city: infrastructure, public space and housing. We will specifically focus on housing typologies and the different options that can be considered for Austin in its effort to develop a denser city fabric.

Trip to Spain
We will travel to Spain on Friday, February 11 and will come back on Sunday, February 19. Students admitted in the studio will automatically be eligible for Mebane scholarships averaging 1,000 $ to cover part of the expenses of the trip to Spain. A detailed itinerary will be provided in the first day of class and we will work out the logistics of the trip during the first week of class.

Project site: The Brackenridge Tract.
All the ideas explored in the studio will be developed and tested in a large tract of land in Austin slated for future development. Deeded to the University of Texas in 1910, the Brackenridge Tract consists of 345 acres of prime land west of the central core of Austin. The area is defined approximately by Enfield Road to the North, Exposition Boulevard to the east, and Lady Bird Lake to the south and west. About half of the area is occupied by a municipal golf course and the other half includes the 84-acre UT Field Laboratory, student housing as well as other commercial and residential structures with leases from the university.
The future of the Brackenridge Tract is a matter of great importance for the city of Austin as much as it is for the University of Texas. It is uncommon for cities to encounter land development opportunities with the kind of potential that this tract holds for Austin. The studio will be encouraged to work with seven aspirational goals in mind (in no particular order):
- Think big when planning public infrastructure.
- Design a dense, family-oriented housing typology.
- Advance UT’s research agenda.
- Create accessible public space.
- Preserve the UT Field Lab.
- Include a variety of housing types (student, faculty, seniors and low-income).
- Embrace innovation.

Class Structure
The studio will benefit from previous work done for this same site by students from our school. The first part of the semester will be devoted to research, with students working in groups. A description of the research tracks and a schedule will be provided in the first day of class.

In the second part of the semester, after the trip to Spain, we will revise master plans developed in previous studios and will develop in more detail specific projects, with a special focus on multi-family housing and the design of the waterfront. Also, I will be very open about letting specific interests of students determine the areas of focus of the final projects.

Office Hours:
Tuesdays from 1:30 to 2:30 or by appointment. My office is located in the reception area at Goldsmith Hall. If you want to set an appointment, the best way to contact me is via email. My email is juan@mirorivera.com and my phone is 512-917-5163.

Bibliography
The following list includes reference books that we will use in the studio. There will be reading assignments from some of them that will be discussed in class. In addition, we will assemble our own library in the studio related to the research we will be conducting.

- On Landscape Urbanism, 2007  Dean Almy (Editor)
- City Design, 2011  Jonathan Barnett
Learning Outcomes

- **Design Composition Skills**: Developed through three dimensional architectural form and space, both exterior and interior; Building envelope
- **Design Integration Skills**: Demonstrated through creative engagement with issues of materiality, structures and construction; Structural and environmental system integration; Building materials and assembly; Sustainable practices
- **Site Analysis and Design**: Developed through the creative engagement with relevant contextual; environmental and programmatic factors underlying the project
- **Critical Thinking**: Quality; depth and consistency of conceptual and critical thought throughout the design process; Learning from precedents; Research Skills; Understanding human factors and behavior; Program
- **Graphic Skills**: Quality of presentation; clarity of communication; appropriateness of media strategy and level of skill displayed through the work presented at all stages of the design process; Technical documentation
- **Understanding Sustainable Practices**: Social dimension; Site design dimension; Building performance dimension
- **Collaborative and Leadership Skills**: Demonstrated through the active engagement in all activities of the studio
STUDIO SPAIN
Advanced Urban Design Studio
Spring 2017
Instructor: Professor Juan Miró, FAIA LEED AP
MWF 1:30-5:30

- **Code Analysis**: Zoning, accessibility, life safety, egress; Basic understanding of the legal framework affecting the design professions

**Design Conversations. School’s activities**
The School of Architecture offers a wide range of opportunities for students to extend the design conversations taken place in studios (Lecture Series, Goldsmith Talks, Exhibitions, etc). Students are encouraged to participate and in school’s activities, it is important for the holistic education of intellectually engaged design students. Specifically, we will attend lectures as a studio and we will have group discussions in studio the following class period.

**Evaluation Criteria**
Establishing grades for projects of a creative nature is more complex 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.

Grading for each assignment is broken into four components:
- 25% grasp: the ideas and understanding of the project at hand, combined with an appropriate process of inquiry
- 25% process: the consistent and rigorous development and testing of ideas
- 25% resolution: the demonstration of competence, completeness, and finesse through representation
- 25% engagement: the active participation in studio activities, leadership, collaboration, group discussions and reviews

Students work will be evaluated according to its rigor and evolution over the semester. Grades are subject to deductions for absences, late work, and late arrivals at the discretion of each instructor.

A student must earn a letter grade of C or better in order for the course to count towards a degree in the School of Architecture and to progress in to the next studio. A letter grade of C- will not satisfy degree requirements.

**Grade Descriptions**

A/A- Excellent
Project surpasses expectations in terms of inventiveness, appropriateness, visual language, conceptual rigor, craft, and personal development. Student pursues concepts and techniques above and beyond what is discussed in class. Project is complete on all levels.
B+/B/- Above Average
Project is thorough, well presented, diligently pursued, and successfully completed. Student pursues ideas and suggestions presented in class and puts in effort to resolve required projects. Project is complete on all levels and demonstrates potential for excellence.

C+/C Average
Project meets the minimum requirements. Suggestions made in class and not pursued with dedication and rigor. Project is incomplete in one or more areas.

C-/D+/D/D- Poor
Project is incomplete. Basic grasp of skill is lacking, visual clarity or logic of presentation are not level-appropriate. Student does not demonstrate the required competence and knowledge base.

F Fail
Project is unresolved. Minimum objectives are not met. Performance is not acceptable. Note that this grade will be assigned when students have excessive unexcused absences.

X Excused Incomplete
Can be given only for legitimate reasons of illness or family emergency. Simply not completing work on time is not an adequate cause for assigning this evaluation. It may only be used after consultation with the Associate Deans’ offices and with an agreement as to a new completion date. Work must be completed before the second week of the next semester in which the student is enrolling, according to the School of Architecture policy.

Attendance
Attendance is mandatory and participation is expected. With three (3) unexcused absences, the student’s final grade for the course will be lowered by a full letter grade. The final grade will be lowered by a full letter grade for each unexcused absence thereafter. Aside from religious observances, absences are only excused with written documentation of a medical issue or family emergency. The student is responsible for completing work missed due to excused absences and initiating communication with the instructor to determine due dates.

If a student is late (5 minutes after the start of class) three (3) times, it will be counted as one (1) unexcused absence. Students should notify the instructor prior to class if
lateness or absence is known in advance. Students must notify instructors directly regarding lateness or absences; Asking a classmate to inform the instructor is not acceptable.

**Religious Observances**
A student shall be excuse from attending classes of other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for the purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. University policy requires students to notify each of their instructors as far in advance of the absence as possible so that arrangements can be made.

**Academic Integrity**
Students who violate University policy on academic integrity 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 academic integrity will be strictly enforced. Refer to the Student Conduct and Academic Integrity website for official University policies and procedures on academic integrity:

**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 in each course at the beginning of the semester and accommodations needed should be discussed at that time.
http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/

**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 everyone. All spraying of fixative, spray paint, or any other substance should be done in the shop. Security is a necessary component for a studio that is accessible to you and your colleagues 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Do not leave your studio without your studio key and do not leave your studio unlocked. Hold yourself and your studiomates accountable for the security of your shared space.
Resources for Learning & Life at UT Austin
The University of Texas has numerous resources for students to provide assistance and support for your learning:
The UT Learning Center:
http://www.utexas.edu/student/utlc/
Undergraduate Writing Center:
http://uwc.utexas.edu/
Counseling & Mental Health Center:
http://cmhc.utexas.edu/
Career Exploration Center:
http://www.utexas.edu/student/careercenter/
Student Emergency Services:
http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/

Cell Phones
Cell phones must be put away during class and computers may be used only for note-taking or for class activities. Students who use digital technology for non-class related activities will be marked absent and asked to leave for the remainder of that class.

University of Texas Honor Code
The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

Use of E-mail for Official Correspondence to Students
E-mail is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, you are responsible for reading your e-mail for university and course-related information and announcements. You are responsible to keep the university informed about changes to your e-mail address. You should check your e-mail regularly and frequently—I recommend daily, to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-critical. You can find UT Austin’s policies and instructions for updating your e-mail address at http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)
If you are worried about someone who is acting differently, you may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone your concerns about another individual’s behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the
Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal

Emergency Evacuation Policy
Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made.

Policies Regarding Evacuation
Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building. If you require assistance to evacuate, inform me in writing during the first week of class. Do not re-enter a building unless you’re given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

Drop Policy
The State of Texas has enacted a law that limits the number of course drops for academic reasons to six (6). As stated in Senate Bill 1231: “Beginning with the fall 2007 academic term, an institution of higher education may not permit an undergraduate student a total of more than six dropped courses, including any course a transfer student has dropped at another institution of higher education, unless the student shows good cause for dropping more than that number.”