INTERIOR FUTURES: CLOSED WORLDS OPEN SYSTEMS

STUDIO STATEMENT
The studio will speculatively explore and critically develop concepts of interiority and interior design in a ‘near future’ scenario. The semester will be developed in two broad project phases: 1. as closed, discrete, relational interior systems, and 2. as systemic interior interventions and proliferating interiors in urban contexts.

In the Anthropocene, Interior concepts must be developed and projected forward into a future where ecologies of place, space, environment, buildings, people, and non-human living things, become increasingly important and vital to survival. We will take a radical position on interiority as a fundamental state of the world, and seek to use that to explore possible futures where effects (such as those occurring in the Anthropocene) are engaged directly. In this process, we will consider possibilities for design that includes Temporal Tectonics, Nested Relations, Softness. Growth patterns, Decay/Entropy, Air, Water and Waste, as well as Human and Non-human occupation. We will explore the concept of nested, layered interiors as both relational and discrete conditions that promote and support life of different kinds.

Through an introductory project referencing the exhibition and book ‘Closed Worlds’, students will develop responses to the concepts of ‘closed’ and ‘open’ interior spatial and environmental systems, and will develop initial projects designed to support life and provoke forms of spatial occupation. To further support this goal, concepts of ‘world building’ and ‘speculative design’ will be introduced asking students to critically develop concepts of interiority focused on one or more ‘near futures’ where negative effects of the Anthropocene may become more evident. Using the first project as building block, students will develop a final project as a systematic intervention (or set of interventions) of an ‘interior living system’ into a large existing urban or building context.

Fundamentally we might begin by asking: How might Interior projects be developed as supple, responsive digital and physical systems? How might we use concepts of ‘futures’ to suggest possibilities for Interiors? And, how might the exploration of interactions between the digital and physical environments be explored as influencing each other rather than as simply moving from the computer to physical making?

We will rigorously explore relationships between digital and physical space, augmented reality, and multiple modes of making, materiality, fabrication, and visualization to engage ‘what if’ questions. If we are to critically engage in the present we must be able to see our place within it. We will critically question the notion of the real, the virtual, the natural and technological as instrumental tools to engage larger questions of human and non-life, and the occupation of the earth in the Anthropocene. How do we use disciplinary tools of design, representation, fabrication and assembly to engage larger, more difficult questions?

We must work through a critical engagement of interiority as both concept and condition. We will consider interiority in relation to contingency or autonomy of interventions into contexts that include buildings as well materials and smaller components. How do the things we make suggest self-sufficiency and closure as they also are informed by external situations and relationships? This work will include considering and developing systems of proliferation of design as well the larger natural environment of the earth that we are always within. We will also consider and develop our work as Dynamic Relations which may include issues or qualities such as:

Elusive yet Present
Natural yet Artificial
Analog yet Digital
Alien yet Familiar
Human yet non-human
Spatial yet Formal
Whole(s) yet Part(s)
Material yet Ephemeral
Autonomous yet Contingent

Projects will be further supported by guided workshops which will take place throughout the semester. Students will explore and develop techniques using Augmented Reality and digital presentation, in addition to Robotics and other available modes of fabrication. In combination, students will begin to merge the aspects of the digital with the physical in their work. Most importantly, the techniques, exercises and projects which will be used to provoke, develop and support theoretical and conceptual foundations for each student’s work at the advanced level.

Finally, students will be asked to innovatively and synthetically engage the resources of the school including Library, Fabrication, Robotics, Materials, and Technologies. Students are asked to seek ways to synthesize and build-upon existing capabilities to create and expose new opportunities for their work and by extension other students in the school. In a sense, SCI-FI and speculative fiction also does this. Selecting and surveying technology and then speculating on its use in a near future or alternative present.
Develop an object or nested set of objects that produce and form space, having different kinds of access, material, spatial, visual, digital, narrative.

“Affective Formations: Interiorities | Architecture generates cultural change by intensifying and inflecting existing modes of inhabitation, participation and use. To accomplish this, architecture must become more responsive, engaging in a relationship of mutual feedback with its users and contexts. In other words it, it must contain ‘affects’ - the capacity both to affect and be affected. Affects differ from effects, which, in everyday parlance, imply a one-way direction of causality: a cause always precedes its intended effect. Affects, in contrast, suggest a two-way transfer of information and influence between a formation, or work of architecture, and its users and environment.” Interiorities Ali Rahim Volume80, Issue2. Special Issue: Exuberance: New Virtuosity in Contemporary Architecture. March/April 2010. P 29.

PROJECT 02A (SPACE PROBES) INTERIOR LIVING SYSTEM | (MESO SCALE INTERVENTION STRATEGIES) | SYSTEMIC INTERVENION AND CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING
Apparatus. Symbiotic. Parasitic

PROJECT 02B (FINAL) IMPLEMENTATION DIAGRAMS | SYSTEMS OF INTERVENTION DIGITAL <> ANALOG

Basic Course. Issues and Outline: interrogating a holistic design process | developing ideas and modes of digital physical effects. using, feedback, iteration and recursion
Beginning: What is a closed world? Nesterd Interiority? What is a living system? What is Augmented Reality or Relation of Digital and Physical?
Instigation: Surveillance of the current conditions and the historical trends? What are the constraints? what are the untapped potentials?
Conceptualization/Motivation: What is a concept? What are measurements of success and project drivers?
Anthropocene: How might our world change because of this phenomena? What does it suggest about Interior Future?
Speculative Fiction: How might we use story, narrative and speculative thinking to develop understandings of interiority and futures?
Programming: What is a program? Is a program different than a summary of spaces? How do we understand scale/site? occupation?
Planning: How might we organize/pattern (complex) systems? What are constraints? How does a system create new opportunities for proliferation?
Parametrization: at a minimum parametric thinking is key to the development of this project. What is this? Why is it important?
Development: how do we link the micro, meso, and macro? Considerations between creating conditions and deploying effects
Actualization: the role of constraints, construction and the creation of intelligent project delivery approach for parts as well as whole systems

READING DISCUSSIONS
EACH FRIDAY AS OUTLINED, STUDENTS ARE TO HAVE COMPLETED A READING FOR THE WEEK. THE READINGS ARE INCLUDED TO HELP STUDENTS FRAME CONCEPTS, ISSUES AND IDEAS WITHIN THEIR WORK. STUDENTS ARE TO USE READINGS AND DISCUSSIONS TO EXPAND THEIR WORK. DISCUSSIONS SHOULD BE USED IN RELATION TO ON-GOING WORK.

“The books of Stephenson, Gibson, Sterling and others, while marketed as speculative fiction, were in fact live broadcasts, and the funhouse mirror that the genre tended to create between the space of the imagination and that of our daily lives expanded throughout a universe of plausabilities and melted into the news, with all its social dimensions. Astonishingly, (science) fiction has shifted neither forward nor rearward but into the here and now. The unfolding scenarios it follows to manipulate our reality are becoming true transformation tools and paradoxically strategic levers to grasp the wobbling of our post digital societies, our choked mass media culture.” Francois Roche ‘(Science) Fiction’. In: Spoiled Climate Light. p57.
EXPECTEDATIONS

FINALLY, WE WILL BE RIGOROUS BUT NOT PRESCRIPTIVE, YOU ARE TASKED WITH ENGAGING YOUR WORK, THE STUDIO, YOUR CRITIC AND THE CRITICAL THEORETICAL AND DESIGN-ORIENTED ISSUES BROUGHT FORTH WITHIN THE STUDIO AND DEVELOPING A BODY OF WORK THROUGH THE FRAMEWORK PROVIDED. THIS IS A STUDIO WHICH BOTH ALLOWS FOR AND DEMANDS CRITICALITY, CURiosity, OPENNESS AND EXCITEMENT ABOUT YOUR WORK AND THE FUTURE.

Students are expected to self-motivate and to engage with the projects, readings, and theoretical/conceptual discussions. Students who are willing to dive in, to figure things out, to test ideas, to prototype, make and explore will do well.

Students are expected to engage in the technologies, techniques and conceptual ideas that underlie the studio. Students are expected to ask questions and to develop responses through design processes. Questions that emerge from student inquiry will be the basis for in-class discussions, open reviews, and project-specific critiques. Therefore, students are expected to develop clear verbal questions in addition to design responses to allow for feedback from peers, the instructor, and the workshop leaders.

SCHEDULE OUTLINE

Schedule is for planning purposes only and may be updated at any time. Please be sure to ask instructor if you are unsure of due-dates, times etc. It is incumbent on each student to clarify any concerns, questions or other issues regarding schedule, content or other issues to the instructor as soon as they arise. Communication is key to all of our success and my door is always open to you.

The instructor may revise the calendar as necessary. Students will be notified of any changes as soon as possible and as needed.

Additional objectives and specific areas of inquiry may be outlined in the weekly assignment handouts.

Pin-ups / Reviews will typically take place in Goldsmith, Room 4.120, unless noted otherwise.

Please see University Calendar http://registrar.utexas.edu/calendars/ for all official University Dates and Holidays

Schedule is for planning purposes only and will be updated and discussed as needed. | Due Dates, Reviews, etc. subject to change based on studio work or other issues

Week 1

M  1/21  Martin Luther King Jr. Day (holiday)
W  1/23  Studio Lottery
F  1/25  Studio is to be moved into and set up on w/ th for class today.
      Discuss Syllabus and Project 01

Week 2

M  1/28  Review Beginning Work (in studio)
W  1/30  Material Discussion MATLAB / Robotics Intro
F  2/01  AR / VR Workshop

Week 3

M  2/04  Review / GOL 4.120
W  2/06  MATLAB / Robotics
F  2/08  AR / VR Workshop

Week 4

M  2/11  Discussion / Desk Crits
W  2/13  Review / GOL 4.120 / MATLAB (tbd)
F  2/15  AR / VR Workshop

Week 5

M  2/18  Review Project 01 / GOL 4.120
W  2/20  Desk Crits
F  2/22  Project 01 Due / GOL 4.120

Week 6

M  2/25  Begin Project 02A (building upon Project 01) / GOL 4.120
W  2/27  Desk Crits
F  3/01  Work / Reading

Week 7

M  3/04  Review / GOL 4.120
W  3/06  Desk Crits
F  3/08  Work / Reading

Week 8

M  3/11  Desk Crit
W  3/13  Project 02A Review / GOL 4.120
F  3/15  Work / Reading

Week 9  Spring Break

3/18-3/22

Week 10

M  3/25  Begin Project 02B
W  3/27  Desk Crits
F  3/29  Work

Week 11
Week 16
M 5/04 Final Project due this week.
W 5/08 Final Review - TBD
F 5/10 Final Review – TBD / Last Class day.

Again, The published schedule is for planning purposes only. The instructor may revise the calendar as necessary. Students will be notified on any changes at least one class meeting in advance. Weekly assignments and handouts may not align directly with this schedule. Please ask your professor if you have any questions or concerns.

Required Software
Use of all software previously used in Visual Communication’s and Studio Courses will be valuable to your work. Rhino and Rhino Grasshopper will be the primary modeling tools. 3dsMax, Unity, and other software and hardware for AR/VR may also be used. Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator will be used. Sketch-up is strongly discouraged. And students are strongly encouraged to engage advanced techniques and fabrication tools.

Readings
Readings will be assigned to supplement the studio-based instruction. Electronic copies will be distributed via Blackboard or by handout, and will be available in a timely manner to allow for in-class discussion. All links and references provided in this syllabus should be reviewed prior to the first full class.

Grading
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.

Grading for the studio course is broken into three components:
1/3 grasp: (the ideas and understanding of the project at hand, combined with an appropriate process of independent and directed inquiry)
1/3 process: (the consistent and rigorous development and testing of ideas)
1/3 resolution: (the demonstration of competence, completeness, and finesse through representation)

Please note that your work will be evaluated on its rigor and evolution over the entirety of the semester.

Grade Descriptions
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.

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

C+/C/C-: average (please note that this is the baseline point from which all work will be considered…ie we all start here)
Project meets the minimum requirements. Suggestions made in class are not pursued with dedication or rigor. (Note: C- does not meet the minimum grade to be counted toward the student’s degree.)

D+/D/D-: below average
Basic skills including graphic skills, model-making skills, verbal clarity or logic of presentation are not level-appropriate. Student does not demonstrate the required design skill and knowledge base.

F: failure
Minimum objectives are not met. Performance is not acceptable. Note that this grade will be assigned with excessive unexcused absences.

X: excused incomplete
Given only for legitimate reasons of illness or family emergency. Incomplete assignments are not a cause for assigning this grade. An incomplete is assigned after consultation with the Associate Deans’ offices. Incomplete coursework must be completed prior to the beginning of the following semester.

ALL GRADES ARE SUBJECT TO DEDUCTIONS FOR ABSENCES, LATE WORK, LACK OF PARTICIPATION, AND LATE ARRIVALS. PLEASE DISCUSS ATTENDANCE WITH INSTRUCTOR PRIOR TO ANY PLANNED ABSENCES OR PERSONAL ISSUES THAT MAY IMPACT STUDIO PARTICIPATION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE
Attendance
Attendance is mandatory. Participation is expected. Students with three (3) unexcused absences may be dropped from the course without further notice. The minimum penalty for more than three unexcused absences is a full letter drop in your final grade for the course. Please contact the instructor via email prior to class if you expect to be late or miss class.

Religious holy days sometimes conflict with class and examination schedules. By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

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. Five business days before an exam the student should remind the instructor of any testing accommodations that will be needed.

Academic Integrity
UT Honor Code (or statement of ethics) and an explanation or example of what constitutes plagiarism
(Link to University Honor Code: http://registrar.utexas.edu/catalogs/gi09-10/ch01/index.html )

Student Honor Code
As a student of The University of Texas at Austin, I shall abide by the core values of the University and uphold academic integrity.

University Code of Conduct
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.

Studio Safety and Security
The studio is an exceptional learning environment. Since it is a place for all, it necessitates the careful attention to the needs of everyone. Please see your instructor if there are problems that you are unable to resolve on your own. 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. Please be mindful not to admit any uninvited visitors and keep all exterior doors locked after hours. Be smart. Be safe.