OVERVIEW:
This studio will examine how informal building and urban practices can inform how we address environmental and socio-economic issues in the built environment. The studio is anchored by a partnership with Intuy Lab in Lima, Peru. Intuy Lab is a publicly-engaged design collaborative that includes young professionals as well as faculty and students from the Universidad Peruana de Ciencia Aplicadas (UPC). They are committed to working with local communities to improve lives through design. They partner with local non-profit organizations working in informal communities. These include recently-built areas on the city edge occupied by recent migrants from mountain villages as well as older neighborhoods that began as informal settlements and continue to house traditional tradespeople such as metalworkers and fishermen.

PROJECTS:
Design-Build Lima
During the first part of the semester we will collaborate with Intuy Lab via Skype and social media to design and develop prototype components for a project in which we will participate in Lima. A typical project could be a microlibrary, outdoor classroom, or shading structures and play equipment for a soccer field. We will design components, develop budgets for locally-sourced materials, and build prototypes at full scale to test ideas. This part of the semester will also involve fund-raising to support material purchases and travel.
During this part of the semester students will also select issues for their post-travel project and determine what types of local research they will do while in Peru.

Travel Peru
We will travel to Peru from approximately October 5-17 (dates to be confirmed) to participate in the construction of the project with Intuy Lab and learn about the social and environmental relationships between urban Lima and the rural parts of the country. In addition to a tour of the historic center of Lima and informal neighborhoods developed by design competitions in the 1960s, we will also visit Cuzco and Machu Picchu via internal flight. Students should expect the course fee to be approximately $2000-2500, including flight, all housing, and some meals. Travel visas as needed should be acquired before the start of the fall semester. While the travel is not required for participation in the studio, it is strongly encouraged.
While in Peru, students will also conduct local research to inform their subsequent issues-based projects.

Issue-Driven Design
Based on initial ideas and research conducted in Peru, students will develop issue-driven projects during the second half of the semester. These will typically engage relationships between environmental and socio-economic conditions in Lima and can be involve site-specific design, systems development, and/or urban scale interventions.