Diploma Studio – Agents of Architectural Space

PREMISE
The final year of the MArch degree is a capstone experience where master's students bring closure to their professional program. It consists of a faculty-led diploma research project that focuses on one theme with several branches of related discourse. Different from the normal topical studio, this studio makes use of established research that underpins student design activities. Flexibility within the studio theme will allow three options to be pursued under one guiding topic whose foundation is anchored in the theories of architectural space.

METHOD AND CONTENT
The research theme covers the formal, social, and theoretical focus of architectural space. This inquiry stems from 20th century theories of modern psychology and phenomenology where secular and democratic factors in architecture have redirected design toward empirical and human perception. In order to widen the research investigations of the determinants of architectural space, students will self-select on one of three (3) branch investigations according to their interest. Each investigation will comprise of a team of students investigating individual projects of a specific branch of the overall studio inquiry.

Diploma Branch A. Size is not a Factor – Illusions of Spatial Grandeur: The design of micro-habitations that are arranged so as to allow impressions of space greater than their physical limits. Such design inquires shall include, but are not limited to, micro-dwellings in housing, aggregate design components for larger structures, etc.

Diploma Branch B. The Craft of Spatial Form Making: The design of spatial morphologies, types, practices, etc. which stand as alternatives to common object-based design methods. These may occur as isolated investigations governed by testing spatial taxonomies, space perception, systemic spatial componentry, space syntax, etc. Such design inquires may be abstract or material, incorporate various spatial programs, and/or create in itself distinct spatial morphologies.

Diploma Branch C. Social Determinants of Space: The design and interpretation of human action upon spatial, architectural configurations. Event spaces shall be the primary factors for determining the design approach. Such conditions may include: spatial necessities based on human occupation, conditions of informal habitation/settlements, and/or hybrid programs; etc.

NAAB CRITERIA
This course satisfies criterion A.1: Professional Communication Skills and C.1 Research as part of the National Architectural Accreditation Board (NAAB) requirements for an accredited professional degree.

EVALUATIONS / GRADING
UNCCCharlotte Graduate grading scale applies (A, B, C, U). External reviewers will assess work produced in the studio at multiple points during the semester, including mid-semester, final, and award reviews.
COURSE NUMBER
ARCH 7104

COURSE TITLE
Design Studio: Diploma Project

CATALOG DESCRIPTION
ARCH 7104. Design Studio: Diploma Project. (6) Prerequisite: 7102 or equivalent. This concluding design studio for the MArch is the capstone project experience for the professional degree. Students engage an instructor-led studio theme that involves design, research, and/or practical issues relevant to architecture and building design. (Spring)

PRE- or CO-REQUISITES
Pre-requisite: ARCH 7102 or equivalent.

OBJECTIVES
• The studio serves as a summative experience for the professional MArch degree.
• Design project that exhibits conceptual, formal, aesthetic, technological and experiential clarity, criticality and sophistication, as it pertains to varying instructor-led themes.

NAAB Criteria: In consideration of the requirements of the National Architectural Accreditation Board (NAAB), the following performance criteria shall be addressed in this course: A.1 Professional Communication Skills and C.1 Research.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHOD
The pedagogical method for this course is studio-based. Students will be given lectures, perform design assignments, and make preliminary and final project presentations. The core of the course is to investigate instructor defined research themes that the professor has engaged as part of their professional development activities. Hence, students will build upon the knowledge, inquires, and research activities that lead building design projects that are inspired by the instructor’s research expertise. The instructor may elect to have such research address a single project or different arms of the research that may be applied to varying projects. The instructor will provide the background, intellectual materials, and scholarship for the research and students will employ such inquires to the project(s).

EVALUATION
This summative project is evaluated on architectural design quality, relevancy, and caliber of execution. The distribution of cumulative course assignments are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Description</th>
<th>Weight for Course (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Design project activities (total)</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal project presentations and documentation</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All courses in the SoA are governed by the rules and regulations of UNC Charlotte as stated in the University Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs. For more information about these polices, please refer to the appropriate catalog, which can be found online at: [http://www.uncc.edu/gradmiss/gs_catalog.html](http://www.uncc.edu/gradmiss/gs_catalog.html) (grad).

Grading of courses conform to the following grading scales and values:

**Graduate Scale & Values**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>Commendable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-89</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-79</td>
<td>Marginal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>69 &amp; Below</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory</td>
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