3250 Design workshop: As if People Mattered

Spring 2011 | M, W 9–12 | Section 001

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Introduction
With a title borrowed from Clare Cooper-Marcus’ book Housing as if People Mattered, this workshop seeks to discover the distinctly architectural aspects of housing.

Through the housing boom and bust of the past decade we and the young people around us have been bombarded with the notion that housing is a primarily an investment vehicle. Any conversations about the places we live as livable, or safe, or even designed have nearly vanished. At the height of the housing boom, artist Jason Salavon produced a collection of composite prints using about 100 images of houses for sale in different metropolitan areas. The message is clear, housing has become incredibly generic, siteless, and bland. Even more troubling, the size and isolation of the housing stock represents a remarkable mismatch between trends in household size and makeup over the coming decades.

Beginning with a pair of week-long exercises examining simple precedents and the Marcy-Holmes neighborhood, the workshop will seek to identify criteria for high-quality housing. Clare Cooper-Marcus, Christopher Alexander, Herman Herzberger, and Sam Davis are all likely to provide guidance as references.

Following a parallel track to the development of ideas about high-quality housing will be an emphasis on developing architectural ideas through an alternating sequence of drawing and modeling. The workshop will challenge students to develop an early conceptual sketch, then test that sketch over the following weeks through increasingly precise representations.

Each week the sketch will be attempted again to determine if its integrity can be maintained. The essential challenge of the workshop will be to maintain a balance between simple site relationships and new priorities for high-quality housing.

Learning objectives:
Representation: Develop conceptual sketch capable of managing increasing number of criteria. Alternate architectural idea development between drawing and modeling.

Process:
Develop iterative design process capable of accepting and integrating new ideas.

Design:
Perform simple precedent and site studies using pre-established strategies.
Develop relationships between site and programmatic constraints.

Program:
Introduce basic tenets of high quality housing.

Content:
Several basic ideas emerge out of even brief study of Housing as if People Mattered and Herzberger's Diagoon Housing project. Issues include the aggregation of individual units of housing into larger blocks and buildings, integration with outdoor spaces, retention and protection of privacy, personalization of dwelling units, and simple programmatic ideas regarding eating / sleeping / living / cooking / storing. In general the workshop will start at either end of the scale spectrum to encourage students to develop relationships between site context and internal program.

Anticipated outcomes:
Students will develop new ways of understanding the everyday context around them and begin to see simple architectural manipulations of space as critical to the places they live.

Important University dates
January 25 100% refund
January 31 50% refund

Grading
10 Concept sketches
   To be scanned and emailed to MF 5 times. Use naming convention “lastname_firstname_1.tif”
30 Review 1
   Requirements will be indicated in Assignment 3.
50 Review 2
   Requirements will be indicated in Assignment 7.
10 Portfolio
   Select 20 images, either scans or photographs, of your work. Combine and email to MF as a pdf.

Assignments
Handouts will be available for each of 7 assignments. Generally assigned on Mondays, developed throughout the week and posted for review and discussion on the following Monday.
References

*Housing as if People Mattered*, Clare Cooper Marcus & Wendy Sarkissian.

Additional references

*Lessons for Students in Architecture*, Herman Hertzberger.

*Visual Notes for Architects and Designers*, Norman Crowe and Paul Laseau.

Typology +, Peter Ebner, et al.


*A Pattern Language*, Christopher Alexander.

*The Architecture of Affordable Housing*, Sam Davis.

Supplies

The majority of the supplies listed below are available at the University bookstore, Penco, Utrecht, and other reputable art supply stores. It is also quite likely that you already have most if not all of these from previous coursework.

**Concept sketches**
sketchbook at least 7” square
soft pencil: 4B or softer

**Hard-line drawing**
drafting pencils: 4H, 2H, HB, 2B
tracing paper 12” roll (a.k.a. bumwad)
architect’s scale 1”=1/8”, 1/4”, 1/2”, etc.
engineer’s scale 1”=10’, 20’, 30’, 50’, 100’, etc.
drawing papers Some regular white stuff, at least a little Bristol

**Modeling**
Cardboard 1/8” or 1/16” corrugated (a lot, can be used cardboard boxes, etc.)
white glue (preferably no hot glue...)
razor blades & holder
18” metal ruler
Miscellaneous bits and pieces, colored paper, maybe some basswood, newsprint, etc.

**Camera**
Digital or film; preferably not the one in your phone.
Schedule

1  Drawing
W  January 19
   DISCUSS:  Course introduction
   LECTURE 1:  Housing types & Concept sketches
   Assignment 1:  What? Where?
   Read Housing as if People Mattered.
   Visit site. See handout for address.
   Develop initial concept sketches for site. Again, see handout.

2  Modeling
M  January 24
   POST:  Concept sketches
   Assignment 2:  How big?

W  January 26
   DISCUSS:  Housing as if People Mattered
   LECTURE 2:  Global Precedents

3  Drawing
M  January 31
   POST:  How big?
   Assignment 3:  TBD - will include some elevation & section obliques

W  February 2
   LECTURE 3:  Local Precedents
   DESK CRITS:  In pairs, 15 minutes each.

4  Modeling
M  February 7
   REVIEW
   Location and precise representation requirements outlined in Assignment 3.
   Review will be relatively informal, but still include a pair of critics.

W  February 9
   SITE VISIT:  Meet on site, precise location TBD.
Bring your sketchbooks for a few perspective tests.

Assignment 4: Site model

5 Drawing
M February 14
POST: Site model
LECTURE 4: Re-presentation

Assignment 5: Ordered?

W February 16
DESK CRITS: Individual, 10 minutes each.

6 Modeling
M February 21
POST: Ordered.
DISCUSS: Order.

Assignment 6: Sliced!

W February 23
DESK CRITS: Threes, 30 minutes each.

7 Drawing
M February 28
POST: Sliced.
DISCUSS: Slices.

Assignment 7: Resolve!

W March 2
DESK CRITS: Individual, 10 minutes each.
THREES: Prepare presentation language.

8 Modeling
M March 7
DESK CRITS: Individual, 10 minutes each.
THREES: Prepare presentation language.

W March 9
REVIEW
Location and precise representation requirements outlined in Assignment 7: Resolve!
Review will be public and will include invited critics.
General University of Minnesota and College of Design Course Policies

1. The two major grading systems used are the A-F and S-N. Departmental majors must take major courses on the A-F system; non-majors may use either system. The instructor will specify criteria and achievement levels required for each grade. All students, regardless of the system used, will be expected to do all work assigned in the course, or its equivalent as determined by the instructor. Any changes you wish to make in the grading base must be done in the first two weeks of the semester.

2. The instructor will specify the conditions, if any, under which an “Incomplete” will be assigned instead of a grade. The instructor may set dates and conditions for makeup work, if it is to be allowed. “I” grades will automatically lapse to “F”s at the end of the next semester of a student’s registration, unless an instructor agrees to submit a change of grade for a student during a subsequent semester to maintain the grade as an “I”.

3. Inquiries regarding any changes of grade should be directed to the instructor of the course; you may wish to contact the Student Dispute Resolution Center (SDRC) in 107 Eddy Hall (625-5900) for assistance.

4. Students are responsible for all information disseminated in class and all course requirements, including deadlines and examinations. The instructor will specify whether class attendance is required or counted in the grade for a class.

5. A student is not permitted to submit extra work in an attempt to raise his or her grade, unless the instructor has specified at the outset of the class such opportunities will be afforded to all students.

6. Scholastic misconduct is broadly defined as “any act that violates the right of another student in academic work or that involves misrepresentation of your own work. Scholastic dishonesty includes, (but is not necessarily limited to): cheating on assignments or examinations; plagiarizing, which means misrepresenting as your own work any part of work done by another; submitting the same paper, or substantially similar papers, to meet the requirements of more than one course without the approval and consent of all instructors concerned; depriving another student of necessary course materials; or interfering with another student’s work.”

7. Students with disabilities that affect their ability to participate fully in class or to meet all course requirements are encouraged to bring this to the attention of the instructor so that appropriate accommodations can be arranged. Further information is available from Disabilities Services (230 McNamara).

8. University policy prohibits sexual harassment as defined in the December 1998 policy statement, available at the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action. Questions or concerns about sexual harassment should be directed to this office, located in 419 Morrill Hall.

**Intellectual Property**

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