DESIGN PRACTICE 1A
Unit Outline (Design Studio Module)

1. General Information

Unit Title: Design Practice 1A
Unit Number: DESA 1001
Semester: 1, 2008
Faculty: Architecture, Design & Planning
Discipline: Architecture and Allied Arts

Unit Convenor: Ross Anderson
Room No.: 323
Email: anderson@arch.usyd.edu.au

Design Tutors: Ross Anderson, Theo Bowering, Joseph Buch, Samantha Donnelley, Tom Heneghan, Claudia Perren, Jad Silvester, Harpreet Mand, Hamish Watt

2. Academic Content

Aims:

The primary intention of this unit is to introduce students to the skills and knowledge required in order to produce creative, innovative and appropriate solutions to architectural problems. It seeks to develop the architectural imagination as a dialogue between poetic thought and pragmatic material circumstance, nurturing the capacity to move back and forth between conceptual, metaphoric levels of experience and the more precise levels of reference required for credible technical resolution. It expands students’ vocabulary of architecture through study of relevant precedents and examination of techniques for spatial organization. Students will develop a preliminary understanding of contemporary architectural theory and will be introduced to a range of architectural representation techniques.

Outcomes:

Students successfully completing this subject will be able to identify and interpret factors acting on a design, including program, precedent, context, structure, material, surface and texture and will be able to reconcile conceptual thinking and pragmatic considerations into a coherent architectural proposal.
3. Delivery of Unit and Timetable

Delivery of Unit:

Design Practice 1A is a studio-based subject, supplemented by lectures and workshops. Students will work in small groups with individual tutors, and will have their own drawing table in their group area. They are free to consult with other tutors, as long as it does not interfere with that tutor's own group.

Attendance:

Attendance at all scheduled sessions of Design Practice 1A is mandatory, except in the case of illness or misadventure. Announcements made at studios and lectures are deemed to be made to the whole group. Attendance means arriving at the time required, usually 10 am, and staying until lectures or studio ends, usually 5 pm. A full day’s work is expected on studio days. The Tutor for each group will record attendance and submission of work. Unexcused absences, late arrival or early departure from lectures, studios and reviews will be noted and will undoubtedly have an adverse effect on your performance and grade. Four or more absences are grounds for failure of the subject.

Consultation with Staff:

Contact with staff should generally be within the allocated lecture/tutorial/studio times. Consultation outside of these hours shall be by prior appointment, and in addition to, not in lieu of, the regular class time. Students who fail to attend classes, and who do not have a medical or counselor's certificate may be refused additional consultation.

Year 1 Advisory Group:

In order to help Year 1 to be effectively run, and as enjoyable an experience as possible for both students and staff, students will establishing a Year 1 Advisory Group, to meet occasionally with teaching staff. There will be two representatives from each Tutor group, elected in the fourth week of term by secret ballot to the tutor, who will collect the votes. The Advisory Group will act as advocates for the Year, advising the Unit co-ordinator of problems, concerns and concerns. Representatives are asked to actively find out any problems, misunderstandings, assignment clashes, etc in any area of learning and teaching in Year 1 and bring them to the Advisory Group meeting for discussion, plan of action and resolution.
Timetable:

The timetable is subject to minor adjustment, and individual studio tutors may issue more detailed schedules for their particular groups. It is each student’s responsibility to be aware of when particular activities take place. Check your University email regularly as it will be the way any changes to the timetable, assessment items, or clarifications of the program are issued.

A series of lectures supporting the primary themes of the studio will be delivered during the first weeks of the semester. They will be presented by tutors and guest lecturers, and attendance is mandatory. All lectures will be held in Carslaw Lecture Theatre 275.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>TUESDAY</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>THEMES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4th March</td>
<td>10 – 11 Design Lecture</td>
<td>- Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>11th March</td>
<td>10 – 11 Design Lecture 11 – 5 Studio</td>
<td>- Daydreaming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>18th March</td>
<td>10 – 11 Design Lecture 11 – 5 Studio</td>
<td>- Frozen Performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BREAK</td>
<td>25th March</td>
<td>No classes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1st April</td>
<td>10 – 11 Design Lecture 11 – 5 Studio</td>
<td>- Reflection</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>8th April</td>
<td>10 – 11 Design Lecture 11 – 5 Studio</td>
<td>- Assemblage</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>15th April</td>
<td>10 – 11 Design Lecture 11 – 5 Studio</td>
<td>- Zoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>22nd April</td>
<td>10 – 11 Design Lecture 11 – 5 Studio</td>
<td>- Circulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>29th April</td>
<td>10 – 11 Design Lecture 11 – 5 Studio</td>
<td>- Structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>6th May</td>
<td>10 – 5 Studio</td>
<td>- Envelope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>13th May</td>
<td>10 – 5 Studio</td>
<td>- Terrain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>20th May</td>
<td>10 – 5 Studio</td>
<td>- Collective Palimpsest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>27th May</td>
<td>10 – 5 Studio</td>
<td>- Feedback Loop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>3rd June</td>
<td>10 – 10:30 Studio 3 – 5 Studio</td>
<td>- Portfolio Delivery and Interview</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Materials and Equipment

Supply of drawing, model making and other materials and equipment is the responsibility of the student. You are expected to come to each class prepared with all materials and equipment needed for that day as specified for the individual weekly exercises. Model making requirements will be discussed with tutors, and will vary depending on the media you choose. You will each have an individual locker in the studio in which you can store materials and equipment. You are required to put your name on your board. Please respect the table-tops. Always use a cutting board or a sheet of cardboard under materials you are cutting. Use sharp blades in a measured and controlled way to avoid personal injury.

The following art supply shops are nearby in Newtown and offer 10% discount for students:

**Newtown Art Supplies**
15 Wilson St
Newtown 2042
T: (02) 9516 2339
E: newtownartsupplies@hotmail.com

**Art on King**
199a King St
Newtown 2042
T: (02) 9516 2342

The following is an online store run by a third year architecture student in the Faculty, offering savings on most materials over against other suppliers:

Christian Foster
www.archistore.com.au
Mob: 0409033078
christian.foster@gmail.com

**Must Have:**
- T-Square
- Adjustable Set Square
- 2mm Clutch Pencil
- Sharpener
- Leads (2B and HB)
- Eraser
- Fineline Pens 0.2-0.8 (Artline or similar)

- Sketchpaper Roll
- Scale Ruler 1:1, 1:20, 1:50
- Flexicurve
- Metal Ruler
- Sewing Pins

- Water-based PVA Glue
- UHU Liquid Glue
- And Gluestick
- Cutting Mat
- Masking Tape (12mm)
- Scalpel

- Cutting Blade
- A4 Hardcover Bound Unlined Sketchbook
- Clipboard
- A3 Trace Pad
- A3 Bond Pad

**Optional:**
- A3 Drafting Board
5. Assessment

The design projects of the semester demand sometimes unconventional approaches to the finding of solutions to problems, of strategies for design, of the bringing together of diverse materials into an organised whole. The subject has been structured to contain a diversity of experiences leading to an understanding of some major themes encountered in the practice of architecture. Assessment will be based on the qualities of: creativity and innovation, academic rigour, technical resolution and presentation.

Your tutor will provide you with verbal and written indications throughout the semester of how you are performing in various aspects of your architectural design work, and at the conclusion of the semester you will be given an ‘indicative grade’ for the subject based on the University grading system:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Distinction</td>
<td>Work of outstanding quality on the learning outcomes of the subject, which may be demonstrated in areas such as criticism, logical argument, interpretation of materials or use of methodology. This grade may also be given to recognise particular originality or creativity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinction</td>
<td>Work of superior quality on the learning outcomes of the subject, demonstrating a sound grasp of content, together with efficient organisation and selectivity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit</td>
<td>Work of good quality showing more than satisfactory achievement on the learning outcomes of the subject, or work of superior quality on a majority of the learning outcomes of the subject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>Work showing a satisfactory achievement of the learning outcomes of the subject.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INC</td>
<td>Work showing a satisfactory achievement and/or quality on the more important learning outcomes of the subject, with an unsatisfactory (but close to satisfactory) achievement on one learning outcome of the subject, but insufficient to continue in higher subjects for which the subject is a prerequisite.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>Work showing an unsatisfactory achievement of one or more learning outcomes of the subject, and not qualifying for the grade of conceded pass.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This will allow you to gauge your performance relative to your peers. It is important to note, however, that this grade will not be recorded on your academic transcript as *Design Practice 1A* is a Pass/Fail subject.

Three grades will be recorded at the end of the semester:

R: indicates that you have completed all tasks required and achieved a 'competent' performance Indicator in all these tasks
INC: indicates that your assessment is incomplete (either due to illness or to the requirement to submit more work)
F: indicates that you have failed to satisfy the requirements of the unit.
It is important that work is submitted on time even if it is incomplete. No late submissions will be accepted except in the case of documented illness or misadventure. Where work is submitted on time but is not of satisfactory standard, you may be allowed to resubmit, or to submit additional work. No eligibility applies to work submitted late or not submitted at all.

**Late Work and Special Consideration**

Late Work:

Late work will be subject to the following regulations, except due to illness or misadventure:


Special Consideration:

If circumstances beyond your control prevent your submitting an assignment, notify the unit co-ordinator at the time they occur. You can apply for an extension due to illness or other unavoidable and verifiable personal circumstances. Supporting documentation must be provided. Doctor's or counselor's certificates, dated at the time of the difficulty, will be accepted as grounds for Special Consideration. The decision on whether to grant an extension and the length of any extension that is given is made by the unit co-ordinator. The Faculty of Architecture Design & Planning Special Consideration, Late Submission and Attendance policy is available on the Architecture website (www.arch.usyd.edu.au) under ‘Current Students’

**Responsibility for assessment**

Your work will be assessed by your Tutor and compared in a joint parity session across groups at the end of the semester. See your tutor first if you are concerned by the outcome of an assessment. If your concerns have not been resolved, see the Design Practice 1A Coordinator. The responsibility for all marks in this unit of study rests with the Coordinator, whose word will be final in the event of any disagreement.

**Keeping a Copy of Your Work**

Work on paper done in the studio is easily transported, however models are difficult and you must ensure these are recorded through photographs for your portfolio. This is your responsibility. Take care of all work. If work is lost or stolen it cannot be replaced.
Plagiarism

Your enrolment in the University of Sydney indicates that you have accepted the conditions of that enrolment. You are expected to be familiar with all relevant University Policies. These include University of Sydney the policy on Academic Dishonesty, Plagiarism and ‘Responsibilities of students’. The plagiarism policy is available at:


Plagiarism is the copying, unacknowledged use of, or reliance on the work of other individuals. It is considered to be cheating and will incur serious penalties ranging from zero marks for the work to exclusion from the University. Plagiarism is a difficult concept to deal with in creative subjects such as design as all architects draw upon influences or precedents in order to conceive and develop their work. In the studio you may hear a tutor or student talk about an idea that may trigger or have resonances with your own thoughts or work. It is acceptable to embrace this information as a means to furthering your own ideas, but it is not acceptable to just copy it. The best course of action is simply to acknowledge your sources. This need not be done formally, and in no way does it diminish the value of your work. It may be as simple as saying in a studio something along the lines of, “I studied the plan of Le Corbusier’s Ronchamp because I was exploring the following ideas …, and the result in my own design work was …” This approach demonstrates a mature attitude as well as an encouraging level of scholarship, in that you acknowledge your work is informed by research and observation.

Complaints

The University has a structured system of dealing with complaints – see MyUni or inquire at our SAC. The process involves first discussing the issue with your unit of study lecturer/s, Year Coordinators, Program Coordinator, the Associate Dean (Undergraduate). Write, send an email or make an appointment. Act sooner rather than later to resolve issues.

Retention of students’ work

The University reserves the right to retain work executed and/or submitted by a student as part of the course including, but not limited to, drawings, models, specifications, essays and reports. Such retention does not affect any intellectual property rights that exist in such student work.
Project Outline:

**Transformations**

The two major architectural themes for the semester are *transformation* and *assemblage*. These themes will be explored through a series of related conceptual exercises with an emphasis on practical experimentation. Rigorous attention is paid to process, not merely as the means to a pre-established end, but rather as a continual opening up of possibilities that inform and transform initial goals and assumptions. The sequence of exercises follow notions of spatiality, program and technology, and can be seen to revolve around three dualities: Desire/Discipline, Figure/Void, Precedent/Invention.

Though the weekly exercises are to an extent independent, they build upon one another and should be seen as a series of transformations, based on an understanding that all architecture (including one’s own) is constituted by other architecture. Rather than narrowing interpretive potential, this condition proliferates the creative act of design, since there can never be certain and stable origins or endpoints that locate final meaning.

Each student will be working on an individual patterned ‘site’ which is nevertheless part of a ‘collective field’ of 15 adjoining sites. These will be distributed in the first studio session. The weekly exercises will be discussed and examined both individually and collectively at the conclusion of each studio day.

The exercises are derived from the first year architecture syllabus at the renowned *Eidgenössische Technische Hochscule* (ETH) in Zürich. The illustrations used in this outline come from:


**Details of Assessment Items**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Due Date of Assignments</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exercises 1 to 10</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portfolio</td>
<td>Week 13</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exercise 1: Daydreaming

Materials: cutting blade, cutting mat, metal ruler, pencil, gluestick

Input: A3 pattern ‘site’, segment of pattern at A4

- Step 1: Working in pairs, imagine a ‘daydream space’, and use 5 adjectives to describe the space: intertwined, sharp, blurred, smooth, disguised…
- Step 2: Make your ‘daydream space’ out of an A4 segment of your pattern by folding, cutting and gluing. Maximum dimensions: 6cm x 9cm x 18cm
- Step 3: Mount your object onto your A3 site
- Step 4: Assemble the ‘daydream space’ onto your tutorial group’s collective field on a wall in the studio

Exercise 2: Frozen Performance

Materials: A4 unlined sketchbook, pencil, A3 paper, T-Square (or portable A3 drafting board), adjustable set-square, plaster (will be provided), grey boxboard (1.5-3mm), paper, cutting blade, cutting mat, metal ruler, masking tape, Plastic takeaway food container (approx. 17cm x 12cm x 4cm deep)

Input: Sequence of photographs of boxers

- Step 1: Observe and sketch the space between the boxers in the sequence of photographs
- Step 2: Make a sketch-model of the in-between space
- Step 3: Make plans of the form-work
- Step 4: Build the form-work in boxboard or balsa. Cover the form-work in cling-film or aluminium foil
- Step 5: Place the form-work into the plastic container such that it protrudes half-way above the top. Be sure that it sits in such a way that it can be removed when the plaster dries. Pour the plaster into both the form-work and the plastic container
Exercise 3: Reflection

Materials: paper, ruler, fine permanent markers (black, red, blue, green), minimum of 5 sheets of clear A4 acetate (overhead projector film)

Input: 1:200 architectural plan and section (will be provided)

• Step 1: Identify and map in ink on separate sheets of acetate the following elements in the plan and section: circulation (red), served spaces (green), servant spaces (blue) and primary structure (black). Use only parallel lines to define areas

• Step 2: Overlay the sheets and recompose them into a tapestry by performing the following operations: mirror, rotate, displace

• Step 3: Mount the tapestry on a white A3 sheet of paper and assemble into a collective field

Exercise 4: Assemblage

Materials: digital camera, paper, pencil, grey cardboard, PVA glue

Input: photographs of previous exercises

• Step 1: Cut and collage photos and make a photomontage onto the A3 sewing pattern. You are required to produce 2 collages (PLEASE NOTE: This is to be done prior to class)

• Step 2: Analyse the montage in relation to the field and translate into a 3D model. The scale of your assemblage is 1:200

• Step 3: As a tutorial group you should by now have made and assembled a timber frame for the collective field in the workshop. Assemble your model onto the field using pins or small nails, NOT GLUE
Exercise 5: Zoning

Materials: coloured cardboard, cutting mat, metal ruler, cutting blade, PVA glue, pencil, A3 paper

Input: Exercise 4

• Step 1: Identify and draw a plan of the spatial zones based on the model from the preceding exercise
• Step 2: Montage a 2D zoning plan using the coloured cardboard and based on the terms below. Scale 1:200
  
  Opposing terms and colour-coding:
  
  PRIVATE (green) / PUBLIC (blue)
  STATIC (orange) / DYNAMIC (red)
  SERVED (purple) / SERVANT (yellow)

• Step 3: Interpretation of the montage into a 3d model. Scale 1:200

Exercise 6: Circulation

Materials: pencil, parallel rule, adjustable set-square, drafting pen, A3 paper, grey cardboard, metal ruler, cutting blade, cutting mat, PVA glue

Input: Exercise 5

• Step 1: Draw a plan and axonometric (45/45) of the circulation system
**Exercise 7: Structure**

Materials: parallel rule, adjustable set-square, fineline pen, A3 paper, PVA glue, wood: sticks, sheets and blocks

Input: Models and drawings from exercises 5 and 6

- Step 1: Use the wood to construct a ‘structural model’ using a mixture of two structural systems: column and beam, load-bearing walls and slabs

**Exercise 8: Envelope**

Materials: various textiles, glue, thread, mesh, sewing utensils…

Input: Model from exercise 7

- Step 1: Use textiles to ‘skin’ the model
- Step 1: Draw a section of the wrapped space. Scale 1:200
**Exercise 9: Terrain**

Materials: pencil, grey cardboard, glue, cutting blade, cutting mat, metal ruler

Input: Models from exercises 4 and 9

- Step 1: Revise the model from exercise 4 to become a site model for exercise 8
- Step 2: Draw a section through your individual ‘site’
- Step 3: Mount your model on the collective field using pins or small nails

**Exercise 10: Collective Palimpsest**

Materials: pencil, A3 paper, parallel rule, adjustable set-square, drafting pen

Input: collective field

- Step 1: Draw a plan and levation across three sites (including yours) of the collective field, indicating shadows and textures. Scale 1:500 (i.e. 2.5cm on the model = 1cm on the drawing)

**Exercise 11: Feedback Loop**

Materials: camera

Input: All previous exercises

- Step 1: Document all previous exercises
- Step 2: Produce a 1 A4 page of writing that is a reflective summary identifying and articulating your work over the semester; what has worked well, what has failed, what you have learned…
- Step 3: Discuss the production of a portfolio together with your tutor
READING LIST:

It is very important that you read broadly to develop your own ideas about architectural design and practice and that you become conversant in the theories and principles that are being explored in the studio. The following is a general reading list. Some of the titles may not be of direct relevance to your first year of study, but they will become increasingly relevant as you progress. They cover subject matter that we think it is generally important for you to engage with. It is NOT recommended that you immediately purchase these texts, rather you should first browse them in libraries and bookshops in order to see if you think they may be of ongoing use. You are encouraged to use the USYD libraries (www.library.usyd.edu.au/Home.html) and other public libraries in Sydney.

Books

Journals and Magazines
- Architecture Australia
- Architecture: The AIA Journal
- Architecture and Urbanism / A + U
- Architectural Design / A.D.
- Architectural Review (UK)
- Architectural Review (Australia)
- Blueprint (UK)
- Casabella
- Daidalos: Berlin Architectural Journal
- Detail
- El Croquis
- Japan Architect
- Grey Room
- L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui