

### **Educational Objectives**

The course will examine traditional and innovative research methodologies appropriate for both archival research and field work. (The approaches to be covered are appropriate for theses and dissertations.) The goal is to cover the theoretical foundations and the applications of the most important methodological strategies for a variety of disciplines—responding to their differences as well as shared features: planning, architecture, landscape architecture, urban design, forest resources, geography, anthropology, public health, public policy, social work, environmental-cultural studies.

### **Format**

The course will be limited to a small enough size to be conducted as a seminar, that is, through active discussion and interaction among all members. The professor will present the most difficult material and gently keep the discussion focused; the students will need to be prepared (e.g. carefully read the assignments), contribute to the discussions, and make presentations concerning their research projects. The intention is to gather a variety of students from multiple disciplines and with differing interests to ensure richness in seminar discussion. The emphasis is on exploration, discovery, and interpretation, not on “proof.”

### **Major Dimensions to be Covered**

#### I. The Current Situation

- A Middle Way between Relativism and Absolutism?
- The Problem of History As/Versus Science
- The Hermeneutic Circle/Spiral of Understanding

#### II. Issues involved in using Case Study Approach

#### III. Traditional Behavior-Perceptual Field and Archival Methods

##### 1. Close Observation and Description

- post-occupancy evaluation
- behavioral-environmental science
- ethnographic
- phenomenological

##### 2. Interviews:

- open-ended interviews
- actor network theory
- Paulo Freire’s critical consciousness: dialogue as naming the world

##### 3. Cognitive & Mental Mapping

- standard scientific mental mapping
- mental mapping as grass-roots empowerment
- qualitative GIS

#### IV. Newly Promising Empirical-Social Research

- readings by and about Actor Network Theory (ANT)

## V. Scenario Building

- narratives/storylines
- visualization
- relationship to digital models

## VI. Major Theoretical and Critical Approaches

1. **History:** Henri Lefebvre on Critical Theory
2. **Human Sciences:** de Certeau on Urban Anthropology (using an accessible secondary source)
3. **Self-Organization:** de Landa on the science of reading historical assemblages

## VII. Particular Readings on Reserve for Architecture Thesis Work

### Course Work and Grading

Each member of the class will decide on her/his choice of subject matter to investigate, perhaps in a variety of formats. Then, students will be expected to do the reading in their area of specialization, briefly try out (at least) one approach to their chosen subject matter, report to the class on the successes and failures of the projects as they go along, and then undertake one substantial research project (reported, with a clear statement and “justification” of method used, in a 15-20 page paper, due the last class day of the quarter). Note, the intention is to emphasize and practice our skills of explorations, discovery, and interpretation. We will consider how “wicked problems”—those where the real problem only emerges in the course of trying to solve what appears as an initial problem—and the dynamic complexity of phenomena require non-reductive approaches that yield multiple fruitful strategies and perspectives rather than “the” solution. Failures and problems are perfectly normal and, while not always cheerful, often are generate deeper understanding—this class is a “low risk” zone to encourage exploration.

### Grades will be determined as follows:

Class Participation and short project report — 25%

Substantial research project — 75%

### Required Texts:

- *Course Reader:* from AVE Copy on University, see separate handout for contents
- Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*
- Manuel De Landa, *A Thousand Years of Nonlinear History*
- Ben Highmore, *Michel DeCerteau: Analyzing Culture* (an excellent secondary source)
- Specialized readings for Architecture Thesis

1. Case Study Method & Observation/Interviews

- Mark Frances, “Community Design (Re)Examined
- Robert Yin, selections from *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*
- Bent Flyvbjerg, selection from *Making Social Science Matter*
- Richard Werner, “Advances in Evaluation of the Built Environment”

2. On the Way to Questionnaires

- Cooper-Marcus, from *Easter Hill Village*

3. Interviews

- Robert Weiss, selections from *Learning from Strangers: The Art and Method of Qualitative Interview Studies*

4. Actor Network Theory

- Bruno Latour, selection from *Reassembling the Social*
- M. Callon, “Some Elements of a Sociology of Translation: Domestication of the Scallops and the Fishermen of St. Brieuc Bay.”

5. Phenomenological

- Jean-Paul Sartre, on “the gaze” from *Being and Nothingness*
- Miles Richardson, “Being-in-the-Market versus Being-in-the-Plaza”
- David Seamon, “Marketplace as Place Ballet”
- Robert Mugerauer, “Midwestern Yards”
- Dennis Skocz, “Homeless at Home: A Phenomenology of Migration & Displacement

6. Mental Mapping & Photography

- Gould & White: “Perception of the Environment”
- Chenoweth, “Visitor Employed Photography”
- Aberley, “Boundaries of Home: Mapping for Local Empowerment”
- *National Geographic*, ‘CartoGraphic: ‘Mappers’ Rights’ ”

7. Sense of Place, selections from the following:

- Violich, “What Our Search for the Meaning of Place has Revealed”
- Goodey, “Values in Place”
- Christian Norberg-Schulz, from *Genius Loci*

8. Dialogue for Critical Consciousness

- Paulo Freire: from *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*
- Paulo Freire: from *Education for Critical Consciousness*

9. Scenarios: Numbers, Stories, Images & Visualizing What Is Not There

- Peter Schwartz, “The Scenario-Building Animal”