Lab Description
Shelter is an interdisciplinary lab on urban developments in Cape Town, with a hands-on opportunity to engage in a collaborative design project in the city. We begin with a focus on the history and legacies of Cape Town’s racialized spaces and the current dynamics that contribute to its role as a site of both sobering urban challenges and promising design solutions. With this background, we’ll consider the functional aspects of shelter, working on a design focused on the practicalities of precarious-living, including the challenges of refuse removal, water, sanitation, electricity, transport, safety, and security. The course focuses on gendered design, attentiveness to public and private spaces, patterns of actual use and the aesthetic needs of communities. Shelter: Cape Town provides an opportunity to explore socially responsive urban design and its relevancy to the social, cultural, and economic dynamics creating acute housing needs in the city.

Learning Outcomes
Upon completion of the lab, students will be able to:

- describe the racialized social, economic, political, linguistic, and spatial histories of South Africa under apartheid and its legacies, as well as the current class and identity dynamics that continue to effect access, distribution, and availability of housing in Cape Town;
- analyze the theoretical and practical dimensions of urban planning in and around Cape Town;
- articulate the shelter challenges and design innovations emergent in Cape Town;
- comprehend the unique resources available in South Africa through contact with host nationals of expertise, including local community activists, practitioners, and academics;
- engage in a practical, collaborative design project, through dialogue with community partners, addressing an urgent shelter issue;
- evaluate the example of Cape Town’s shelter challenges and innovations in light of global urban housing needs.
Language of Instruction
This course is taught in English.

Lab Schedule

*Please be aware that topics and excursions may vary to take advantage of any emerging events, to accommodate changes in our lecturers’ availability, and to respect any changes that would affect student safety. Students will be notified if this occurs.*

Module 1: Mapping the City: Cape Town’s colonial & apartheid geographies

Topics include:

- Understanding established urban patterns
- Colonial and apartheid geographies of the city
- Race, class, identity and the Kaapstad / iKapa built environment
- Party politics, land reform, and housing for all
- Informality
- Land tenure, possession, and dispossession
- Public/private, urban/peri-urban, and other (false) dichotomies
- The gendered city
- Good (city) governance
- Urban cultures of economies

Excursions:

- Langa Pass Museum
- District Six Museum
- Cape Flats
- Gugulethu / Khayelitsha / Belleville / Camp’s Bay
- University of Cape Town / Rhodes Memorial

Module 2: City Fundamentals: Infrastructure & life quality in Cape Town

Topics include:

- Street life
- Pedestrian environments
- Humane and habitable shelter
- Human waste
- Drainage and sanitation
- Water
- Food security and informality
- Energy and electricity
- Safety and security
- Transport
- Aesthetics and urban space
- Fires, floods, and disaster response

Excursions:

- Cape Town Community Housing Corporation: [http://www.ctchc.co.za/](http://www.ctchc.co.za/)
- Shack / Slum Dwellers International Alliance: [http://sasdialliance.org.za/](http://sasdialliance.org.za/)
Module 3:  Social innovation & the Cape Town built environment

Topics Include:
- Design innovations: iShack and Empower Shack
- Design Indaba 10x10 Housing Project
- Eco-design
- Materials: indigenous and up-cycled
- Re-blocking
- Storytelling, engaged listening, and the ethics of urban planning
- Densification, gentrification, and urban integration
- Financing low-cost housing
- Upgrading

Excursions:
- Urban Design Institute of South Africa:  http://urbandesigninstitute.co.za/about-udisa/
- CityThinkSpace:  http://citythinkspace.com/
- Ikhayalami:  http://www.ikhayalami.org/

Module 4:  Design for the 99%

Topics include:
- Realizing the right to the city
- Inclusive and empowering human settlements
- Affordable, attractive, accessible housing
- Shelter design & System D
- Basic needs, quality of life, and urban resilience

Excursions:
- Green Point Urban Park
- Robben Island

Readings:

African Centre for Cities -  http://www.africancentreforcities.net/programme-type/publishing/


Future Cape Town: http://futurecapetown.com/tag/urban-design/#.U4zKiHYvo1A

Greater Tygerberg partnership and Voortrekker road corridor website: http://www.gtp.org.za/


Evaluation and Grading Criteria

Description of Assignments

Map:
Students will use a variety of possible mapping strategies in order to better understand the realities of living in dense, informal urban settlements surrounding Cape Town. Students may utilize existing base maps and gather primary data that will assist in illuminating issues related to shelter. The output of this project is a series of at least three maps that visually represent data drawn from sources including: field observations, semi-structured interviews, and/or community mapping techniques. An oral presentation/discussion of the maps provides students with an opportunity to share results of the project.
Journal:
Students will prepare five two-page analytical journal entry reflecting on each of five excursion visits. Five journal submissions are required – the actual excursions to be addressed are selected by the student. Following each academic excursion, students should reflect on critical issues observed and knowledge gained. The aim of the reflection will be to connect theory as presented in lectures and class discussions with practice as experienced during the academic excursions.

Project:
In small groups, partnering with community members and local organizations (as assigned), students will design a collaborative project addressing a local shelter need. The project will be generated, refined, and designed in tandem with community beneficiaries. Depending on the project, the design may be executed during the program. The design (build) process and the resulting project, if applicable, will be thoroughly documented and presented by the group both orally and in writing. 50%

Assessment

Map: 15%
Journal: 35%
Project: 50%

Grading Criteria

Grades are given both fairly and rigorously and in accordance with the system below. An “A” letter grade reflects exceptional work. A “B” letter grade reflects serious and methodical work, as well as a substantial effort at analyzing and understanding cross-cultural issues. A “C” letter grade indicates that the work meets the minimal requirements but needs more in-depth reflection and personal/cultural engagement. A “D” letter grade is insufficient and clearly reflects serious deficiencies or lack of effort.

Grading Scale

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>90-93%</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>Above Average</td>
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<tr>
<td>87-89%</td>
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<td>64-66%</td>
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<td>below 64</td>
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<td>Fail</td>
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Expectations and Policies

Lab Participation
Participation in lab refers to attendance, punctuality, attentive listening and active engagement in all work, including lectures, excursions, group activities, and other sessions. In addition, the following are expectations of all participants:

- **Show up prepared.** Students are required to be on time for all scheduled meeting times and are expected to be prepared and ready to engage. Complying with these elements raises the level of your individual and collaborative work and the expected outcomes of your final product(s).
• **Ask questions. Engage your instructor.** These are very busy professionals and practitioners who have made themselves available during this short program. Take advantage of their expertise.

• **Comply with academic integrity policies.** Plagiarism, cheating, and/or unethical behavior will not be tolerated and will have serious consequences.

• **Respect differences of opinion.** While you are not expected to agree with everything you hear, you are expected to listen across difference and consider other perspectives with respect.

Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad handbook for policies on academic integrity, ethics, warning and probation, diversity and disability, sexual harassment and the academic appeals process. Also, refer to the specific information available in the Student Handbook and the Program Dossier given to you during Orientation.