SYLLABUS

## 4.229J / 11.228J COLLECTIVES: New Forms of Sharing

# Mexico City's Urban Innovation Playground

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Credits: 3-0-9 G
Schedule: W 2-5
Room 1-132

**The course will include travel and fieldwork in Mexico City during Springbreak**



*La Feria Chapultepec – Mexico City*

**Class Description and Goals:**
The site of Mexico City's iconic La Feria is to be re-designed as Parque Aztlan - an urban 'innovation playground' - a new park/expo typology that combines recreation and education-demonstration programs to celebrate the city's past and help shape its future. Parque Aztlan, located in the heart of Chapultepec, one of the largest urban parks in Latin America, will combine attractions, public/community programs, and demonstration and prototyping sites of diverse scales and kinds (landscapes, objects/structures, short film, VR

and more) to raise awareness and inform of Mexico City's environmental and socio-economic challenges and explore its future urban life and culture.

This spring's COLLECTIVES class will be structured as a collaborative research-design workshop involving prominent Mexican architects, planners, city government - ministry of environment, developers, journalists and community members. Building off the MIT SA+P and Leventhal Center for Advanced Urbanism (LCAU) engagement to set up a future city lab for Mexico City, the COLLECTIVES workshop will be organized in two parts: an exposé of present and future challenges the city faces and a design exercise to envision possible interventions, architecture-urban-landscape elements within the park.

The course will include funded travel to Mexico City between March 19-24, 2022 to visit the site, city selected public projects and engage in discussions with our collaborators. Our work will be showcased as part of Mextropoli in September 2022.

**Class Structure and Requirements:**
This spring's COLLECTIVES class will be structured as a collaborative research-design workshop organized in two phases: a research/analysis component and a design exercise. The workshop will include guest lectures, a collective design session and funded travel to Mexico City during Spring break, in between the two workshop phases. Work will be done in small groups or individually and will include presentations to guests and collaborators at MIT and in Mexico City.

**Assignment 1**
The first phase will focus on an **analytical and visual project,** which will identify problems and challenges that the city faces looking into the future. We will expose and explore the following themes: Water, Waste, Mobility, Air, Housing, Wellbeing and Economy.
This assignment will be 6 weeks long and include weekly tasks, presentations and discussions in the group. Our work will focus primarily on existing research, data collection, mappings and diagrams as part of creating compelling visual and textual narratives.
The assignment will include background readings on Chapultepec and plans for La Feria, mapping stakeholders/current and potential ones partners (eg. community associations, academic institutions, etc), precedent studies and more.

**Co-Design Session**
During the first phase of the workshop we will hold a collective design session to develop our own urban vision plan for the park.

**Trip to Mexico City**
To take place during spring break and include: meetings with Grupo Mota-Engil, Government of Mexico City's officials, planners and architects, curators and journalists; site visits to La Feria and other public/collective space projects in the city.

**Assignment 2**

After the trip and with the end of Spring break we will start the second phase of the workshop which will focus on a single design exercise to be done individually or in groups. Students are asked to envision a **design component, element or strategy** to express and/or create space for one the themes/issues identified through assignment 1. The design outcome can be in the form of an object/pavilion/structure, short film, storyboard, landscape element, VR, community/public program. This design project would be envisioned to be implemented in the park, within the urban vision plan that the group put forth following our co-design session, and to serve one or more of the following objectives: communicate and inform visitors about the challenges that the city faces, act as a demonstration/prototyping space for urban innovation to test out and collect reactions/feedback, space to convene, to discuss and prepare for change.

**Evaluation Criteria:**
10% Attendance and participation in class.
40% Analytical Project
50% Final Project

**Grading Definition:**
A. Exceptionally good performance demonstrating a superior understanding of the subject matter, a foundation of extensive knowledge, and a skillful use of concepts and/or materials.
B. Good performance demonstrating capacity to use the appropriate concepts, a good understanding of the subject matter, and an ability to handle the problems and materials encountered in the subject.
C. Adequate performance demonstrating an adequate understanding of the subject matter, an ability to handle relatively simple problems, and adequate preparation for moving on to more advanced work in the field.
D. Minimally acceptable performance demonstrating at least partial familiarity with the subject matter and some capacity to deal with relatively simple problems, but also demonstrating deficiencies serious enough to make it inadvisable to proceed further in the field without additional work.
F. Failed. This grade also signifies that the student must repeat the subject to receive credit.

**Academic Integrity and Honesty:**
MIT's expectations and policies regarding academic integrity should be read carefully and adhered to diligently: http://integrity.mit.edu

**Writing and Communication Center:**
The WCC at MIT (Writing and Communication Center) offers free one-on-one professional advice from communication experts. The WCC is staffed completely by MIT lecturers. All have advanced degrees. All are experienced college classroom teachers of communication. All are published scholars and writers. Not counting the WCC's director's years (he started the WCC in 1982), the WCC lecturers have a combined 133 years' worth of teaching here at MIT (ranging from 4 to 24 years). The WCC works with undergraduate, graduate students, post-docs, faculty, staff, alums, and spouses. The WCC helps you strategize about all types of academic and professional writing as well as about all aspects of oral presentations (including practicing classroom presentations & conference talks as well as designing slides). No matter what

department or discipline you are in, the WCC helps you think your way more deeply into your topic, helps you see new implications in your data, research, and ideas. The WCC also helps with all English as Second Language issues, from writing and grammar to pronunciation and conversation practice. The WCC is located at E18-233, 50 Ames Street). To guarantee yourself a time, make an appointment. To register with our online scheduler and to make appointments, go to https://mit.mywconline.com/. To access the WCC's many pages of advice about writing and oral presentations, go to http://cmsw.mit.edu/writing-and-communication-center/. Check the online scheduler for up-to-date hours and available appointments.

**Student Performance Criteria (NAAB):**
Realm A: Critical Thinking and Representation
A1. Communication Skills: Ability to read, write, speak and listen effectively• A2. Design Thinking Skills: Ability to raise clear and precise questions, use abstract ideas to interpret information, consider diverse points of view, reach well-reasoned conclusions, and test alternative outcomes against relevant criteria and standards.• A3. Visual Communication Skills: Ability to use appropriate representational media, such as traditional graphic and digital technology skills, to convey essential formal elements at each stage of the programming and design process.• A5. Investigative Skills: Ability to gather, assess, record, apply, and comparatively evaluate relevant information within architectural coursework and design processes.

**Course Schedule:**

| Week 1 (feb 2) | Introduction<br>Workshop Launch: Gensler lecture 3pm ET<br>(Please send Portfolio and Statement by the end of the day)<br>**What do you miss from the future?**<br><br>**Introduce Assignment 1:**<br>a. Readings from section:  Chapultepec & La Feria<br>b. Analysis of present and future challenges ( Water, Waste, Mobility, Air, Housing, Wellbeing and Economy) |
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| Week 2 (feb 9) | Workshop Launch: Lecture City Government Ministry of Environment 2pm ET<br>**Reading presentation Due**<br><br>**Introduce Assignment 1.1 (part 2)**:<br>stakeholders map, including current and potential partners, precedents and research regarding specific theme<br><br>Possible Readings: Specific reading to each theme (water, air, connectivity etc)<br>("La ciudad que soñamos") |
| Week 3 (feb 16) | Class discussion<br>**Stakeholder map Due** |

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| Week 4 (feb 23) | Research updates<br>Class discussion |
| Week 5 (March 2) | Co-design session on master plan: identify urban elements that create and occupy the 'in-between' |
| Week 6 (March 9) | Presentation/ mid-review<br>**Assignment 1 Draft due** |
| Week 7 (March 16) | Possible zoom meeting with collaborators and partners<br>**Assignment 1 revised version due**<br><br>**Midterm**<br>(Springbreak March 19th: travel 19-24th TBD)<br>Presentation of assignment 1 in Mexico City<br><br>SEE trip Itinerary |
| Week 8 (March 23) | (Springbreak March 19th: travel 19-24th TBD) |
| SWeek 9 (March 30) | Mark Harris lecture on experiential design<br><br>Introduction to **Assignment 2**<br>Develop a design project for the theme identified in phase 1 such as: object, short film, story, landscape, VR, program: community/public.<br><br>Possible Readings: Precedent objects, landscapes/urban spaces, stories/films, maps/diagrams, programs. |
| UWeek 10 (April 6) | Class discussion |
| Week 11 (April 13) | Class discussion<br>mid-review of **Assignment 2** (with guests) |
| Week 12 (April 20) | Class discussion |
| Week 12 (April 27) | **Final Review:** Miquel Adria Lecture: director of Arquine, el Festival de Arquitectura, and Ciudad MEXTRÓPOLI<br>(possible Gabriela Gomez Monte Lecture (citylab)) |
| MAY 4TH | **Submission of project**<br>**Assignment 2 Due** |

## Reading List:

**Chapultepec Park & La Feria:**

Intro to Chapultepec park. https://chapultepec.org.mx/chapultepec-park/?lang=en

*Amabilis, Bárbara Sánchez. 2021. "La Feria de Chapultepec se transformará en Parque Urbano Aztlán." Inmobiliare (blog). July 20, 2021.*
*https://inmobiliare.com/la-feria-de-chapultepec-se-transformara-en-parque-urbano-aztlan/.*
Moerer, Andrea Kristine. n.d. "Changing Chapultepec: Construction, Consumption, and Cultural Politics," **Only Chapter 1, 3 and 5.**
*https://conservancy.umn.edu/bitstream/handle/11299/162505/Moerer_umn_0130E_14571.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y.*
*"Parque Aztlán, el proyecto que reemplazará a la Feria de Chapultepec." 2020. ADNPolítico. December 2, 2020.*
*https://politica.expansion.mx/cdmx/2020/12/02/parque-aztlan-el-proyecto-ganador-que-reemplazara-a-la-feria-de-chapultepec.*

**Mexico City (History and challenges)**
*Boyer, Christopher R. 2012. Land between Waters: Environmental Histories of Modern Mexico. Latin American Landscapes. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.*

*Sillitoe, Alan. 1991. Review of Review of Mexico City: The Production and Reproduction of an Urban Environment, by Peter M. Ward. Bulletin of Latin American Research 10 (1): 106–7. https://doi.org/10.2307/3338584.*

*Soja, Edward W. 2010. Seeking Spatial Justice. Globalization and Community Series. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.*

*Wakild, Emily. 2011. Revolutionary Parks: Conservation, Social Justice, and Mexico's National Parks, 1910-1940. Latin American Landscapes. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.*

*Workshop on Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Latin American Environmental History. 2004. "Territories, Commodities and Knowledges: Latin American Environmental History in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries." In . London: Institute for the Study of the Americas.*

"LA CIUDAD QUE SOÑAMOS.Pdf." n.d. Accessed January 19, 2022.
https://www.dropbox.com/home/MEXICOCITYSCAPE/XX_ADMIN/5_Documents?preview=LA+CIUDAD+QUE+SO%C3%91AMOS.pdf.

**Data Sources (Maps and images)**

*"Fundación ICA." n.d. Accessed January 18, 2022.*
*http://www.fundacion-ica.org.mx/colecciones_digitalizadas.*

*Pública, Agencia Digital de Innovación. n.d. "Portal de Datos Abiertos de la CDMX." Accessed January 18, 2022. https://datos.cdmx.gob.mx/.*
*"Visualizador de Capas." n.d. Accessed January 18, 2022. http://chapultepec.centrogeo.org.mx/interactive/layers.*

**Experiential Design (precedents and examples)**

"https://20propuestas.mextropoli.mx/." n.d. Accessed January 19, 2022. https://20propuestas.mextropoli.mx/.
"Town Branch Water Walk." n.d. SCAPE. Accessed January 19, 2022. https://www.scapestudio.com/projects/town-branch-water-walk/.

**Future challenges** (Water, Waste, Mobility, Air, Housing and Wellbeing)

CON-NECT-ED-NESS- Denmark pavilion. Venice Biennale 2021.
https://youtu.be/v7gIs6vjPIM
*Foodcam, Copia*
https://youtu.be/6RlxySFrkIM
DATA ACTION-Using data for public good. Sara Williams.
https://civicdatadesignlab.mit.edu/Data-Action-Using-Data-for-Public-Good
AIR- Catalonia in Venice 2021. 30.000km.
https://air.300000.eu/#en
Vivienda colectiva. Arquine Jams No.23 Miquel Adrià, Fernanda Canales, Juan Herreros,
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fjadd-le1wY
SHARED STRUCTURES-PRIVATE SPACES. Housing in Mexico. Fernanda Canales.
https://actar.com/product/shared-structures-private-spaces/
HAPPY CITY. Transforming Our Lives Through Urban Design.
https://thehappycity.com/
https://thehappycity.com/the-book/

**Design**

The Hospital of the Future. OMA
https://vimeo.com/350586481
Platform for Humans and Birds. Studio Ossidiana.
http://www.studio-ossidiana.com/variation-on-a-birdcage
Seventeen Playgrounds. Aldo van Eyck
https://www.archdaily.com/787273/amsterdams-seventeen-playgrounds-aldo-van-eycks-neglected-legacy