Mapping of pearl river delta

DELTA PLUG-INS

FIELDS

INSTRUCTOR
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ARCHITECTURE AS AGENCY

The studio responds to "agency" through an expanded understanding of architecture's role in layered, evolving environments like the Pearl River Delta. Instead of producing fixed masterplans, students explore how small, strategic interventions can operate within broader hydrological, social, and technological systems. Agency here means the capacity architecture to operate across overlapping landscapes, where nature meets infrastructure, and where traditional settlements meet top-down urban planning. In this context, architecture becomes a tool not just to shape space, but to activate and negotiate systematic flows – which are hydrological, logistical, social and ecological.

FIELDS

The studio responds to the "Field" cluster by exploring how climate, mobility, and governance shape space across the PRD. Students use mapping, fieldwork, ethnography, and design to trace connections and identify where small-scale interventions can influence larger systems. The studio progresses from "system and ecology" (regional scale) to "prototype" (architecture scale) to "urban application/adaptation" (urban and landscape scale). Relational agencies emerge through collective acts, enabling design to mediate short-term shifts and long-term transformations (Sepulveda-Carmona, 2025).

Focusing on complementary urbanism as "architectural agency," the studio investigates peripheral PRD territories shaped by urban centres, infrastructure, migrating populations, and shifting industrial geographies. Using the West River (Xijiang) as a site, students explore dynamic relationships that balance economy, culture, technology, and ecology, positioning architecture to engage peripheral spatial potential.

Territorial thinking invites students to act as strategists, mediators, and spatial-social negotiators, with design producing concepts as concrete actions in space (Viganò, 2016).

PROJECT CRITERIA

All projects developed throughout the year, both collective and individual, must respond to the following criteria:

Agency and Relevance
The proposal must engage with real issues (social, ecological, or territorial) and respond critically to the conceptual lens of the assigned cluster.

Multiscalar and Contextual Design
The project must operate across multiple scales and respond meaningfully to its socio-spatial, environmental, and cultural context.

Programmatic and Spatial Richness
The project must integrate diverse uses, users, and spatial conditions, avoiding reductive or mono-functional approaches.

Design Resolution and Coherence
The project must be well-developed in form, material, and construction logic, and demonstrate architectural depth through clear drawings, physical or digital models, and a coherent narrative.

RESEARCH QUESTION

How can architecture operate as agents across scales to design conditions that support adaptation and enable transformations in delta regions?

The issue of delta regions unfolds at a regional scale. Following Han Meyer's approach, we draw on Complex System Theory to understand the interaction between design and spatial planning in delta contexts (Meyer, 2014). Urbanization becomes an interplay between local processes and strategic development shaped by diverse actors and stakeholders. In the contemporary Pearl River Delta (PRD), urbanization is strongly influenced by centralized state planning. Often called "the miracle of the South," the PRD reflects a tension between its historical legacy of informal, self-organized development and modern top-down interventions.
In this planning-oriented context, we ask: Where do architects intervene in such a multi-scalar and multi-actor process? Architecture in the PRD is inherently connected to public authorities, engineering consultants, and communities. Students are encouraged to explore how architecture can act as an agent within this network, synchronizing and mediating the environment as a systematic response.
Delta regions rely on long-term self-organization. Architecture can engage across scales—from infrastructural and geological to social and spiritual—bridging engineering, cultural, and civic relationships. The studio proposes "Delta Plug-ins," inspired by Archigram's "Plug-In City," as adaptive spatial tools responding to seasonal flooding, informal economies, and productive landscapes. These interventions contribute to resilience and foster architectural agency within the PRD.

STUDIO DESCRIPTION

This studio begins with water. In the Pearl River Delta (PRD), water is not just a resource or a risk—it underlies the shaping of cities, settlements, infrastructure, ecology, and daily life. The deltaic landscape is dynamic, influenced by shifting riverbeds, tidal flows, wetlands, fishponds, and estuaries. Strategically located, the PRD has been central to China's development, from the Reform and Opening Policy in the 1980s to the Greater Bay Area nowadays. The architecture, infrastructure and landscape in the PRD exist in an interconnected network, forming a shared field and territory – together, they act as the agency for urban adaptation and transformation.

Liquid Conditions
Flowing systems of water, goods, people, capital, and policy define the PRD's territories. Delta Urbanism provides a framework to work with these dynamic, multi-scalar processes rather than against them (Meyer, 2008). Infrastructure, from ports to roads and villages, is not static but part of evolving territories. Architecture acts as an adaptive agent, mediating environmental processes and socio-economic development.

Students will approach the PRD as a complex system and develop an understanding that spans across-scales (architecture, urban and regional) and across-layers (landscape, infrastructural network and architectural occupation). Students will design "plug-ins", that create conditions and activate systematic changes for PRD's future. Methodologies include mapping and prototyping to analyse the PRD's West River territories, under themes of water towns, port territories and megaprojects. Mapping serves as a generative tool for design, revealing the environmental, infrastructural, and socio-political conditions. Prototyping tests strategies in response to eco-hydrological systems, economies, governance, and community needs. Through this process, students will position architecture as a mediator between territorial systems and lived experience and design interventions that shape both local places and impact long-term regional transformations.

PART ONE_COLLECTIVE

In this studio, this exhibition presents a multi-scalar investigation of the West River in the Pearl River Delta, developed through a matrix of thematic focus and the elements that make up a complex system.
Thematic focus (Live with Water): Water Towns, Megaprojects, Port Territories
Complex Systems: Landscape condition, Infrastructure, settlement, social, economy/industry, governance, everyday life, policy.
We aim to build a systematic and critical understanding of the West River in the Pearl River Delta, investigating the relations between landscape, infrastructure, and built form . The exhibition aims to present a collective of urban research through a series of models of "urban cross-sections", alongside diagrams, and a video (ethnographic filmmaking). Following James Corner's approaches to mapping, the "urban cross-section" will serve as a generative tool to inform design and enable interventions within the complex system of PRD. This exhibition responds to *field* by mapping the relational agencies between water (landscape), infrastructure (network), and urbanization (built forms) across disciplines and territories of PRD, as structured through the matrix.

Phases and Deliverables

01 Drawings
Site plan (1:1000 / 1:500)
Floor plans (target scale 1:100 or 1:50, depending on project scale)
Sections (at least two) to illustrate key spatial and contextual relationships
Axonometric or exploded axonometric to communicate structural, programmatic, or conceptual logic

02 Models*
Site plan model at an appropriate site scale (1:1000 or 1:500)
Building models ranging from 1:200 to 1:50
Detail model or fragment at 1:50 or 1:20 to explore material/tectonic resolution

03 Illustrations and Representation
Concept diagrams and narratives
Material/atmospheric explorations
Photographic collages, sketches, or other visual material to support conceptual development

04 Narrative and Critical reflection
Project statement (max 500 words) articulating the design intent, agency, and connection to the studio theme and cluster. The integration with insights from the first semester's collective work is strongly encouraged.

PART ONE_PROJECT PROPOSAL

At the end of the first semester and contextual the presentation of the COLLECTIVE work students will present a proposal for the development of their individual or group project for the second part of the studio. This proposal should outline how the project responds to the overarching theme of the MArch — Architecture as Agency — and to the specific conceptual lens of the studio cluster. The aim of this to demonstrate a clear and thoughtful direction that can be further developed in the next phase of the studio.

Deliverables

Students will submit a booklet to illustrate their project proposal. Using a shared Project Book format common to all studios, the layout will be organised into four sections: Project Site, Research Questions, Project Description, Design Concept. The booklet will gather the main outcomes of the conceptual stage, including drawings, model photographs, illustrations and preliminary programme, to clearly convey the core ideas of the project. An InDesign template will be provided to ensure clarity and consistency among the students.

PART TWO_PROJECT

Each student will develop a project that explores architecture as a form of agency within the framework of their assigned cluster — a tool for engaging with and responding to contemporary social and spatial challenges. With guidance from the tutor, students are encouraged to formulate their own brief and select a site aligned with their thematic direction.

In this studio, students will build on the exhibition's matrix framework, and select a site on the West River of PRD to apply and test their plug-in. The site is not fixed, but rather the chosen site should reflect one of the themes proposed by the studio (i.e. water towns, megaprojects and port territories). Students will continue develop the "cross-section prototype" developed in Part One, and develop an architectural prototype engages with specific systems— such as water governance, port ecologies, or inter-city flows. The prototype must operate at an architectural scale while positioning itself within broader territorial processes. Students will work iteratively across scales—from 1:50 to1:100, to 1:1000 and reverse. They will use larger-scale frameworks to test territorial logic, and refining smaller-scale interventions as architectural responses that both emerge from and inform broader spatial systems. The work will be collated into a publication

Deliverables

Drawings
Site plan (1:1000 / 1:500)
Floor plans (target scale 1:100 or 1:50, depending on project scale)
Sections (at least two) to illustrate key spatial and contextual relationships
Axonometric or exploded axonometric to communicate structural, programmatic, or conceptual logic

Models
Site plan model at an appropriate site scale (1:1000 or 1:500)
Building models ranging from 1:200 to 1:50
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Illustrations and Representation
Concept diagrams and narratives
Material/atmospheric explorations
Photographic collages, sketches, or other visual material to support conceptual development

Narrative and Critical reflection
Project statement (max 500 words) articulating the design intent, agency, and connection to the studio theme and cluster. The integration with insights from the first semester's collective work is strongly encouraged.

Final Presentation
Students will give an oral presentation and present their projects using drawings, models, and all required materials in various formats. The Final Review will take place over three days and will be a moment to celebrate and showcase the work developed throughout the semester. As per tradition, a group of international and local experts, invited by each studio tutor, will join the review to provide feedback and share their perspectives.

Project Book

Students will present their final work through a shared Project Book format, common to all studios. The book will be organised into six sections: Project Summary, Research Questions, Project Description, Programme & Technology, Process, and Appendix. It will gather the main outputs of the studio, including detailed drawings, model photographs, and a comprehensive technology report with construction details. An InDesign template will be provided to ensure clarity and consistency, supporting potential use in exhibitions and publications.

IMPACT

1. Environmental and Climate Impact Perspective

The studio addresses one of today's most urgent design challenges: responding to climate change in vulnerable deltaic regions. It encourages innovative, systemic, and place-specific design responses in the PRD (Haraway, 1988), aligned with the UN's SDGs (SDG 6:Clean Water, SDG 9Industry and SDG 11Innovation, Sustainable Cities, SDG 13: Climate Action). Through partnerships with institutions like the Guangzhou Urban Planning & Design Survey Research Institute and research networks such as TU Delft's PortCityFutures, the studio links local experimentation with global dialogues on port cities, climate adaptation, and environmental justice. Design and architecture are reframed as cultural and infrastructural practices that coexist with water and uncertainty.

2. Student Agency and Regional Coordination

Students act as active agents shaping the Greater Bay Area and PRD, co-developing spatial strategies through collaboration across disciplines and institutions, including CUHK, SCUT, and HITSZ. Fieldwork, co-teaching, and shared outputs build trans-local knowledge, while international collaboration with TU Delft connects them to global research. The studio bridges academia and practice, preparing architects to lead equitable, adaptive transformations in the delta and beyond.

A List of Collaborative Partners

Universities:
1. City University of Hong Kong
2. Hong Kong Polytechnique University
3. South China University of Technology
4. Harbin Institute of Technology, Shenzhen
5. TU Delft

Industry Partners:
1. Guangzhou Urban Planning & Design Survey Research Institute (广州市规划院)
2. Shenzhen Urban Planning & Design Institute（深圳市规划设计研究院）
3. Shenzhen Urban Planning & Land Resources Research Centre (Shenzhen Centre for Design)
4. 深圳市规划国土发展研究中心（深圳市城市设计促进中心)
5. UNESCO Chair of Waters
6. PortCityFutures

METHODS

The methods adopted in this studio are intended to support students in developing a strong conceptual foundation and translating it into clear, context-specific, and conceptually engaged design proposals. The studio will combine analytical research, design experimentation, and collective discussion. Students will be encouraged to explore both conventional and non-conventional methods of enquiry and representation, including:

1. Site-based research through mapping, observation, and photographic documentation;

2. Critical readings review, to introduce key theoretical concepts related to the studio's cluster and MArch theme;
3. Case studies, to analyze relevant precedents and extract strategies that can be translated into design proposals
4. Learning by making using physical models to test and refine spatial ideas, tectonic logics, and material strategies
5. Drawing as enquire methods to understand the relation between buildings people and context by working across a range of scales, from territorial systems to detailed architectural solutions (1:1000 to 1:50)
6. Community engagement (where applicable), to better understand local dynamics and integrate socio-cultural knowledge into the design process
7. AI as an exploratory tool, to learn how to critically engage with large language models (LLMs) and interactive digital platforms for research, site analysis, and conceptual development.

REQUIRED READINGS

Delta Urbanisms

1. Meyer, Han. *City and Port: The Transformation of Port Cities: London, Barcelona, New York and Rotterdam.* Rotterdam: NAi Publishers, 1999.
2. Meyer, Han, and Steffen Nijhuis, eds. *Delta Urbanism: The Netherlands.* London: Routledge, 2012.
3. Meyer, Han, Arnold Bregt, Ed Dammers, and Jurian Edelbos. *New Perspectives on Urbanizing Deltas: A Complex Adaptive Systems Approach to Planning and Design.* Dordrecht: MUST Publishers, 2015.
4. Meyer, Han. *Cities on Silt: The Inspiring Promise of a Self-Building Delta – Venice, Rotterdam, New Orleans.* Amsterdam: Blauwdruk Publishers, 2019.
5. Hooimeijer, F., Han Meyer, and A. Nienhuis. *Atlas of Dutch Water Cities.* Gouda: Sun Publishers, 2005.
6. Juval Portugali, Han Meyer, Egbert Stolk, and Ekim Tan, eds. *Complexity Theories of Cities Have Come of Age: An Overview with Implications to Urban Planning and Design.* Berlin: Springer, 2012
7. Anne Loes Nillesen, Boukje Kothuis, Han Meyer, and Frits Palmboom. *Delta Interventions: Design and Engineering in Urban Water Landscapes.* Delft: Delft University Publishers, 2016.
8. Meyer, Han, John Westrik, and Maarten Jan Hoekstra. *Urbanism: Fundamentals and Prospects.* Amsterdam: Boom, 2020.
9. Jaap Evert Abrahamse and Reinout Rutte, *Atlas of the Dutch Urban Landscape: A Millennium of Spatial Development* Amersfoort, Netherlands: Thoth Publishers, December 2015.

Theoretical Readings

10. Allen, Stan. "From Object to Field." In *Points + Lines: Diagrams and Projects for the City*, 92–103. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999.
11. Bauman, Zygmunt. *Liquid Modernity.* Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000.
12. Banham, Reyner. *Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies.* London: Allen Lane, 1971.
13. Latour, Bruno. *We Have Never Been Modern.* Translated by Catherine Porter. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993.
14. Bosselmann, Peter C. *Adaptations of the Metropolitan Landscape in Delta Regions.* 1st ed. London: Routledge, 2018. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315147871
15. Corner, James. "The Agency of Mapping: Speculation, Critique and Invention." In *Mappings*, edited by Denis Cosgrove, 213–252. London: Reaktion, 1999.
16. Viganò, Paola. *Territories of Urbanism: The Project as Knowledge Producer.* Lausanne and Chicago: EPFL Press; Distributed by University of Chicago Press, 2016.
17. Haraway, Donna. "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of

Partial Perspective." *Feminist Studies* 14, no. 3 (1988): 575–599.

OTHER REFERENCES

Transitional Territories
Transitional Territories — Home
Robert Reinartz — Transitional Territories

Delta Urbanism
Home - Delta Urbanism

Frits Palmboom – Drawing as a Design Tool
Palmboom, Frits. *Rotterdam, Verstedelijkt Landschap*. Rotterdam: Stadsuitgeverij Rotterdam, 1987.
Palmboom, Frits. *Drawing the Ground: Landscape Urbanism Today – The Work of Palmbout Urban Landscapes*. Basel: Birkhäuser, 2010.

Aggregate Collective
Aggregate – Governing by Design (we-aggregate.org) (the relationship between governing and design)
Aggregate (we-aggregate.org) (history and theory collective to understand system thinking)

Publica (Architectural Practices)
Publica — The Case for a River Thames Cultural Vision

We Made That (Architectural Practices)
London Made – We Made That
Creative Supply Chains Study – We Made That (For reference for the video exhibited at the exhibition)

MAP Office (Exhibition Reference)
MAP Office. *Where the Map Is the Territory*. Hong Kong: Map Book Publishers, 2011.
MAP Office. "Mapping Mobility: Guangshen Highway." In *Mobility: A Room with a View*, edited by Angelika Fitz and Elke Krasny, pp212-237. Rotterdam: NAi Publishers, 2003.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

A. Studio Related

1. Ability to analyse deltaic territories through multiscalar mapping and spatial research, with a focus on the Pearl River Delta.
2. Ability to design adaptive architectural interventions that respond to environmental, infrastructural, and socio-political dynamics.
3. Ability to develop and refine spatial prototypes across scales, from territorial systems to detailed architectural elements.
4. Ability to translate research into speculative design tools for climate resilience and regional transformation.
5. Ability to collaboratively investigate and represent hydrological governance and territorial dynamics through collective mappings, models, and exhibitions.
6. Understand and communicate spatial strategies for water-driven urban transformation, using drawing, narrative diagrams, maps, films and digital tools.

B. MArch Programme Related

Design & Process

1. Develop architectural designs that satisfy both aesthetic and technical requirements.
2. Generate complex and original design proposals that demonstrate awareness of current architectural issues and the ability to test new hypotheses and ideas.
3. Formulate a project brief and programme based on site analysis, user needs, and contextual research.
4. Respond to natural and built site characteristics in the development of a coherent and integrated design.

Communication & Representation

5. Communicate effectively in English, both orally and in writing, on architectural topics.
6. Engage in dialogue with non-architects, demonstrating the ability to listen, explain, and incorporate external perspectives into design.
7. Use a broad range of media (visual, written, oral, digital) to test, analyse, and present design ideas and processes.
8. Apply appropriate representational tools (e.g. drawings, diagrams, models, digital media) to convey design development across all project phases.

Context & Responsiveness

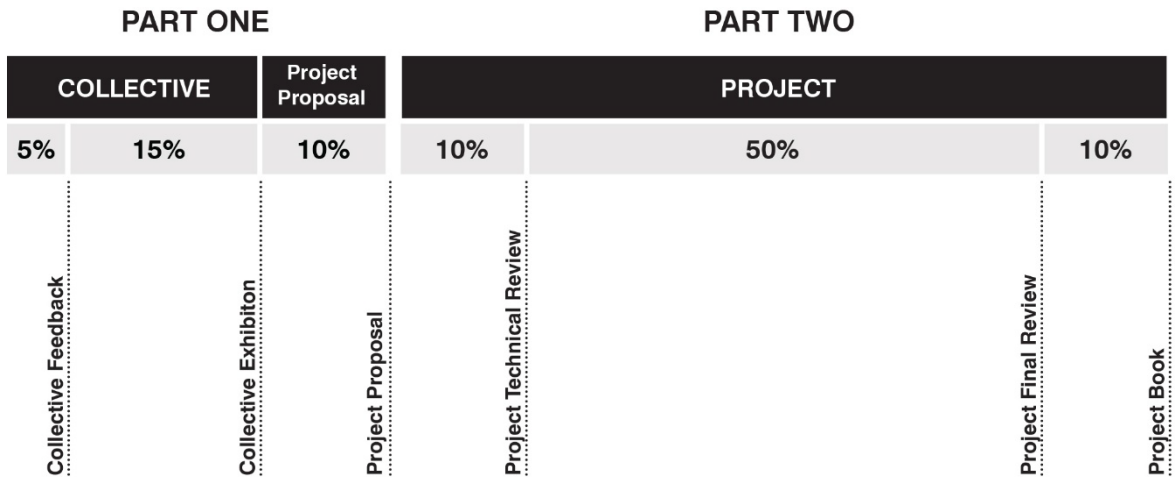
9. Demonstrate understanding of sustainable development principles and the architect’s role in promoting social, environmental, and economic responsibility.
10. Relate architectural design to human needs and scale, including the spatial relationship between people, buildings, and the built environment.

Knowledge & Integration

11. Apply knowledge of architectural history and theory, as well as related arts, technologies, and human sciences, to inform design decisions.
12. Collaborate effectively within team-based design processes, showing initiative, adaptability, and shared authorship.
13. Understand structural principles and systems, including gravity and lateral force resistance, and apply them appropriately within architectural projects.

ASSESSMENT SCHEME

The following diagram describes the structure and the assessment criteria for the year.



TIMELINE

Part One (30%)
13, 16 October: Collective Feedback* (5%)
1-3 December: Collective Exhibition* (15%)
12 December: Project Proposal** (10%)

Part Two (70%)
26 February, 2, 5 March: Project Technical Review (10%)
4-6 May: Final Presentation (50%)
4-6 May: Project Book (10%)

*The final grade for this component will be identical for every student, highlighting teamwork, shared responsibility, and equal contribution to the project.
**Individual or in small groups (Up to three students).

Review Results
Feedback and review will be released to students promptly after completion, together with written comments reflecting their progress and performance.

COURSE FORMAT

Individual and Group Work

1. Students may work in groups on various assignments and projects throughout the course calendar.
2. In the first part of the semester, students will develop a COLLECTIVE group project, which will be evaluated with a single, shared grade for the entire group. However, in cases of specific critical issues (such as illness, lack of participation due to personal problems) an individual assessment may be considered for the student(s) directly involved.
3. Final projects will generally consist of individual architectural design proposals. However, group work will also be allowed, with teams of up to three students permitted to develop a joint proposal. In such cases, students will be required to submit a written statement detailing each member's contribution, in order to clearly assess individual engagement within the group.

Teaching Days

1. The Design Studio will be taught on Monday and Thursday 13:30 to 18:00. Students must be in a studio during these teaching hours.
2. Students must attend School Lectures scheduled 12:30 – 13:30.
3. Field trips, lectures, and other learning activities may be scheduled outside of teaching days.

Teaching Assistant

The teaching assistant for this studio is SUN, Yanyu (Yanyusun @cuhk.edu.hk).

Studio Spaces

1. Each Studio will have their own space, accommodating a desk for each student.
2. Layouts will be issued at the start of the academic year.
3. The school has made studio space and use a priority. Students should maximise the use of their space by conducting design work in studio.
4. Working in the studio creates an opportunity for peer learning and collaboration – take advantage of this valuable resource.
5. Studio space should be respected – especially with consideration of food, drinking, material use, personal safety, disruption to others, and building safety regulations. Areas relating to fire escape should be always kept clear.

Cluster Dialogues

There will be four Dialogue Days organised across the clusters to share the work-in-progress of each studio and to foster critical reflection on the current and future directions of the design work.
These dialogues will be held within each cluster and will take the form of shared pin-ups, symposium-style discussions, and guest lectures by invited speakers.

PROJECT TECHNICAL REVIEW

The Project Technical Review is intended to support the integration of technical and environmental considerations into the design process. Students are required to prepare a presentation/report detailing their technological and structural strategy, with explicit attention to sustainable principles and their application within the project. In Term 2, consultations with external experts will be organised to strengthen students' knowledge of building systems and performance. These sessions may be scheduled by studio clusters or student groups, and students are expected to come prepared with preliminary research, drawings, and specific questions.

MODEL MAKING

Physical models are at the core of our design expression. To encourage a process of learning by making, we place strong emphasis on hands-on experimentation and material engagement. Laser cutting or 3dprinting should be not recommended especially during the early, conceptual phases of the design process, to prioritize more intuitive, open-ended, and tactile model-making approaches.

FIELD TRIP

Study Trip 1: To The Greater Bay Area (Gba), China
Dates: 6–10 September 2025
Theme: Regional Design and Cross-Border Coordination in Port City Territories
Proposed Schedule (tbc)

1. Day visit to Shenzhen
    a. Academic exchange and seminar at Harbin Institute of Technology, Shenzhen
    b. Field documentation at Shenzhen Yantian Port
2. 2-Day visit to Guangzhou
3. Lecture and academic exchange at South China University of Technology, with Professor Shifu Wang and Professor Jing Wang
4. Visit to Guangzhou Urban Planning & Design Survey Research Institute
5. 2-Day visit to a town along the West River, PRD
6. Field visit to a town along the West River (tbc)
7. Community workshop and collaborative mapping focused on spatial memory, water infrastructure, and regional integration

Study Trip 2: To The Netherlands
This trip takes place after the first term. This trip builds on the initial testing and understanding of Pearl River Delta after term one. Through joint studio review with TU Delft and project visits, itd aims to show students a series of wated-based infrastructure design of the Dutch Delta.
Dates: 5–15 December 2025
Theme: Learning from the Netherlands, Water Infrastructure Design

1. 3- day visit to TU Delft
    a. Joint MArch Studio Review with CUHK and TU Delft students, with Critical Environments Urban Design (urbandesigntudelft.nl) led by Professor Víctor Muñoz Sanz
    b. Research Seminar introducing TU Delft's PortCityFutures by Professor Carola Hein
2. 2-Day Institution Visits
    a. MVRDV (Rotterdam) – Design office
    b. OMA (Rotterdam) – Design office
    c. Movares (Utrecht) – Engineering consultancy
    d. Rhdhv (Amersfoort) – Engineering/Infrastructure
    e. Gemeente Den Haag – Government planning body
3. 3-Day Excursion – Key Sites & Projects
    a. Amsterdam
    b. Sluishuis (BIG + Barcode) – New architecture
    c. NEMO (Renzo Piano) – Architecture
    d. Float community – Water-based city cluster
    e. NDSM – Urban renovation
4. Rotterdam
    a. Maasvlakte – Engineering/port development
    b. Maeslantkering – Flood barrier / construction
    c. Watersquare Benthemplein – Climate-adaptive public space

   d. Centraal Station & Luchtsingel – Station area
   e. Blaak, Markthal, Cubehouse – Urban icons
5. Others
   a. Room for the River (Nijmegen) – Landscape-scale flood control
   b. Centrum (Utrecht) – City-scale design
   c. Centrum (Almere) – New community development

IMPORTANT NOTE TO STUDENTS

Expectations for Professional Conduct
The motto of The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) is "Through learning and temperance to virtue". This motto places equal emphasis on the intellectual and moral education of students. In addition to pursuing academic excellence, students of CUHK are expected to maintain and uphold the highest standard of integrity and honesty in their academic and personal lives, respect the rights of others and abide by the law. More information on Postgraduate studies can be found in the PG Student Handbook. https://www.gs.cuhk.edu.hk/

Attendance
Class attendance is required in all courses. For an excused absence, the instructor must be notified and presented with documentation of illness or personal matter. Please note: **Three (3)** or more unexcused absences may result in a failing grade for the course.

Academic Honesty
Attention is drawn to university policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at: http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/. With each assignment, students may be required to submit a statement that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines, and procedures. The Final Project will require students to submit and sign a written statement outlining details of any 3rd party assistance and acknowledgement of university policies on Academic Honesty to their studio instructor before their review.

The Chinese University of Hong Kong places very high importance on honesty in academic work submitted by students and adopts a policy of zero tolerance on academic dishonesty. While "academic dishonesty" is the overall name, there are several sub-categories as follows:

i. Plagiarism
ii. Undeclared multiple submissions
iii. Employing or using services provided by a third party to undertake ones' submitted work, or providing services as a third party
iv. Distribution/ Sharing/ Copying of teaching materials without the consent of the course teachers to gain unfair academic advantage in the courses
v. Violating rules 15 or 16 of the University's Examination Rules (Annex 1) or rule 9 or 10 of the University's Online Examination Rules (Annex 2)
vi. Cheating in tests and examinations (including violation of rules 17 or 18 of the University's Examination Rules or rule 11, 12, 13, 14 or 16 of the University's Online Examination Rules)
vii. Impersonation fraud in tests and examinations (including violation of rule 19 of the University's Examination Rules or rule 15 of the University's Online Examination Rules)
viii. All other acts of academic dishonesty
ix. Any related offence will lead to disciplinary action including termination of studies at the University.

Third-Party Assistance
All intellectual work essential to the design project must be completed by the student and cannot, under any circumstance, be outsourced to a third party (including, but not limited to a company, consultant, alumni, and/or friend).
In the design studio context, students may utilise external resources, such as printing services for presentation materials, and/or laser cutting and 3D printing services for prototyping purposes. Use of such third-party services constitutes non-intellectual work done by others. It is only permitted with prior written consent from the studio tutor and acknowledgment of such work done by the third party.

Assistance from other students or friends for aspects of project production also constitutes non-intellectual work done by others; this is allowed only if declared and acknowledged in a written statement attached to any such work that has received assistance.

Under all circumstances, students must declare all work done by others by completing the school's designated form before assessment. This form must include a detailed explanation of the third party's identity (name and relationship to the student), when and how they were utilized, and the specific tasks they performed in the project. The completed form, signed by the student, must be endorsed by the tutor and presented during the final review. The school will collect and retain this form for record-keeping purposes.

Failure to follow this code of conduct may be considered a case of academic dishonesty, to be reviewed by a disciplinary board, and possible failure of the course.

Artificial Intelligence
This studio will adopt Approach 3 – "Use only with explicit acknowledgement."
Students may refer to Approach 3 – Use only with explicit acknowledgement from CUHK's "Use of Artificial Intelligence Tools in Teaching, Learning and Assessments – A Guide for Students."

Students are allowed to use AI tools for different tasks, always under the guidance of the tutor. Examples of tools include: ChatGPT (text-based support, prompt generation), Grammarly (grammar checking), and MidJourney (visual exploration). The use of such tools is permitted only on the condition that students provide explicit acknowledgement and proper citation of any input generated by AI tools.

Acknowledgement
"*I acknowledge the use of (name of AI tool – e.g. ChatGPT (https://chat.openai.com/) to (specify the support, e.g. for text-based support and prompt generation, Grammarly for grammar checking, and MidJourney for visual exploration, etc.).*"

Student Work
Submission of studio documentation must be complete and correctly formatted. Missing or incomplete submission of the documentation folder will result in the grade for the course being withheld. This will prevent registration for the following term or delay graduation. In addition, a grade deduction of *one letter grade* will be made.

External Examination
Of paramount importance to the academic rigour and professional relevance of the architecture programme, the external examination process serves as a critical and impartial review mechanism. An invited panel of distinguished practitioners, academics, and industry experts convenes to rigorously evaluate the school's pedagogical ecosystem. This comprehensive audit scrutinises the fairness and consistency of the internal assessment process, benchmarks the standard and ambition of student work

against national and international norms, and provides invaluable feedback on the intellectual and pedagogical direction of the curriculum itself.

As a cornerstone of this process and a mandatory graduating requirement, final-year students from both the Bachelor of Social Sciences (Architecture) and Master of Architecture programmes must present their final project and portfolio work in person. This formal defence before the external panel not only validates the authenticity and depth of their learning but also simulates a professional practice environment, demanding they articulate their design rationale, critical thinking, and technical resolution to an authoritative audience, thereby preparing them for the collaborative and discursive nature of the architectural profession.

SCHEDULE

Important Dates

1_Studio Selection	01 SEP
2_COLLECTIVE Feedback	13, 16 OCT
3_COLLECTIVE Exhibition	1-2-3 DEC
4_PROJECT Proposal	12 DEC
5_PROJECT Technical Review	26 FEB, 2,5 MAR
6_PROJECT Final Presentation	4-5-6 MAY
7_PROJECT BOOK	4-5-6 MAY
8_EXTERNAL EXAMINATION	12-13-14-15 MAY

Term 1: 1 September 2025 (Monday) – 29 November 2025 (Saturday)

WEEK 01		
01.09	**ORIENTATION & STUDIO PRESENTATION**	**Studio Selection for Students**
04.09	**DAY_01 OF STUDIO**	**Studio Sections Announced**
WEEK 02		
08.09	**STUDIO**	System and Ecology (desk research)
11.09	**STUDIO**	System and Ecology (desk research)
WEEK 03		
15.09	**STUDIO**	System and Ecology (desk research)
18.09	**STUDIO**	System and Ecology (desk research)
WEEK 04		
22.09	**STUDIO**	System and Ecology (mapping and diagrams)
25.09	**STUDIO**	System and Ecology (mapping and diagrams)
WEEK 05		
29.09	**STUDIO**	System and Ecology (mapping and diagrams)
02.10	**STUDIO**	System and Ecology (mapping and diagrams)
WEEK 06		
06.10	**STUDIO TRIP**	GBA Study trip (video filming)
09.10	**STUDIO TRIP**	GBA Study trip (video filming)
WEEK 07		
13.10	**REVIEW**	COLLECTIVE Feedback
16.10	**REVIEW**	COLLECTIVE Feedback
WEEK 08		
20.10	**STUDIO**	System and Ecology (prototype design)
23.10	**STUDIO**	System and Ecology (prototype design)
WEEK 09		
27.10	**STUDIO**	System and Ecology (prototype design)
30.10	**STUDIO**	System and Ecology (prototype design)

WEEK 10		
03.11	**STUDIO**	System and Ecology (prototype design)
06.11	**STUDIO**	System and Ecology (prototype design)
WEEK 11		
10.11	**STUDIO**	System and Ecology/Prototype (exhibition production)
13.11	**STUDIO**	System and Ecology/Prototype (exhibition production)
WEEK 12		
17.11	**STUDIO**	System and Ecology/Prototype (exhibition production)
20.11	**STUDIO**	System and Ecology/Prototype (exhibition production)
WEEK 13		
24.11	**STUDIO**	System and Ecology/Prototype (exhibition production)
27.11	**STUDIO**	System and Ecology/Prototype (exhibition production)
WEEK 14		
01 – 03.12	**EXHIBITION**	COLLECTIVE EXHIBITION
WEEK 15		
12.12	**PROJECT PROPOSAL**	PROJECT PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Term 2: 5 January 2026 (Monday) – 18 April 2026 (Saturday)

WEEK 19		
05.01	**STUDIO**	Prototype
08.01	**STUDIO**	Prototype
WEEK 20		
12.01	**STUDIO**	Prototype
15.01	**STUDIO**	Prototype
WEEK 21		
19.01	**STUDIO**	Prototype
22.01	**STUDIO**	Prototype
WEEK 22		
26.01	**STUDIO**	Prototype
29.01	**STUDIO**	Prototype
WEEK 23		
02.02	**STUDIO**	Prototype/Urban Adaptation and Transformation
05.02	**STUDIO**	Prototype/Urban Adaptation and Transformation
WEEK 24		
09.02	**STUDIO**	Prototype/Urban Adaptation and Transformation
12.02	**STUDIO**	Prototype/Urban Adaptation and Transformation
WEEK 25		
16.02	**Lunar New Year Vacation (16-22 Feb)**	No Class
19.02	**Lunar New Year Vacation (16-22 Feb)**	No Class
WEEK 26		
23.02	**STUDIO**	Prototype/Urban Adaptation and Transformation
26.02	**REVIEW**	Prototype/Urban Adaptation and Transformation
WEEK 27		
02.03	**REVIEW**	PROJECT TECHNICAL REVIEW
05.03	**REVIEW**	PROJECT TECHNICAL REVIEW

WEEK 28		
09.03	**STUDIO**	Urban Adaptation and Transformation
12.03	**STUDIO**	Urban Adaptation and Transformation
WEEK 29		
16.03	**STUDIO**	Urban Adaptation and Transformation
19.03	**STUDIO**	Urban Adaptation and Transformation
WEEK 30		
23.03	**STUDIO**	Urban Adaptation and Transformation
26.03	**STUDIO**	Urban Adaptation and Transformation
WEEK 31		
30.03	**STUDIO**	Urban Adaptation and Transformation
02.04	**STUDIO**	Urban Adaptation and Transformation
WEEK 32		
06.04	**Easter Holiday (3-6 Apr)**	No Class
09.04	**STUDIO**	Urban Adaptation and Transformation
WEEK 33		
13.04	**STUDIO**	Urban Adaptation and Transformation
16.04	**STUDIO**	Urban Adaptation and Transformation
WEEK 34		
20.04	**STUDIO**	Urban Adaptation and Transformation
23.04	**STUDIO**	Urban Adaptation and Transformation
WEEK 35		
27.04	**STUDIO**	Urban Adaptation and Transformation
30.04	**STUDIO**	Urban Adaptation and Transformation
WEEK 36		
04 – 06.05	**FINAL REVIEW + PROJECT BOOK**	PROJECT BOOK SUBMISSION
WEEK 37		
12 – 15.05	**EXTERNAL EXAMINATION**	

Grade	Descriptor	Criteria	Points
A	Excellent	Comprehensively excellent performance on all aspects of the design intention, development, technical resolution and presentation. Achieving all learning outcomes with distinction.	4
A-	Very Good	Generally outstanding performance on the design intention, development, technical resolution and presentation. Achieving all learning outcomes with merit.	3.7
B+	Good	Substantial performance on the design intention, development, technical resolution and presentation. Achieving all learning outcomes satisfactorily.	3.3
B			3
B-			2.7
C+	Fair	Fair performance on the design intention, development, technical resolution and presentation. Achieving all learning outcomes at a passing standard.	2.3
C			2
C-			1.7
D+	Pass	Barely satisfactory performance on the design intention, development, technical resolution and presentation. Achieving all learning outcomes at a barely satisfactory standard.	1.3
D			1
F	Failure	Unsatisfactory performance on the design intention, development, technical resolution and presentation. Not achieving all learning outcomes.	0

Academic Honesty Statement

*Please print out and pin-up next to your works on your allocated panels

Relating to the 2025-26 Studio Review pin-up (MArch students)

Please tick one of the following:

☐ All the work and models presented at the Final Review were made by me personally

☐ All the work and models presented at the Final Review were made by me.
with the exception of the following:

Under all circumstances, students must declare all work done by others by completing this form before the review. Provide a detailed explanation of the third party's identity (name and relationship to the student), when and how they were utilized, and the specific tasks they performed in the project.

Student's Name: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

Tutor's Name: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

Written Feedback to Students

Term: _____ **Grade:** _____

Course Code: _____

Review: _____

Tutor: _____

Student Name: _____

Student ID: _____

Feedback from Tutor:

Achievements:

Challenges: