



**THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA  
SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE & PLANNING**

**COURSE SYLLABUS  
ARPL 601, 603, 701: Concentration Studio I, II or III**

Fall Semester 2014  
Graduate Class

**Course website:** <http://faculty.cua.edu/bermudez/courses/bermudez-bormida>

---

**Credit Hours:** 6

**Prerequisites:** ARPL 302, 502, 601, 602/503, or 603 (depending on the student's standing)

**Classroom:** CROUGH Graduate Studio

**Days and hours of class meetings:** MWF 2:10-6:00pm

**Instructors contact information:**

Associate Professor **Julio Bermudez**, Ph.D.

Office: Crough B-22A — Phone: (202) 319-5755 — email: [bermudez@cua.edu](mailto:bermudez@cua.edu)

Office Hours: Wednesdays 11:00 am-12:00 Noon *and* by appointment (contact instructor)

2014 Walton Critic (Visiting Scholar) **Eliana Bórmida**, Architect

Office: Crough B-22A — Phone: (202) 319-5755

Office Hours: by appointment (contact instructor directly)

---

**Course Description**

This studio explores advanced ideas of architectural design as related to the Sacred Space and Cultural Studies graduate concentration. It uses three related projects (an *introductory theoretical exercise*, a *2-week long warm-up urban project* and a *complex building located in a rural setting*) as pedagogical vehicles to study the relationship between nature, the quotidian and spirituality as foundations of architecture. The studio also hosts 2014 Walton Critic Eliana Bórmida for 3 weeks, preceded with preparation work laid-out by the special guest in consultation with Professor Bermudez. During her visit, focused assignments will be given to speed-up students' growth by tapping into architect Bórmida's unique expertise. The studio will produce developed architectural solutions demonstrated through clear and in-depth design definition, crafted presentations, and articulated arguments. For more specific information, see the COMPANION course description attached to this syllabus (or visit class website).

**Instructional Methods**

The studio make use of traditional (and proven) methods of teaching architectural design, such as specific design assignments, desk criticism (individual and group), informal public pin-ups/reviews and discussions, formal design juries, lecturing, readings, precedents/case studies, field trips, etc.

## Required & Recommended Texts

While the following books will be used throughout the semester, there will be other required or recommended texts (i.e., articles, book chapters, etc.) and media content (e.g., video, music, etc.). Please, refer to each design assignment for specifics (to be handed out separately).

*The Eyes of the Skin*, Juhani Pallasmaa (Wiley, 2005)

*Voluntary Simplicity*, Duane Elgin (New York: William Morrow, 1993)

*Architecture of the Everyday*, Steven Harris and Deborah Berke (New York: Princeton Arch Press, 1997)

*For an Architecture of Reality*, Michael Benedikt (New York: Lumen Books 1987)

*Principia Architectonica*, Alberto Campo Baeza (Mairea, 2012)

*Claudio Silvestrin*, Franco Bertoni translated by Lucinda Byatt (Birkhäuser 1999)

*Minimum*, John Pawson (London: Phaidon Press Ld 1998)

## Other materials (readings, bibliography, detailed calendar, web links and info, etc.)

Please, review the STUDIO TOPIC document (website), detailed schedule, particular assignments, and more in the course website (this material will be also handout at the appropriate time).

## Course Goals & Pedagogy

In general, the Sacred Space and Cultural Studies (SSCS) concentration studio introduces and/or advances (depending on the student background and level) fundamental skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to build disciplinary expertise on how spirituality, culture and architecture interact and affect one another. In this occasion, we will investigate 'locality,' everyday life, and spirituality as they shape and are expressed through architecture. We will focus on how the phenomenology of buildings creates opportunities for elevating our realization of the ordinary as a path to the transcendent. This inquiry will be done under a premise of voluntary simplicity and the insights and experience of master architect Eliana Bórmida – the 2014 Walton Critic – to guide the studio pedagogic and ideological path. These intentions are deployed in four teaching phases, each addressing learning objectives that build upon each other:

**Phase One (2 weeks): *Preparation*** provides the basic intellectual scaffolding for the rest of the semester. It involves the study of the quotidian-everyday life vis-a-vis Voluntary Simplicity and getting acquainted with relevant precedents, in this case, the work of Bórmida & Yanzón architects and minimalist-essentialist architecture. Work will be done in teams.

**Phase Two (2 weeks): a *warm-up project*** asks students to envision an Urban Spiritual Retreat in the middle of (everyday life in) downtown, Washington DC. Phase Two introduces students to the major conceptual and methodological dimensions that will be developed during the rest of the semester. Work will be done individually and/or teams.

**Phase Three-A (1 week): *Site & Program Analyses*** familiarize students with the site conditions and building program (a Spiritual Retreat in a rural environment). Phase Three gets students ready to start parti development. Work will be done in teams.

**Phase Three-B (2 weeks): *Parti*** asks students to develop a scheme for the building program and site following a design methodology grounded on phenomenology and locality (based on Bórmida's approach). Students will have a chance to work and direct relation with the 2014 Walton Critic. At the end of this intense period students will have a successful parti that will be developed over the remaining of the semester. Work will be done individually or in teams (depending the situation).

**Phase Four (8 weeks): *Schematic Design Development and Presentation*** involves the skillful evolution of the parti produced in Phase Three based on the consideration of precedents and experiential simulation-narrative methods. Architect Eliana Bórmida (and other special guests) will participate in the final review. The purpose of Phase Four is the integration and communication of the architectural work developed throughout the semester.

## Goals for Student Learning

At the conclusion of the course, the student will be able to:

- understand and utilize fundamental concepts, arguments and examples related to the relationship among architecture, culture and spirituality;
- find, interpret, and utilize relevant SSCS precedents;
- understand and apply phenomenological (1<sup>st</sup> Person), interpretive (2<sup>nd</sup> Person) and analytical (3<sup>rd</sup> person) methods to architectural problems;
- see and acknowledge own frame of (professional, cultural, and spiritual) reference in relation to others;
- gauge space, program, site, tectonics, and experience based on SSCS values and ideas;
- use analog and digital media, representations and methods in dialogic and productive ways;
- understand, develop, and use conceptual schemes (partis) to organize, elaborate and criticize architectural design work;
- respond to a demanding architectural program within a complex set of contextual forces using a meta-cognitive frame of reference;
- develop the tectonic and phenomenological dimensions of a building type;
- deploy oral as well as analog-digital graphic means to present an architectural project thoroughly;
- understand, articulate, and propose nuanced architectural and theoretical arguments regarding the role of voluntary simplicity in today's civilization;
- develop, negotiate, and utilize rules of interactions to successfully cooperate with others.

For more specific learning outcomes, please refer to each particular assignment. See course webpage.

## Professional Standards Addressed

Although the studio focuses on these three NAAB criteria:

- [A.2] Design Thinking Skills
- [A.3] Visual Communications Skills,
- [A.7] Use of Precedents

We will also actively cover the following criteria:

- [A.1] Communication Skills
- [A.5] Investigative Skills
- [A.6] Fundamental Design Skills
- [A.8] Ordering Systems Skills
- [A.9] Historical Traditions and Global Culture
- [A.10] Cultural Diversity
- [A.11] Applied Research
- [B.2] Accessibility
- [B.3] Sustainability
- [B.4] Site Design
- [B.5] Life Safety
- [C.1] Collaboration
- [C.2] Human Behavior
- [C.8] Ethics and Professional Judgment
- [C.9] Community and Social Responsibility

## Course Requirements

There are five Assignments covering the four Learning Phases described above. The specifics for each one will be defined at the time a particular assignment is introduced. All the projects must be completed in order to pass the course. Please, refer to the website for the specifics of each assignment.

## Expectations and policies

### *Academic Integrity*

Academic integrity is not merely avoiding plagiarism or cheating, but it certainly includes those things. More than anything, having academic integrity means taking responsibility for your work, your ideas, and your effort, and giving credit to others for their work, ideas and effort. If you submit work that is not your own – whether test answers, whole papers or something in-between – I have a responsibility to hold you accountable for that action. I also have a responsibility to treat you with respect and dignity while doing so

The following sanctions are presented in the University procedures related to Student Academic Dishonesty (from <http://policies.cua.edu/academicundergrad/integrityprocedures.cfm>): “*The presumed sanction for undergraduate students for academic dishonesty will be failure for the course. In the context of graduate studies, the expectations for academic honesty are greater, and therefore the presumed sanction for dishonesty is likely to be more severe, e.g., expulsion. ... In the more unusual case, mitigating circumstances may exist that would warrant a lesser sanction than the presumed sanction.*”

At times, I may ask you to do group work for an in-class presentation or group project. For that *specific* assignment, you are allowed to share material, ideas and information; however, for any related work that is to be submitted on an individual basis, I expect your submission to be your own in its entirety

For more information about what academic integrity means at CUA, including your responsibilities and rights, visit <http://integrity.cua.edu>

### *Supplemental Expectations and Policies*

See Studio Culture Policy (attached)

See School of Architecture & Planning Policies (attached)

## Assessment

The weight of each of the five Learning Phases will be broken down as follows:

Phase One:	<b><i>Preparation (team work)</i></b>	5%
Phase Two:	<b><i>Warm-up Design Exercises (individual or team work)</i></b>	10%
Phase Three:	<b><i>Site, Program and Design Parti (team and individual work)</i></b>	35%
Phase Four:	<b><i>Schematic Design, Dev. &amp; Presentation (team-indiv work)</i></b>	40%
Total		90%

While projects will be primarily evaluated using the jury/review system and focused on a set of criteria (different for each phase/project), the faculty will also consider the level of inquiry (breadth, depth, method, logic and creativity) that the student’s effort demonstrated during the design process. Other pedagogic dimensions such as a student growth (i.e., improvements in skills, knowledge, attitude, questioning, etc.) as well as their participation, collaborative practice, citizenship and/or committed effort throughout the semester will count toward the ***remaining 10% of the grade.***

## University grades

The University grading system is available at

<http://policies.cua.edu/academicundergrad//gradesfull.cfm#II> for undergraduates and

<http://policies.cua.edu/academicgrad//gradesfull.cfm#iii> for graduate students.

Reports of grades in courses are available at the end of each term on <http://cardinalstation.cua.edu> .

## Course Schedule

See attached Calendar or visit course website. However, some modifications are likely depending on how the studio work progresses. Students are expected to review the updated schedule at regular intervals.

## Bibliography

See each particular assignment (or visit course website).

## Campus Resources for student support

### Library

The Architecture and Planning Library is located in the basement of our building (phone: ext. 5167). Books on reserve, however, are located in Mullen Library, CUA main library. For other locations, library services, research tools, research guides, and more, see: <http://libraries.cua.edu> or call ex. 5070. For assistance on papers and assignments, consult the research guides at <http://guides.lib.cua.edu> or schedule an appointment with a subject librarian at <http://libraries.cua.edu/about/subjlibs.html>

**Tutoring:** The Center for Academic Success can help. See <http://success.cua.edu/tutoring/index.cfm>

### Other Services:

<http://success.cua.edu/resources/index.cfm> has information to the following:

- The Writing Center in 111 O'Boyle Hall, phone ext. 4286. See <http://english.cua.edu/wc>
- Computer Centers in multiple locations. For help, call ext. 4357. See <http://computing.cua.edu>
- Counseling Center in 127 O'Boyle Hall, phone ext. 5765. See <http://counseling.cua.edu>
- The Dean of Students Office, in the Pryz. See <http://deanofstudents.cua.edu>

## Accommodations for students with disabilities

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss specific needs. Please contact Disability Support (at 202-319-5211, room 201 Pryzbyla Center) to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. For more information, visit the website: [dss.cua.edu](http://dss.cua.edu) .

## Academic Support Services

The university's primary academic support resources are located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Pryzbyla Center. These affiliated offices and services include:

**The Undergraduate Advising Center** offers guidance to all undergraduates, especially first-year students, as they move toward their academic goals.

**Phone:** (202) 319-5545 **Email:** [cua-advising@cua.edu](mailto:cua-advising@cua.edu) **Web:** [advising.cua.edu](http://advising.cua.edu)

**The Center for Academic Success** provides academic support services for all students through a broad base of programs and services, including Tutoring Services, Workshops, Academic Coaching, Individual Skills Meetings, Peer Mentoring, and more.

**Phone:** (202) 319-5655 **Email:** [cua-academicssuccess@cua.edu](mailto:cua-academicssuccess@cua.edu) **Web:** [success.cua.edu](http://success.cua.edu)

**The Writing Center** provides free, one-on-one consultations with trained graduate instructors for writing projects across all disciplines at any stage of the process, from brainstorming to revising.

Appointments in the main location, 202 Pryz, can be scheduled in advance online (<http://english.cua.edu/wc/>). Drop-in appointments are also welcome based on availability in the Pryz and at the satellite location in the Mullen Library Lobby (see website for days and hours).  
**Phone:** (202) 319-4286 **Email:** [cua-writingcenter@cua.edu](mailto:cua-writingcenter@cua.edu) **Web:** [english.cua.edu/wc/](http://english.cua.edu/wc/)

**Disability Support Services** provides programs and services designed to support and encourage the integration of students with disabilities into the mainstream of the university community.  
**Phone:** (202) 319-5211 **Email:** [cua-disabilityservices@cua.edu](mailto:cua-disabilityservices@cua.edu) **Web:** [dss.cua.edu](http://dss.cua.edu)

**The Counseling Center** provides free individual and group counseling services, psychiatric consultation, alternative testing, and emergency services to CUA students. In addition, we provide consultation services and outreach programs to the CUA community. Appointments can be scheduled in person in 127 O'Boyle Hall, or by phone.  
**Phone:** (202) 319-5765. **Web:** [counseling.cua.edu](http://counseling.cua.edu)

## School of Architecture & Planning Policies *(attachment to syllabus)*

### Achievement

Grades on exams and assignments are based on the degree to which each student has achieved course learning objectives. They do not depend on how hard a student worked, the student's degree of self-satisfaction, or the number of other things a student was trying to juggle during the same semester.

### Assignments

In general, no "make up" or "extra credit" projects will be allowed. Students are urged to do a good job the first time. Incomplete work will be graded as is. Limited extensions of time will be allowed only when the Dean approves a request to assign a grade of "Incomplete" (see "Attendance", below).

Papers are expected to be free of spelling and grammatical errors. With computerized spell-check and grammar-check, this is particularly easy. Professionalism counts.

Lost work, crashed computers, etc., will not be accepted as excuses. Back up files and keep hard copies.

### Attendance

As noted in the Academic Regulations for Undergraduates:

***XII. Attendance at Class:** Good scholarship requires the presence of students at all class and laboratory meetings. The responsibility for prompt and regular class attendance rests upon the individual student. If, for any reason, a student is absent too frequently from class, it may become impossible for that student to receive a passing grade. Authority for excusing absences rests with the teacher who may request that the student obtain authentication of absences considered unavoidable.*

Those who arrive late or depart early may be counted as absent. Teachers may give failing grades to students with too many unexcused absences. Absences are excused at the discretion of the teacher.

Students are allowed time to participate in sports teams so long as they complete course requirements.

Students who are sick are asked to stay away so that they can recover and so that they don't infect others. And students facing personal or family crises are expected to need time to manage them. But in both cases, students need to manage their absences through communication and balance.

- For foreseeable absences (upcoming sports team event, religious holiday, funeral, etc.): Please notify teachers ahead of time and submit documentation if requested explaining the absence.
- For unforeseeable absences (sickness, injury, or family emergency): Please notify, or have someone else notify, teachers as soon as possible and generally no later than the end of the day of the absence. Note that unforeseen events caused by lack of planning do not justify absence.

Students must work out with teachers how they will achieve the learning objectives of the missed session(s). When the absences occur before the deadline to withdraw from a course and the teacher feels that there is no practical way to achieve the objectives, the student should withdraw. If he or she does not, the teacher has an obligation to give the student a grade of F for failing to achieve the learning objectives of the course. This is simply an acknowledgement of the infeasibility of making up the missed session(s). When the absences occur after the deadline for withdrawal, the student should request the dean to allow a grade of "Incomplete" (a form for that is posted to the school's website) to be permitted additional time to finish the work.

## **Grading**

Letter grades for architecture and planning majors for courses in those majors will be assigned by the following scale:

**A:** Exceeded Learning Objectives (Grades of A and A- allow for some nuance)

**B:** Fully Met Learning Objectives (Grades of B+, B, and B- allow for some nuance)

**C:** Partially Met Learning Objectives (Grades of C+, C, and for undergrads only, C-, allow for some nuance)

**D:** Failed to Meet Learning Objectives, even though some or even a significant amount of work was done. (Available to undergraduates only; D+ and D- grades are not available even to them.)

**F:** Failed to Meet Learning Objectives by a significant margin

Students receiving grades of **D** or **F** will be required to repeat the course until a grade of at least **C-** is earned. Students may repeat a passed course with all grades calculated into the GPA. Only failed grades may be appealed, and only when the failure was for reasons unrelated to academic performance.

## **Lecture Series Attendance**

Attendance at the school's Lecture Series events is required. No undergraduate classes are scheduled in our school at that time, so students should not have any conflicts. Lecture dates can be found on the school website. Take sketchbooks to the lectures to make drawn as well as written notes.

## **School Closure**

In the event of unforeseen school closures, students are expected to maintain their progress in courses by such means as completing assigned readings and completing and submitting assigned work electronically when due. See teachers for supplemental procedures applicable to specific courses.

The Provost will determine any changes in the academic calendar and usually will notify the entire campus community by e-mail.