What is the power of design to realize new urban potentialities?

This research-based theory seminar will explore how evolving trends will impact the future of the city and what implications these trends will have on architectural and urban design. The topics we will discuss include but are not limited to: rapid urbanization, emerging transit paradigms, a growing water crisis, adaptive reuse, affordability, and social equity. The focus will be on Portland, and yet we will seek parallels and lessons from other urban environments. And while we will have an eye to the future, our efforts will also be grounded in understandings of urban history.

The course requires individuals to assume a proactive stance in considering these issues. The goal will be for each course participant to articulate a clear sub-interest within the larger topic of the seminar. Such an effort will have value in and of itself; it is also intended to help positively shape educational goals and professional aspirations moving forward. To that end, the role of the instructor and guests will be to guide participants to resources that will enable them to further cultivate their interests.

With the acquisition of research skills in mind, the seminar is organized in a manner akin to a conference. This will include the submission of draft abstracts for blind review, research workshops, and ultimately the development of manifestos that will be presented at an end-of-quarter symposium THE FUTURE OF THE CITY.

Learning outcomes:

• Participants will develop more critical and informed attitudes about evolving trends impacting the city and how these will affect architectural and urban design
• Participants will gain awareness of various research methodologies relevant to the discipline and practice of architecture
• Participants will demonstrate awareness of the value of systems thinking
• Participants will be able to articulate clear, relevant, and specific research hypotheses corresponding to the theme “the future of the city”
• Participants will understand how their efforts complement those of others and contribute to an enriched learning culture and understanding of the city