REFUGEES IN THE 21ST CENTURY: ARCHITECTURE ROLE IN PROBLEM-SOLVING

CRN 20393 / 20490- Tuesday and Thursday 2:15 pm-3:45 pm (tentative) Online via Zoom
3 credits

Instructor: Grace Aaraj, grace.aaraj@gmail.com (to be replaced with @uoregon.edu)

"Refugees are mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, children, with the same hopes and ambitions as us—except that a twist of fate has bound their lives to a global refugee crisis on an unprecedented scale"
This seminar sheds light on the complex and often misunderstood refugee situations of the 21st century. Leading with a global perspective, students are invited to explore in discussions and projects who refugees are, where they come from, and what problems they face that affect their future. Understanding this global perspective helps in understanding how architectural solutions have been implemented before and what should future solutions learn from past solutions.

In this seminar, the student is at the center of the learning experience.

1) Who are refugees? From a legal point of view, therefore introducing a multi-disciplinary analysis beyond refugees as future users, but with refugees as people with a loaded history that is often forgotten under the label of "refugee" or "displaced person" (Internally displaced people, Stateless people, refugees, etc.)

2) Reflecting on relevance of present solutions: The analysis from students is to put aside architectural analysis for the first while, and delve first into the analysis of the structure and mechanism of refugee relief delivery: the cost, the timeline, the sensibility, the cultural relevance, and the dignity.

3) Solutions for the refugee problem at multiple phases, from post-disaster solutions to more durable, long-term solutions.

**Student Learning Outcome:**

It is an opportunity to implement active learning methods, offering opportunities to students to experience learning refugee issues in the world we currently live in. I hope that the learning outcome will be meaningful and lasting to the students' future careers.

1) Identifying on-the-ground refugees problems and identifying practiced solutions,
2) Analyzing current solutions, and weaknesses to improve,
3) Identifying different stages of post-disaster support for refugees,
4) Understanding how legal Situation of refugees depending on countries and how they affect humanitarian interventions,
5) Reflecting on the role of designers and architects in solving and reducing problems,
6) Defining the right of refugees: Shelter, safety, dignity, food, WASH, play...
7) Understanding the relationship between the migration of refugees and the development
8) Being able to question existing solutions, learn from them and present characteristics of better solutions (both logistically and from a design point of view)
Format:
The format of the course is interactive, via online learning and diverse materials ranging from readings, interviews with practitioners, and multi-media review.

International guest lecturers will be announced consequently, taking the opportunity of the situation of lockdowns to virtually host researchers, activists, and architects who attempted solutions or made them happen. A guest lecturer’s role is to shed light on problems they worked on and how they solved it. Discussions will be moderated by the instructor. Sessions including guest lecturers or media reviews are expected to be interactive as well.

Due to the situation of COVID-19, all group work and individual work will not require in-person visits or field trips. The safety and well-being of the students is a priority. The course will allow reasonable flexibility when seen adequate.

The seminar will involve a combination of *individual work*, and large-group discussions, as follows:

- Research and present precedents on the architecture used to solve refugees’ problems worldwide (*In particular cases, and at the request of no more than 2 students, teamwork can be accepted for the initial phases of the research.)*
- Engage in group discussions and readings,
- Develop individual emphasis on a case studio involving refugees or internally displaced people due to natural or man-made disasters.

Deliverables:
The deliverables are divided into three consecutive and interconnected parts:

Part 1: Story of context (roles, socio political forces)
Part 2: Analysis of architecture and implementation logistics
Parts 1 and 2 are short parts intended to be analytical. These parts can be done individually, or per group as long as it is once analyzed scenario per person. In the case of group works, comparative and contrast studies are encouraged.

Part 3: Design recommendations through diagrams and proposals.
Part 3 is individual work. Format and deliverables to be announced at a later stage. The intention of this part is to create alternative solutions based on lessons learned from parts 1 and 2.