ARCH 439 / 539 Minimal Dwelling

Winter 2022 / Department of Architecture – University of Oregon / Eugene

Instructor:  Professor Emeritus Michael Fifield, FAIA, AICP
Time: Thursdays 4:00-6:50 PM in 206 Lawrence Hall
ARCH 439 CRN: 24855   ARCH 539 CRN: 24860
Credits: 3
Prerequisites: Junior Standing. Open to all majors in the College of Design with design backgrounds.

Note: This course fulfills one of the courses required for the Graduate Housing Specialization.

CATALOG DESCRIPTION:
Examination of the design of small dwelling units for a variety of user groups and special situations.

SPECIFIC FOCUS:
This course is a combination lecture, seminar, and workshop in the examination of small unit design at higher densities as a strategy to deal with compact growth and affordability. In addition, shelters for the homeless, disaster-relief housing, migrant farm worker housing, S.R.O. hotels, capsule hotels, and modular/prefab homes will be examined. The course will review various examples of small unit design and students will research, design, and/or construct prototypes, depending on individual student interests.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:
Class attendance and participation. Although there are recommended reading assignments, the main thrust of the course will be based on projects. The class meets once a week for three hours; the format is essentially a lecture/workshop. This term, you have some choices. Every student must complete at least two bi-weekly (every two weeks) projects (#1) from a choice of six types (e.g., ADU, Small Cottage House, Disaster Relief, Temporary Homeless Shelter, Micro-Unit, Pre-Fab). Project due dates will be staggered (e.g., half the class presenting one week, the other half the next week during the term). Each of these short assignments is 20% of the final grade. If you wish to do a major design team project (#2) then it will be worth 60% of the grade. Instead, if you wish to do a research paper (#2) or case study (#2) as an individual project, it will be worth 40% of the grade and you will need to do a third Project #1 (at 20% each). If you choose a design project for the primary project #2 (60%), it should be different from one of the two bi-weekly projects completed.

NOTE: The primary Project (#2) will be due / presented on Thursday, March 3. March 3 is the last class period. However, final documentation and/or built prototype of any major design project such as the modular, prefabricated house kits (if you choose this as Project #2) can be completed no later than the time of the Final Exam (12:30 PM) on Monday, March 14. You may turn it in as early as March 3 if you wish.

COURSE FORMAT: The course meets once a week for almost three hours each week, typically as follows:

• 1st hour: Presentation of weekly topic by instructor
• 2nd hour: Student group presentations of bi-weekly assignments
• 3rd hour: Student peer group breakout discussions of next week’s project