

Northeastern University School of Architecture

Anti-Displacement Studio

ARCH 5115 Schedule for Fall 2021: Mondays and Thursdays, 1:35pm-4:30pm

Lily Song, Assistant Professor (L.song@northeastern.edu)

Office hours: 541 Holmes Hall, Thursdays 11am-1pm or by Zoom appointment

Course Schedule

	DATE	TOPIC	DO	DUE
week 1	Thu 9 Sept		Intro	
week 2	Mon 13 Sept Thu 16 Sept	UNRAVELING	Kick off Exercise 1A Desk crits	
week 3	Mon 20 Sept Thu 23 Sept		Share out Kick off Exercise 1B	Exercise 1A
week 4	Mon 27 Sept Thu 30 Sept		Desk crits Pin ups	
week 5	Mon 4 Oct Thu 7 Oct	V	Share out Debrief + reflection	Exercise 1B
week 6	Mon 11 Oct Thu 14 Oct	REVISITING	NO CLASS Kick off Exercise 2	
week 7	Mon 18 Oct Thu 21 Oct		Desk crits Pin ups	
week 8	Mon 25 Oct Thu 28 Oct	V	Share out Debrief + reflection	Exercise 2
week 9	Mon 1 Nov Thu 4 Nov	PRAXIS	Kick off Exercise 3 Desk crits	
week 10	Mon 8 Nov Thu 11 Nov		Desk crits NO CLASS	
week 11	Mon 15 Nov Thu 18 Nov		Desk crits	
week 12	Mon 22 Nov Thu 25 Nov		Desk crits NO CLASS	
week 13	Mon 29 Nov Thu 2 Dec		Desk crits Pin ups	
week 14	Mon 6 Dec Thu 9 Dec	V	Share out Debrief + reflection	Exercise 3
week 15	Mon 13 Dec			Final Cumulative Course Portfolio

Note: this schedule may change during the semester. Students will be notified of any changes.

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Courtesy of Sweet Water Foundation

Anti-Displacement Studio

“Architecture is reaching out for the truth.” –Louis Kahn

“You cannot change any society unless you take responsibility for it, unless you see yourself as belonging to it and responsible for changing it.” – Grace Lee Boggs

Course Background

Displacement is the forced relocation and exclusion of people from places of origin, residence, and belonging. In the 21st or “urban” century, the restructuring of cities as engines of economic growth based on knowledge and service sectors, commodification of housing as financial assets and instruments, and escalating socioeconomic inequality have destabilized urban neighborhoods and routinized gentrification and displacement. Where “gentrification” –deriving from “gentry”–spotlights the privileged status of incoming populations, “displacement” emphasizes the standpoint of the spatially ejected and dispossessed. “Anti-displacement”—in contrast to the passive stance of non-displacement—actively redresses past and continuing harms of displacement along with underlying structural conditions and drivers. It follows traditions of collective refusal, cultural preservation, and equitable, regenerative development among Black, indigenous, anti-colonial, and poor people’s movements.

For design professions, rampant urban displacement presents a proverbial “canary in the mine,” symptomizing broken connection between built spaces and human needs. It further exposes our implication in spatial legacies and continuing forces of settler colonialism and racial capitalism, which perpetuate social stratification and labor exploitation, land and wealth enclosure, and resource extraction. Despite growing resonance with designers, calls for anti-displacement often register more as “calling out” than “calling in” or “call to action.” Rather than standing by and abnegating our creative will as designers, how might we respond with reflective and purposeful action? What can we learn from/with place-based activists and frontline communities who are working to re/root, regenerate, repair, and nourish collective life through spatial projects and policies in cities? How might we subvert and reformulate design to serve global majorities living in present and imminent conditions of displacement?

Course Description

This option studio seeks to unravel the contemporary conundrum of displacement urbanism with a focus on the role and responsibility of the designer. Students will understand historical and institutional drivers of urban displacement in the United States along with larger economic, political, social, cultural, and spatial structures, which circumscribe conventional planning and design responses. Students will additionally conduct design research and exercises that “sister” anti-displacement initiatives situated in post-pandemic Chicago and Los Angeles-- through virtual collaborations with the Sweet Water Foundation (SWF) and Alliance for Community Transit- Los Angeles (ACT-LA) respectively.^[1]

SWF and ACT-LA are each rooted in place and relational, resourceful, and reparative in their approach, offering creative insights on how to design for anti-displacement. Sweet Water Foundation’s model of regenerative neighborhood development and corresponding civic architecture, urban ecology, wellness, education, and workforce programs are transforming urban conditions of manufactured vacancy and blight into beauty, hope, and belonging in Chicago. The Alliance for Community Transit- Los Angeles is a coalition of 41 community-based organizations that conducts grassroots organizing, coalition building, and direct-action campaigns to make LA accessible and affordable to all—especially low-income communities and communities of color. Their latest campaign seeks to create social housing.

Course Learning Objectives

1. Clarifying historical and institutionalized processes of urban displacement, which are seemingly divergent but interrelated across cities and regions, in which designers are complicit.
2. Understanding overlaps and differences between anti-displacement initiatives that redress past and continuing harms of displacement along with underlying structural conditions and drivers, and prevailing approaches to “equitable development” and “creative placemaking.”
3. Formulating strategies and tactics of anti-displacement planning and design in collaboration with SWF and ACT-LA.
4. Reflecting on the power and creative agency of planners and designers to subvert and reconfigure spatial design and development in solidarity with community-based activists and organizations.

Course Structure

The course precedes in three parts: unraveling, revisiting, and praxis. In the first, we will historicize, contextualize, and otherwise unravel the present phenomenon of displacement urbanism with a focus on Chicago. We will also comparatively and critically analyze the Sweet Water Foundation’s anti-displacement practice alongside other redevelopment and placemaking projects in the neighborhood. In revisiting, we will examine both displacement trends and anti-displacement policies and programs in different cities and regions around the world. In Praxis, we will apply our conceptual understanding and case study findings in collaboration with the Alliance for Community Transit-Los Angeles

Course Exercises

Module 1. Unraveling displacement and antidisplacement (Chicago)

- [Exercise 1A](#): Create a pair of [concept maps](#), one summarizing key drivers, mediating conditions, and effects of displacement and the other summarizing Sweet Water Foundation’s anti-displacement practice. Compose a reader’s guide (100-200 words) to accompany the concept map.
- [Exercise 1B](#): Applying lessons and takeaways from Exercise 1, analyze the Sweet Water Foundation’s practice of Regenerative Neighborhood Development alongside prevailing approaches to “equitable development” in Chicago (i.e. Invest South/West- Englewood Connect) and creative placemaking (i.e. Arts Bank, Color(ed) Theory, Boxville). Create ["design impact" maps](#), considering both designed and non-designed effects as well as tensions and tradeoffs for these initiatives. Compose a reader’s guide (100-200 words) to accompany the maps.

Module 2. Revisiting anti-displacement formations (Global)

- [Exercise 2](#): Working in teams, conduct case studies of anti-displacement measures around the world that are specifically focused on social/decommodified housing (Berlin, Lisbon, Vienna, Monterrey,

Singapore, and Madrid). Conduct virtual interviews with practitioners and advocates of the respective locales. Create a visual summary of case findings (i.e. defining attributes of the policies/programs, forms of tenant ownership and control, forms of public ownership and oversight).

Module 3. Anti-displacement design praxis (Los Angeles)

- [Exercise 3](#): Working in teams of 4, codesign social housing typologies (1 per team) that manifest the values and principles of the Alliance for Community Transit-Los Angeles and extend the aims of their social housing campaign in differing Los Angeles neighborhood contexts. Create visuals for social housing that can be shared among the general public to increase understanding and support of social housing. Build out examples of community governance structure, with structures that account for/address the large public concern of neighbor conflict. Based on case studies, recommend how to achieve permanent affordability for residents as well as abundant funding for operations and maintenance at high quality level.

At the end of the semester, students shall submit a required final Cumulative Portfolio of all completed assignments. This shall be a consolidated document for each assignment (1-3) submitted to your professor via Canvas by Wednesday of the final exam week. For drawings, take good quality smart phone (or better) photos (make your page flat, have even lighting across the whole image, center the camera lens on the drawing). Your files shall be labeled: "Your last name ARCH 5115 Song Fall 2021"

Course Evaluation

Your grade will be based on:

- 15% exercise 1a
- 15% exercise 1b
- 20% exercise 2
- 40% exercise 3
- 10% your participation and engagement in the class.

Course Parameters

1. REQUIRED READING: See below
2. HOMEWORK: Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date listed or you will forfeit that grade. As a matter of fairness, late work will not be accepted except in extenuating circumstances, and by prior arrangement.
3. PARTICIPATION: In this course, learning depends on participating in class on a regular basis. It is expected and required that you arrive on time and prepared to give your undivided attention and actively contribute to the class (not to your cell phone), and to remain for the entire duration of every session. Students joining the class via Zoom are expected to keep your cameras on and your mic off unless speaking.
4. ATTENDANCE: Each unexcused absence will reduce your grade, and two unexcused absences will drop your grade by one letter-grade, (i.e., from an A to a B), and three unexcused absences will be automatic failure of the course (F).
5. EXCUSED ABSENCE: Per University policy, excusable lateness or absences are as follows: religious observances; participation in University-sponsored student activities and athletic competitions; jury duty; and military service. All of these conditions except the religious observances require written documentation. Please notify your professor in advance if you plan to be absent for these reasons.
6. ILLNESS: In case of an illness or personal crisis, do not come to class, email the professor as soon as you determine that you will not be in the next class, and see a health specialist. It is your responsibility to

work with your instructor on a make-up plan and to get notes from your classmates on the class activities.

7. OFFICE HOURS: The instructor will be available Tuesday 1pm-4pm and via Zoom by appointment.
8. COURSE EVALUATIONS (TRACE): As students, you play a critical role in the University's commitment to quality teaching. Your honest responses to the course evaluation in the TRACE system are invaluable in improving the design and delivery of courses, and to my development as a faculty member.
9. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: As Northeastern students and faculty, we are part of an academic community dedicated to the creation and translation of knowledge, and therefore dependent on relationships based on honesty and trust. Actions that violate these standards undermine the community will not be tolerated. You should be familiar with the University's Code of Student Conduct, and the Academic Integrity Policy, and know that violations of these policies have serious administrative and academic consequences.

10. GRADING RUBRIK:

A: Exemplary quality work. The student:

- demonstrates one of the best performances on projects the instructor has seen at Northeastern or any other accredited schools of Architecture
- demonstrates an exceptional understanding of course lectures
- participates in class discussions cogently and willingly.

A-: High quality work. The student:

- demonstrates one of the best performances on projects within the class and a strong understanding of course lectures
- participates in class discussions intelligently and willingly.

B+: Good quality work. The student:

- demonstrates strong performance on projects and a strong understanding of course lectures.
- participates in class discussions intelligently.

B: Above average work. The student:

- demonstrates above average performance projects and an above average understanding of course lectures
- participates in class discussions when asked to respond.

B-: Average Work. The student:

- demonstrates average performance on projects and an average understanding of course lectures.
- participates in class discussions reluctantly and meets attendance requirements.

C+: Below average work. The student:

- demonstrates below average performance on projects and a below average understanding of course readings and lectures
- participates in class discussions reluctantly and meets attendance requirements.

C: Well below average work. The student:

- demonstrates well below average performance on projects and a well below average understanding of course readings and lectures
- does not participate in class discussions and engages in excuse-making, tardiness, and absence.

C-: Minimal work. The student:

- demonstrates minimal performance on projects and a minimal understanding of course readings and lectures
- does not participate in class discussions and engages in chronic excuse-making, tardiness, and absence.

D+, D, D-: Marginally acceptable work. The student:

- demonstrates unacceptable performance on projects and an unacceptable understanding of course readings and lectures
- does not participate in class discussions and engages in chronic excuse-making, tardiness, and absence.

F: Failure. The student:

- does not reach a level of achievement that is worthy of credit, or produces work that is chronically incomplete
- does not attend enough classes to pass the course.

Reference materials

Exercise 1

Readings on key displacement issues and anti-displacement strategies

- [Written Statement for the Record from Prof. Karen Chapple before the House Financial Services Committee](#)(2020)
- [Pg. 7-21](#), “Literature Review Existing Narratives of Gentrification and Displacement,” in [Building a National Narrative of Anti-Displacement Strategies: Key Takeaways from SPARCC Regions](#) (2020) by Anna Cash, Elizabeth Mattiuzzi, Anna Driscoll, Karen Chapple, Renee Roy Elias, Miriam Zuk. [see sections on racial equity, investment-driven displacement and green gentrification, disinvestment-driven displacement, health, climate change]
- [Pg. 2-5](#) from [White Paper on Anti-Displacement Policy Effectiveness](#) (2021) by Karen Chapple (UC Berkeley) and Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris (UCLA)
- [Eviction Lab](#) research on [Eviction Filing Patterns \(2020\)](#) and [Top Evicting Landlords Driving Eviction Crisis \(2020\)](#).
- Joint Center for Housing Studies, [Executive Summary, State of the Nation’s Housing, Harvard University, 2021.](#)

Optional reading:

- [Smith, N. \(2002\). New globalism, new urbanism: gentrification as global urban strategy. *Antipode*, 34\(3\), 427-450.](#)

Videos

- [Displacement](#) Explainer Video, Urban Displacement Project
- [Legacy of Redlining](#), Urban Displacement Project
- [How the real estate financial model is harming us](#) by Leilani Farha, TEDxQueensU
- Everything You Need to Know About the New Economy | Robert Reich
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fMmH_2EYohQ

Optional videos

- For more background on redlining: [UnDesign the Redline Social Exhibit Tour](#)
- Comedic relief? [Housing Discrimination](#), Last Week Tonight with John Oliver

Readings on root conditions of displacement

- SWF [“We the Publics” exhibition](#): [Re]Constructing Public Memory.
- [The Case for Reparations](#) (2014) by Ta-Nehisi Coates, The Atlantic.
- [Sustainability as Plantation Logic, Or, Who Plots an Architecture of Freedom?](#) By K. Wayne Yang
- Tuck, Eve, and K. Wayne Yang. "[Decolonization is not a metaphor.](#)" *Decolonization: Indigeneity, education & society* 1, no. 1 (2012).

- Tuck, Eve. "[Suspending damage: A letter to communities.](#)" *Harvard Educational Review* 79, no. 3 (2009): 409-428.
- [Sassen, Saskia. *Expulsions*. Harvard University Press, 2014, ch. 2.](#)

Anti-displacement practice by the Sweet Water Foundation

- [SWF Emergence of The Commonwealth timeline.](#)
- [Emmanuel Pratt, 100 day studio](#) + [The Architectural League](#) presentations
- [SWF urban ecology global fellowship presentations](#)

Exercise 2

- [How Social is that Housing? Primer from Community Service Society](#)
- [ACT-LA's Comments and Recommendations for LA City's 2021-2029 Draft Housing Element](#)
- [Healthy LA, Social Housing: models, metrics + research](#)
- Sandra McNeil's [7/13/21 presentation](#) of Social Housing case examples and basic questions
- ACT-LA [Community Plan website and toolkit](#) (2017)
- ACT-LA [website](#) + Videos: [What Is Equitable Community Planning](#), [A Changing South LA](#), and others on [ACT-LA's YouTube page](#)
- ACT-LA [Transit for All: Achieving Equity in Transit-Oriented Development](#)
- Laura Raymond's [presentation on ACT-LA](#) to community development class @ Harvard GSD (Spring 2021)
- See other materials in [shared ACT-LA + ARCH 5115 google drive](#)

Exercise 3

- [ACT-LA Narrative Session on Social Housing](#), where community members participate in explorative/visioning activities (Passcode: h**k5t8z. The session starts exactly at the 10:00 minute mark of the recording). See [the accompanying presentation](#)+ [Jamboard](#).
- Watch (1) [KCET Lost LA Building the Metropolis](#) + (2) [Artbound Third L.A. with Architecture Critic Christopher Hawthorne](#)
- Browse [3rd LA Archive: L.A. House and Home: New Paths in Housing Policy and Residential Architecture](#), [Turn Off the Sunshine: Shade as an Equity Issue in a Warming Los Angeles](#)
- Read (1) ["How Immigrants Changed LA"](#) + (2) ["Common Ground at Ground Zero,"](#) both by Manuel Pastor
- Read ["Mobilizing for Transit Oriented Communities in Los Angeles" by Lily Song + Laura Raymond](#)

[1] [Sis-tered, sis-ter-ing, sis-ters \(v\). Architecture.](#) To affix a beam or other structural member to (another) as a supplementary support. Read more about sistered design [here](#).