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1111 684-005

## course information - arch 684\_005

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### ARCH 684\_005 LEC 0.50CR

#### Dodolab

**DodoLab: Grad Elective (Winter 2011)**

Led by Lisa Hirmer and Andrew Hunter, Adjunct Faculty & Researchers UW Architecture and DodoLab Principals

The disappearance of rural/agriculture lands has become a prominent concern for communities throughout the world. Once active and productive terrain that acted as a "buffer zone" between other places (whether urban or "wilderness"), the identity of the rural landscape has changed drastically over the last few centuries. Many traditionally agricultural regions have stopped being used for agricultural production, while others have changed the nature of their production. Many have become dormant, depleted and/or transitional landscapes awaiting new development as housing, industrial parks or transportation corridors. Others yet are being reclaimed as "natural" or "green" spaces. What can become of, and what is imbedded within, these highly altered spaces whether fallow or worked? How can architecture move into, inform and be informed by, these transitional spaces?

The goal of this elective is to critically examine the place, fate and potential of fringe urban areas and semi-rural landscapes and then to design and construct physical interventions that explore these issues. The immediate environment of the UW School of Architecture (including RARE, a 913 acre land reserve) offers an ideal opportunity to explore these issues in depth and in the field. The course will explore interactions between urban, rural and "wilderness" landscapes through a program of readings, discussion and research followed by the development of design proposals for the creation of built structures/interventions. While the primary focus will be local (Galt, the Grand River and the RARE site), students will be encouraged to explore wider issues and make links to communities throughout the world. The course will explore such impacts on rural lands as suburban developments, urban sprawl, industrial parks, monoculture farming, the presence of the wild in urban settings, invasive species and the emergence of urban agriculture.

Divided into three components, the course will begin with a focused analysis of issues and ideas related to the state of the rural and agricultural lands that surround urban centres. This first phase will also include presentations that consider innovative models of creative intervention by artists and architects, as well as industrial, traditional and vernacular methods of shaping and building in the landscape. This first phase will be structured as a group discussion/seminar and students will be required to present and lead discussions.

This portion of the UWSA website is maintained by Terri Boake, Undergraduate Officer.

This is the course information for the term.

Information will be updated as materials become available.

Information contained in this database is intended solely for use by registered students and does not necessarily represent content or direction for courses in past or subsequent years.

For the second and third phases of the course, students will work individually or in small teams to develop project proposals for temporary built structures, installations and/or interventions that will be executed in the final phase of the course. The course will meet weekly and will combine discussion/critiques with work sessions. While the primary work of the course will be the designing and executing of a structure/intervention, students will also be required to produce a final report on their projects (see below). The final projects will be promoted and presented as part of DodoLab's ongoing program of public activity.

#### **About DodoLab – [www.dodolab.ca](http://www.dodolab.ca)**

DodoLab is an art and design-based program that employs experimental and adaptive processes to spark positive change and resiliency. We work collaboratively with a diversity of emergent thinkers/doers to imaginatively and critically engage with the public in public. Our focus is the complex relationships between people and their surroundings and how communities define, and are defined by, their environment. DodoLab puts the creative process at the heart of confronting social and environmental challenges.

The fundamental focus of DodoLab is simple: *What are the barriers to adaptation and change?* In order to address this, we work to uncover underlying – and often unperceived – ideas, beliefs and assumptions that affect (or even govern) what we do or don't do. We want to reveal these ideas so that we can examine and discuss them openly, and so become more aware, purposeful and ultimately more resilient. DodoLab is convinced that being open to change is critical and that we desperately need to develop richer and more generous and creative adaptation strategies if we do not want to go the way of the Dodo. We want to repopulate the world with a new species of Dodos that are more than just sustainable; they are also robust, resilient and capable of surviving in an unstable, fluid environment.

DodoLab is a collaborative project of Musagetes and Waterloo Architecture. Led by Andrew Hunter and Lisa Hirmer, DodoLab involves an expanding and changing team of creative researchers with knowledge, experience and a commitment to engaging environmental and social issues and who see design and meaningful innovation as central to their work. DodoLab works with a number of like-minded organizations in Canada and Internationally.

#### **Schedule**

Weeks 1–4: seminar, readings, discussion, guests and field trips

Weeks 5–7: project proposal development

Week 8: Presentation and Critique of proposals

Weeks 9–11: Project installation/construction/production

Week 12: Project critique

(Final Report due one week after Project Critique)

#### **Final Report**

The concept of the final report may be refined based on the specifics of student projects (it may be that a student may wish to produce a video report for example) however a publishable report containing a written text of approximately 1500–2000 words accompanied by images (photos or illustrations) should be considered the basic standard.

More information:

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**Instructors:** Andrew Hunter and Lisa Hirmer

course outline