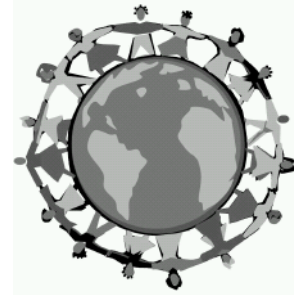


university of oregon - school of architecture and allied arts - department of architecture
sustainable cohousing design studio – arch 484/584 fall 07 – prof. nancy cheng
CRN 10400 / 10460

Sustainable Cohousing



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"To be rooted is perhaps the most important and least recognized need of the human soul. It is one of the hardest to define. A human being has roots by virtue of his real, active and natural participation in the life of the community, which preserves in living shape certain particular expectations of the future... It is necessary for him to draw well-nigh the whole of his moral, intellectual and spiritual life by way of the environments of which he forms a part." – Simone Weil, The Need for Roots

We need to envision new ways to live more harmoniously with nature and other people. Living lightly on the land requires working together, looking at how an individual can be part of sustainable systems at the scale of the unit, block, neighborhood and city. As we will consider new possibilities for bringing people together productively, the studio will emphasize group design and contributing to a learning community.

Design Approach: A PROCESS TO FOSTER DISCOVERY

RESEARCH: We'll start by examining how community and sustainable environments can support each other. Groups will create presentations about a specific design aspect of an intentional community, i.e. co-housing, communes or eco-villages.

SITE: What's the best way to design with nature? We'll consider the nature of place by first gathering site information from Eugene, and then by visiting Bend to look at examples, get to know the site and interview our clients. From personal conceptual responses to the place, groups will design analysis graphics, site massing and landscape plans.

BUILDING: After reflecting on the best approach to the site, students can regroup and each person will take part of a scheme to develop. Some students will concentrate on indoor & outdoor common areas, looking at how shared spaces can support different circles of community. Others will consider alternatives for flexible unit configurations that could accommodate a wide range of people, such as unrelated adults and single parent families, in comfortable yet compact quarters. Each student will select a sustainable aspect to integrate into the design and create a large-scale study.

RE-INTEGRATION: For the final review, we'll apply lessons learned from the parts to the whole and unify the individual efforts both conceptually and tectonically. We will consider the project at different scales to understand how urban-level decisions affect the immediate spatial experience and how details might subtly shift the larger picture.

Learning Objectives:

To understand

- how environments can support different kinds of community along with privacy.
- how to build ecologically in the Pacific Northwest region
- how design media can support idea development

Teamwork: LIVE & ONLINE

This class is a joint effort that depends on participation of all members: enthusiasm is greatly appreciated. Together we can foster the teamwork skills that are crucial to all building enterprises. Your challenge is to contribute productively to group efforts and create a supportive environment for collaboration.

We'll create groups according to interest and complementary experience, and students will have the option of regrouping at the end of each phase. Towards the middle of the term, students will give and receive feedback about their participation in small and large group discussions and activities.

To connect more closely with our Bend clients and wider community, we will build an online Wiki (last year: <http://rrcoho.pbwiki.com>) and use video-conferencing.

Class Website: <http://coho.pbwiki.com>

Copyrighted Resources at: <http://blackboard.uoregon.edu>

Media & Design Process

The class will use design media strategically, starting with sketching and sketch modeling and moving towards digital refinement. Push yourself to draw as much as possible to develop quick visualization skills and to embed the habit of looking deeply. Assignments will encourage experimentation with media, such as hand-computer hybrids and quick generation of options.

Evaluation

Students will be evaluated on design thinking, process and media & group participation (see attached rubric). Students are expected to prepare material for each class and attend each class. I have a bias for quantity: lots of quick and dirty alternatives that inform design decisions. Students who miss a review or more than 3 classes during the quarter will be in danger of not passing. Major deliverables:

1. Research Case Study
2. Site Design
 - define constraints & opportunities, then generate concept
 - identify sustainable strategies to explore
 - design site circulation, massing, landscaping & program organization
3. Building Design: (individual components of group design)
 - exterior community & semi-public space, site amenities
 - interior common spaces
 - housing units
4. Sustainable building technique or system
 - Explain key principles through relevant examples
 - Apply principles in detail design of housing unit or common space
5. Wiki postings

Sustainable Cohousing Schedule (subject to change)

1 COMMUNITY	M	9/24	Overview, partner intro, ecotopia, make groups	
	W	9/26	Chuck Rusch & Diana Fiscetti" bring ecotopia icons, focus case study duties	room 279
	F	9/28	Wiki profiles, ecotopia, Case study topics due Chuck Rusch in studio	
	Sun	10/31	Post 1st draft of case study on wiki	
2 INTERPRETING PLACE	M	10/1	Small group discussions	
	W	10/3	Case Study Presentations, prep for trip	room 279
	F	10/5	Case Studies posted to wiki, FIELD TRIP TO BEND	
	Sa	10/6	GREEN & SOLAR TOUR	
3 SITE DESIGN	M	10/8		
	W	10/10	<i>Bring Recycling tour 7pm 4446 Franklin Blvd</i>	
	F	10/12		
	Sa/Su	10/13-14	<i>Lost Valley \$Event / free tour http://lostvalley.org/</i>	
4 BUILDING W/ NATURE	M	10/15		
	W	10/17		
	F	10/19		
5 UNIT CLUSTERS & COMMON SPACE	M	10/22	Site Design Review	room 279
	W	10/24		
	F	10/26	<i>Possible Eugene or Portland tour</i>	
	Sa	10/27	<i>Northern Cal Cohousing \$tour http://cohousing.org/tours.aspx</i>	
6 GREEN MEASURES	M	10/29		
	W	10/31		
	F	11/2		
	Sun	11/4	<i>Aprovecho tour 1-5pm http://aprovecho.net/</i>	
7 EXPRESSIVE DETAIL	M	11/5		
	W	11/7		
	F	11/9	Building Design Review	Room 206
8 RE-INTEGRATION	M	11/12		
	W	11/14		
	F	11/16		
9 PRESENTATION	M	11/19		
	W	11/21		
	F	11/23	Thanksgiving - no class	
10 FEEDBACK	M	11/26	Pinup Rehearsal	room tba
	W	11/28	FINAL REVIEW 2-4pm video conf	Studio A
	F	11/30		
11 ADVISING	M	12/3	Exit Interviews	
	T	12/4	Exit Interviews	

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Sustainable Communities Network: <http://www.sustainable.org/>

Annotated links to Community Issues (cohousing), Affordable Housing, Success Stories

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Principles of Co-housing

(McCamant & Durrett interpreted by Maruja Torres' 2001 PhD thesis, Univ. of Florida)

1. **Participatory process**—cohousing communities are formed, planned and developed with the active participation of prospective residents;
2. **Intentional neighborhood design**—based on the principles of social contact design, the physical environment of cohousing encourages connectedness within the community;
3. **Extensive common facilities**—the common house and other collectively-owned facilities supplement the individual dwellings for practical and social purposes;
4. **Complete resident management**—residents are responsible for community management and maintenance.
5. **Non-hierarchical structure**—residents take on leadership roles in different tasks but leave major action and policy decisions to the community;
6. **Separate income resources**—residents have independent means of income that are not tied to community finances.

Students will need to become familiar with co-housing and sustainable building practices through required readings and independent research.