

Graduation Plan

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences



Graduation Plan: All tracks

Submit your Graduation Plan to the Board of Examiners (Examencommissie-BK@tudelft.nl), Mentors and Delegate of the Board of Examiners one week before P2 at the latest.

The graduation plan consists of at least the following data/segments:

Personal information		
Name	Stephany Knize	
Student number	5045320	
Studio		
Name / Theme	Explore Lab	
Main mentor	Nelson Mota	Architecture and Dwelling
Second mentor	Aleksandar Staničić	Methods of Analysis and Imagination
Argumentation of choice of the studio	My motivation to join Explore Lab was centred on the flexibility to approach a very specific topic in a specific urban context like Santa Cruz. I wanted to be part of a studio that encourages students to explore their personal fascination and develop their own projects while in a collaborative and interdisciplinary environment.	

Graduation project	
Title of graduation project	Urban Lounge: The Recovery of Social-Spatial Cohesion
Goal	
Location:	Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia.
The posed problem,	The historic city centre or so called "Casco Viejo" (old town) of Santa Cruz continues to be a monumental space for its citizens, but it is no longer a living element with value for use and social unity as it used to be. This raised the idealistic notion of a society coming together motivated by constructive architectural interventions that advocate social encounters and free appropriation of space, particularly for marginalized people. This research aims to address the interaction between social behaviour and urban architectural interventions, studying the notion of public spaces and how these are currently utilized.
research questions and	How can patrimonial buildings and spaces in the Casco Viejo be redefined to bring back social-spatial cohesion, and in what ways could urban voids be restored to become more inclusive without compromising traditional values and identities?
design assignment in which these result.	The object of research are informal practices in vacant or ruined areas, which will tackle a design series of small-scale clustering interventions to re-adapt existing buildings or spaces for new uses. The project will result as "pockets" of urban spaces or "cultural hubs" to encompass the idea of an 'Urban Lounge', ultimately leading toward a conscious, integrated, and restorative scheme that would enlighten existing patrimonial buildings, promote social and cultural behaviours, and celebrate the everyday life and the ordinary.

Process

Method description

My first research method will consist of observations, analysing urban studies and social practices (both as individual and community level). This must be done from experiencing spaces at eye level. Field research will help me perceive spatial activities from a first-hand experience to collect data on current practices and appropriation of space. This is a socially grounded more ethnographic research approach with the aim of achieving a deep and lengthy immersion in the culture and lives of the locals, while studying the notion of social space and observing different practices through different lenses. This part of my research seeks to explore the complexity of both public space as a concept, its use and users, and the management of public space as an aspiration and set of activities – primarily as informal practices.

As another part of my methodologies, I have categorized discussions (or a 'recollection of opinions') with the goal that through formal interviews and informal conversations, across a variety of different positions and different actors, there can be a knowledgeable interpretation of the use and meaning of spaces as well as suggestions of different ways of *adding* new meanings to spaces. This is a qualitative research method based on interaction through user perspective, and it is meant for citizens to participate and bring their voice into the research itself.

To help record and synthesize my findings, the last method consists of creating visual interpretations of otherwise invisible information through mapping. This is a socially grounded more ethnographic research approach with the aim of achieving a deep and lengthy immersion in the culture and lives of the locals, while studying the notion of social space and observing different practices through different lenses. Mapping is usually a top-down analysis, which relies on an objective or etic view. What I attempt to do instead is a type of mapping that results as an accurate ethnographic description from an internal or emic perspective - a perspective that is immersed in social practices and behaviours. This resulted as a psychogeography exploration, where social actions and spatial practices are represented by drawing them together and making connections. That is, *social-spatial* mapping.

Literature and general practical preference

Fuller, M. G., & Löw, M. (2017). Introduction: An invitation to spatial sociology. *Current Sociology*, 65(4), 469–491. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392117697461>

Jacobs, J. (1993). *The death and life of great American cities*. Vintage Books.

Lefebvre, H. (1968). *Le droit a la ville: 2e ed.* Anthropos.

Lefebvre, H. (1991). *The Production of Space* (N. S. Donald, Translated). Blackwell Publishing, London.

Limpas Ortiz, V. H. (2010). *Plan Techint: Medio siglo de urbanismo moderno en Santa Cruz de la Sierra* (1st ed.). Santa Cruz de la Sierra: Gobierno Municipal Autónomo.

Low S.M. (2009) *Towards an anthropological theory of space and place*. *Semiotica* 2009(175): 21–37.

Lynch, Kevin (1960) *The Image of the City*. Cambridge/London: The MIT Press

Putnam, R. (1995). Bowling alone: America's declining social capital. *Journal of Democracy*, 6, 65–78.

Putnam, R., Light, I., De Souza Briggs, X., Rohe, W. M., Vidal, A. C., Hutchinson, J., Gress, J., Woolcock, M. (2004). Using Social Capital to Help Integrate Planning Theory, Research, and Practice: Preface, *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 70:2, 142-192. DOI: 10.1080/01944360408976369

Rudiger, A., & Spencer, S. (2004). *Meeting the challenge: Equality, diversity and cohesion in the European Union*, Paper presented to the Joint European Commission/OECD conference on the economic effects and social aspects of migration, Brussels. Retrieved from Manca A.R. (2014) Social Cohesion. In: Michalos A.C. (eds) *Encyclopedia of Quality of Life and Well-Being Research*. Springer, Dordrecht. https://doi-org.tudelft.idm.oclc.org/10.1007/978-94-007-0753-5_2739

Staničić, A., & Štjaković, M. (2019). (Re)building Spaces of Tolerance: A "Symbiotic Model" for the Post-War City Regeneration. *Architecture and Culture*, 7:1, 113-128. DOI: 10.1080/20507828.2018.1556374

Vázquez, G. C. (2016). *Teorías e Historia de la Ciudad Contemporánea*. Barcelona: Gustavo Gili.

Reflection

1. What is the relation between your graduation (project) topic, the studio topic (if applicable), your master track (A,U,BT,LA,MBE), and your master programme (MSc AUBS)?

Throughout my time at TU Delft, I have discovered a philosophy that entails design as an interdisciplinary and collective effort to respond to contemporary needs and future issues. I've particularly gain interest in addressing societal and cultural issues that impact design – and inversely, how design impacts people's socio-spatial interaction as well. Therefore, I believe my graduation topic will not just allow me to arrive to a research-based design solution for my own fascination project but will also provide me further knowledge on a broader set of topics related to social and cultural theories, as well as understanding effective research approaches and reflection strategies.

2. What is the relevance of your graduation work in the larger social, professional, and scientific framework?

Stimulated by social, cultural, and urban issues, part of the objective of this research is to investigate new forms of cooperation, participation and actions that enhances unity within a community. There is a socially grounded responsibility within this project which implies giving citizens a space that they respect, feel identified by, and thus have a certain value for. 'Urban Lounge' will therefore be a proposal based on participatory research that will have a direct impact on the city's image and urban form, ultimately leading toward a conscious, integrated, and restorative scheme that promotes social and cultural behaviours, celebrate the everyday life and the ordinary.