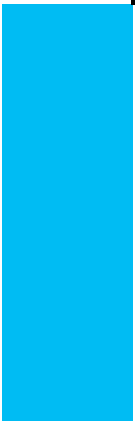


Graduation Plan

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences



Graduation Plan: All tracks

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

Personal information	
Name	Thomas Ponds
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Studio	
Name / Theme	The Border Studio / Complex Projects
Teachers	Mitesh Dixit, James Westcott, Sven Jansse, Hrvoje Smidhen
Argumentation of choice of the studio	The Border Studio deals with the complex relationship on the border region between the US and Mexico, combining architecture with social, political, economical, and environmental issues. This coincides with my interest in architectural and urban interventions in complex urban environments in our highly globalized world.
Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	The Border Bridge
Goal	
Location:	Border area between El Paso, US, and Juarez, Mexico.
The posed problem:	<p>'the US-Mexico border region is the place where the poorer of the first world meet the wealthier of the developing world.'</p> <p>J. Pick</p> <p>The border region between the United States and Mexico is intensely debated at the moment. The combination of economic potential, migration crises, the physical manifestation of homeland security and the respective current success and failure of Mexican and US economies have led to an unprecedented worldwide attention for the border region.</p> <p>The close proximity of the two nations combined with the cultural and economical difference between them has led to both problems and benefits: because of the difference in laws and labour costs, the region has developed into a manufacturing hub, fueled by tax incentives and trade policies. Cheap Mexican labour is used in Free Trade Zones right next to the border, so that products can be exported directly into the US, and further on into the western world.</p> <p>At the same time, the migration flows from Central America combined with the rise of drug related violence in Mexico, and post-9/11 sentiment have led to the erection of the Border Fence, a physical manifestation of the efforts of Homeland Security to halt illegal migration.</p> <p>The inhabitants of the border region have always had a lively</p>

	<p>economical, cultural, and social cross border exchange. The erection of the fence and increased security measures rudely disrupted this, halting the century long cross-border exchange.</p> <p>Especially in the twin cities along the border, such as San Diego-Tijuana, or El Paso-Juarez, this is visible. The border fence violently disrupts the city fabric, dividing the two cities that have had a century long history of working together.</p>
<p>research questions</p>	<p>The Border Studio wants to invest the effects of the effects of this 'architecture of violence', on both XXXL scale, looking at the whole region, as well as neighborhood scale, investigating the effect of the border.</p> <p>Looking at the whole region, the studio questions the economic model that is now in place. Would it be possible to use the economic advantage of the region in a more sustainable way, distributing the wealth to both sides of the border?</p> <p>The effects of the border fence are immediately visible in the twin cities. Is it possible to eliminate the forced division between cities that always used to work together, while keeping in mind the safety issues and visa requirements?</p> <p>And is it possible to find a new political reality for this region, which identifies itself as 'not Mexican, not American', but as a third nation, with its feet in both countries?</p> <p>In summary, the graduation project examines the realities and difficulties, the condition, of a divided, bi-national region.</p>
<p>design assignment in which these result.</p>	<p>The goal of my graduation project is an intervention on three scales: first looking at the whole region, secondly focusing on one of the twin cities in the region, and finally zooming in one border crossing in a twin city.</p> <p>In Msc.3 we have researched the region in a collaborative effort by the whole studio. Taking into account all different (social, economical, governmental) aspects of the region, this has led to a regional plan, consisting of strategy and policy, instead of traditional master planning.</p> <p>The second part of the assignment is an investigation of a twin city in the region, trying to find a new strategic master plan to reestablish the connections and collaboration between the two sides of the border city.</p> <p>Finally, on the smallest scale, my design assignment is the redevelopment of a border crossing, the critical element in bringing the cities back together. By redeveloping a border crossing into a more integrated, connecting urban tissue that brings the two sides together, I want to replace the 'architecture of violence' that is now</p>

	in place, with a project that celebrates crossing, and celebrates the interdependence between the two nations.

Process

Method description

The problem of the graduation project has been defined through extensive research on different scales. The project can be divided into 6 parts:

- initial collaborative research: with the whole studio we investigated the area on both hard and soft aspects: by mapping the different regions on infrastructure, resources etc, but also looking at migration flows, social issues, etc. we collected a vast amount of data.
- research trip: for two weeks we travelled the whole border region, investigating on site. Interviews with people, visits to NGOs and experts on the border.
- atlas: all the research has been combined into an atlas in which we filtered the research, divided it in relevant topics, finally producing a research book that can be used as a reference for projects.
- strategy: with the research a strategy has been developed for the region, dealing with the problems stated in the atlas.
- city research: zooming in on one twin city, the same problems have to be dealt with on a city scale, resulting in a combination of master planning and strategy for the twin city.
- design intervention: finally this has led to a 'brief' for the design intervention that will be dealt with in Msc.4.

Literature and general practical preference

J. Pick & E.W. Butler: Socioeconomic inequality in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands
 North American Centre for Transborder Studies, State of the border report
 Oscar J. Martinez: Border People, Life and Society in the US-Mexico Borderlands
 Norma Ojeda, 'Familias transforterizas y familias transnacionales
 Independent Task Force Report, North America, time for a new focus,
 Justin McQuirk , Radical Cities,
 Keller Easterling, Extrastate Craft
 Michael Foucault ,Crime & Punish,
 Teddy Cruz, Mapping Non-Conformity,
 Francesco Romero , Hyper Border,
 Michael Dear, Post Border City,
 Micheal Dear , Why Walls wont Work

Reflection

Relevance

The border between the US and Mexico is part of a wider network of borders that divides the western world from the developing world. The issue of a physical border wall can be found both in the past (the Berlin Wall) as in the future, as more and more kilometers of walls are going up throughout the world. Even in Europe, the border issues, especially migration, are getting more urgent.

The studio deals with more than just the border, the divide between the west and the developing world will become even more apparent, migrant crises will become more urgent, and in our globalized world, the type of international economic cooperation that happens in the US-Mexico border region will become more widespread.

The project deals with a conflicted, complex, divided bi-national territory, a condition which is exemplary for many regions in the world.

Time planning

Msc3

Week 01 | 01th September

- introduction
- selection of research region

Week 02-04| 08th September

- research for the Atlas

Week 05|29th September

- presentation of the research – First draft of Atlas

Week 06 -08 | 06th October

- study trip to Border Region

Week 09-11| 27 October

- reflection on trip
- combining research into Atlas

Week 12 | 21th November P1 PRESENTATION

Week 13-15| 27th November

- finalizing atlas
- development of region strategy
- zoom in on twin city
- initial architectural intervention ideas

Week 16|16th December P1.5 PRESENTATION

Week 17-20 | 22th December

- further development of city strategy
- development of program & architectural intervention

Week 21 | 23th January P2 PRESENTATION

Msc4

Week 01 | 02 February

- post-P2 revision of research/strategy
- program revision/elaboration
- initial ideas of program on site
- reflection of ideas throughout all scales

Week 02 | 09 February

- further study of site
- climate analysis
- further programmatic division
- definitive relationship/flow scheme

Week 03-07 | 16 Feb

- design development:
- program transformed into building
- study of routing, accessibility, security, logistics, sustainability
- spatial qualities
- technical design
- detail design
- façade studies
- material studies
- physical model studies

Week 08 | 23 March | P3 PRESENTATION (proposed date)

Week 09-13 | 30 March

- finalize overall design
- focus on integration technical/façade/sustainability design
- zoom out: integration regional/city/architectural intervention
- finalize technical/installation concept

Week 14 | 04 May

- detailed plan/section/elevation drawings
- integration of all aspects of design

Week 15 | 11 May

- presentation deliverables production

Week 16 | 18 May | P4 PRESENTATION (proposed)

Week 17-18 | 25 May

- final revision and elaboration of design

Week 19 | 8 June

- research book /documentation finish
- production of model(s)

Week 20 | 15 June

- final production of presentation drawings and models

Week 21 | 22 June | P5 PRESENTATION (proposed date)