Globalization and the Urban Environments of the Global South

Globalization, manifested through economics, culture and politics—emulated or imposed—has had an effect on the evaluation of lived spaces in contemporary urban environments. As a result, there have been changes to the processes of conceptualization and execution of urban planning and architectural development. Local and regional modalities of urban development, in some cases thousands of years old, have been transformed by the arrival of imported models. These interactions have inevitably led to a wide spectrum of environments, some exhibiting social-political tensions and violence in contested spaces, some demolishing the old urban fabrics in favor of the new or imported models, and still others resulting in fascinating third ways that draw from both the traditional and the global. The seminar will use case studies to examine urban spatial productions at various scales: from the effects of leapfrog technology in historic urban fabrics, to the development of entirely new Commercial Business Districts (CBD) that claim to offer the latest in globalized urban planning and development.

Students will write an individual research paper in the geographic area of their interest, and will be expected to give a 20 minute presentation to the class regarding their research by the middle of the semester. Finally, students will form teams to produce a final semester project focusing on a chosen aspect of an urban environment of the Global South.