

## RIVER DETOX

*Millennial developments at the waterfront to regenerate the river*

IIT Cloud Studio – Fall 2017/Spring 2018

SOM - Jorge Rovira

This studio will focus on regenerating the activity at the Chicago River waterfront, through transformative design interventions at the scale of the neighborhood. Urban design, landscape and architecture strategies will reposition the waterline to capture new resident, opportunities and energy – Advancing new living patterns and offering lifestyle alternatives for millennials. Using the river shore as an opportunity, the studio projects must deliver distinctive, inclusive places and architecture that challenge the prevailing distribution of growth and rethink the relation of the city towards the water.



*Chicago River at Sant Patrick's Day*

## **Brief:**

### ***The River waterfront as an opportunity:***

The Chicago River has been historically a strong industrial corridor. Utilizing the river for material transportation, and the water to cool machinery and eject toxins; the shores of the river, has been a strong spine of the City of Chicago. With the relocation of these industries to the outboard of the city, opportunities arise to occupy these spaces. How can we reconnect the public real with the river shore?

In addition, the industry corridor (and the river) has been the limit and separation of different neighborhoods. Often unsafe, unsecure and unpleasant places, the waterfront has been acting as a frontier, of the neighborhoods, segregating communities and compartmentalizing the urban growth. How can we use the river to stitch the different neighborhoods of Chicago together?

Last, the Chicago River has been remarkable for the contamination and pollution of the water. Highly affected by industrial and residential development the toxicity of the river has improves but still has far to go. How can we develop communities that are sustainable and respectful of the city ecosystem? Can we go further use the new habitats to clean the river instead of polluting it?

## **Designing ethos (projects):**

This studio does not have a particular aesthetic vision and will elude uniformity of projects. It will be the students that develop their own vision of the project based on their own urban beliefs and architectural sensibilities. We do believe, however, that some guidelines will need to be followed:

### Multidisciplinary:

The developments will have to be design with a deep understanding of the different scales and disciplines that are needed to develop a compelling project. The Studio will strongly encourage collaboration, teamwork and exchange of ideas at all scales and expertise. All projects will have to be multidisciplinary.

### Mix of uses: creating public realm:

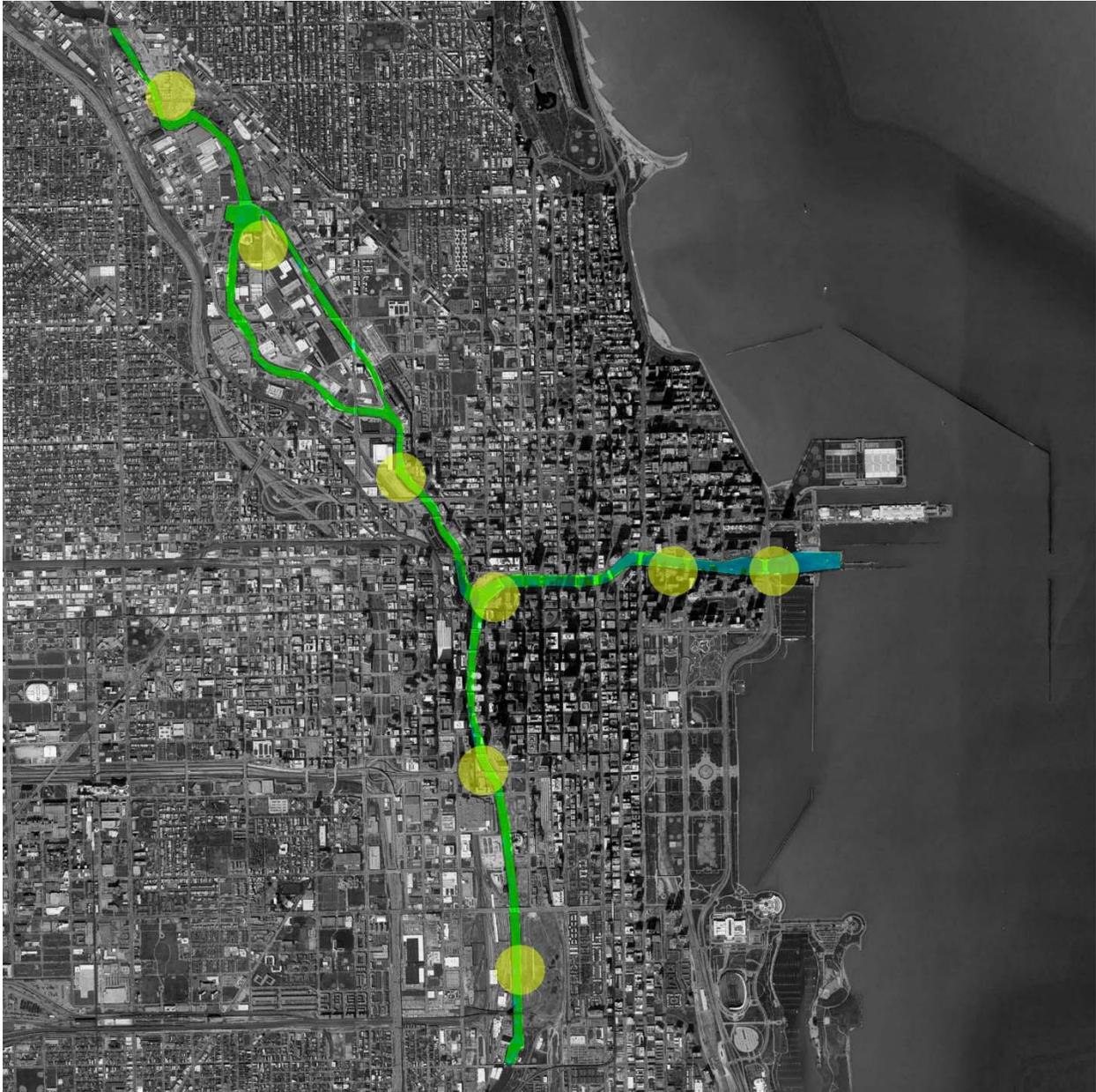
Chicago has a long tradition on great urban public spaces. However, for these spaces to be successful, they need to concentrate a mix of uses. The Studio recognizes that mix-use is one of the ingredients of a successful urban development. All projects will have to contain a different range of uses and merge them together with a public space.

### Rethinking urban habitats: millennials

Our society has changed, and with it, the way that we live and the way that we occupy the public space. A new generation of millennials needs set new parameters for urban habitat. The studio will analyze how the city is used by this metropolitan people. All projects will need to diagram and develop the house of the new way of living.

### **The diversity of sites (project sites):**

The river will be the common spine for all the projects, from Lake Michigan, to Roosevelt to the Finkl Site. The project sites will be diverse, and selected by the students after careful analysis.



*Chicago River, potential sites*

## **Logistics:**

### Modules:

The studio will operate on a module increment - with 8 total modules, 4 per semester. Each module has a specific theme/deliverable and concludes with a pin-up/review. The design work builds from module to module, midterm and final reviews are the products of multiple modules' work.

In the first two modules, research and design will run in parallel between the Chicago sites and the reference sites. Drawings will be duplicated and prepared at the same scale.

### Class Meeting Days:

Modified Studio Schedule: Classes will always meet during normal studio hours on Monday, Wednesday or Friday, 2pm to 6pm.

Instructors will sometimes hold a full studio only two of the three class sessions per week - with a third class session by appointment only. Other weeks all three full studio sessions will be required. Classes will be held both at IIT Crown Hall and at the office of Skidmore Owings and Merrill, 224 S Michigan Ave. On days class is held at SOM, class will begin at 2:30 and conclude at 5:30 in order to allow time for students to commute back and forth with other classes.

### Site Visits:

Field studies at the Chicago sites and reference neighborhoods are proposed during the second module. Tentatively the plan is to take a couple business/class days and a weekend for each team to visit and document their reference neighborhood.

### Team Projects:

Students will work in teams throughout the semester to develop a Chicago Rivershore development. Each team will select a site from choices pre-determined by the instructors.

### Deliverables:

All deliverables need to adhere to standard formatting established by the studio instructors. Drawings that do not follow format will be required to be redrawn or excluded from consideration when grading. An indesign template will be distributed for all major pin-ups and reviews.

While formatting, layout and drawing types will be standardized, student teams will be allowed great flexibility in the specific drawing style/technique they choose to represent their ideas.

Physical models will be built in a consistent scale and materiality as determined by the studio.

There will be no collective required readings across the studio, however the instructors will target specific case studies and articles to student groups as projects evolve, it is expected that these assignments are taken seriously.

## **Attendance and Grading:**

Attendance is mandatory as required by the IIT COA. Any student in excess of two absences will be eligible for grade reduction or an incomplete.

Grading will be conducted collectively by the instructors. Grades will be determined primarily by the work developed and presented at each module's termination. In addition, grades are influenced by participation and engagement beyond studio hours. Students will be notified by midterm of unsatisfactory progress, in order to allow corrective action before receiving a C, incomplete or Fail grade.

### Evaluation Criteria

Only letter grades will be given and these will be based on a curve.

Grades will be issued for each project and these will be based on the following criteria:

1. Conceptual sophistication and critical thinking
2. Sophistication and extent of project investigation and development
3. Sophistication and quality of presentation material (drawings and models)
4. Participation in class and critiques

A final letter grade will be compiled from all assignments

The School policy on grading is attached here:

A Excellent work that is on time and complete

B Above average work that is on time and complete

C Average work that is on time and complete

D Below average work, late work, or incomplete work

F Unacceptable work

### Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy Statement:

Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with documented disabilities. In order to receive accommodations, students must go through the Center for Disability Resources office. The Center for Disability Resources (CDR) is located in Life Sciences Room 218, telephone 312 567.5744 or disabilities@iit.edu

**Instructor:**

*Jorge Rovira*  
Jorge.Rovira@som.com

Jorge Rovira is a senior designer at Skidmore Owings and Merrill LLP. He has over ten years of experience in mix-used projects of a variety of scales in United States, United Kingdom, China and Middle East. Jorge obtained his Bachelor and Master of Architecture from the Superior Technical School of Architecture of Barcelona (ETSAB).

Guest Instructors:

*Arathi Gowda*  
Associate Director, Leader of High Performance Design, Skidmore Owings and Merrill

*John Law*  
Chicago Urban Design - Planning Associate, Skidmore Owings and Merrill

*Juntaek Kim*  
Chicago Urban Design - Planning Associate, Skidmore Owings and Merrill

*Seanna Walsh*  
Senior Architectural Designer, Skidmore Owings and Merrill

*Maria Palencia*  
Senior Architectural Designer, Skidmore Owings and Merrill