11.332/4.162 Joint Urban Studio, Fall 2017
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a b s t r a c t

CITIES BY SEA
Urbanism in the Age of Rising Seas and Climate Change

Coastal areas have been urbanizing for centuries. The expansion, building and retrofitting of urban waterfronts must confront the urgent challenge of how to adapt to increasing floods, storms and sea level rise. The historic dependence on the sea, for trade and exchange, is no longer a driving force in the shaping of urban waterfronts' form and infrastructure. In many cases, the relationship to the sea does not solely define a city's socio-economic milieu. In the age of sea level rise, the sea has become a threat or risk to citizens, a thing to protect and defend against, or retreat from. Waterfront urbanism now carries a heavy burden of damage, loss, and vulnerability.

How are coastal cities responding to these challenges? How can physical and spatial design, and urban planning aid in preparing cities to adapt to these new conditions? Can these dangers also create new opportunities for cities to promote resilience, livability and socio-equitable growth?

The studio will combine research and urban design around the theme of 'rising seas in the age of climate change' for the city of Boston and its surrounding neighborhoods. The first part of the studio is a collective research effort that will analyze selected cities and contemporary projects around the world that address these challenges. The studio will provide a trip to the Netherlands and England to visit existing design solutions and discover cutting edge precedents. The second part of the studio will engage individual and group design projects for two water edge sites in Boston's neighborhoods. A series of lectures from experts working in Boston will visit the studio to share the most current data and thinking on the overwhelming challenges facing the city and the larger metropolitan area along the coast over the next fifty years.

Prerequisites: Design studio experience, design degree, or successful completion of UD Skills. 4.240J/11.328J