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EM1 825155: >>Remotelessness: New Conditions for Architecture in the Era of Remote Working in Remote Places <<

UIBK Winter Semester 2025/26

Instructors: José Carlos López Cervantes/ Cynthia Sánchez Morales

Course meetings: Wednesdays 9:00 am

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Video presentation: https://youtu.be/rRoXNrJ6fgM

This video was created using artificial intelligence, based on the narration of a utopian near future of remote working in remote place.

Introduction

Remotelessness designates a paradoxical condition of our time: places that are geographically distant yet digitally immediate, isolated yet hyperconnected, rural yet globally central. *In the age of remote working, distance ceases to matter. What once was "remote" now becomes a viable hub of cultural, economic, and architectural production.*

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*This studio proposes the design of a **Remote Work Hub** in **Breiðdalsvík (Iceland)**, a small fishing village with an abandoned airstrip, port, and direct access to renewable energy sources. Students will be asked to transform this marginal site into a new form of settlement: autonomous in resources, circular in economy, and globally connected through data, logistics, and aerial infrastructures.*

*Morphologically, the studio draws on the legacies of speculative cities and mega-structures of the 20th century: **Japanese Metabolism** (Kurokawa's Agricultural City, Kikutake's Marine City, Tange's Tokyo Bay Plan), **Archigram's Plug-In urbanism**, **Moshe Safdie's Habitats**, **Frank Lloyd Wright's Broadacre City**, and **Constant's New Babylon**. All share a condition of imagining radical settlements ex nihilo, projecting typologies where architecture, technology, and society coalesce.*

Learning Outcome

Students will:

- *Investigate **Remotelessness** as a new condition for architecture in the age of remote work.*
    - *Explore speculative methodologies for designing autonomous and hyperconnected settlements in **remote geographies**.*
    - *Utilize AI as a generative tool for urban and architectural morphologies.*
    - *Develop **hybrid typologies** (housing, co-working, artisanal production, data centers) that articulate new modes of living and working.*
    - *Formulate proposals at the scale of a **Remote Work Hub** for Breiðdalsvík, integrating renewable energy, food autonomy (winter gardens, hydroponics), and circular economies.*
    - *By the end of the semester, students will deliver a complete vision of a new architectural typology that transcends isolation and connectivity.*

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Contents

The course positions architecture as a tool to rethink how we inhabit remote territories in the digital era. It frames ***Remotelessness*** *as a paradoxical condition: the absence of distance within distance. Students will engage with historical and theoretical precedents while speculating on new design strategies for the future of work and settlement.*

The course will be structured around three thematic investigations:

1. ***AI-Driven Design for New Typologies***
    - *AI-generated morphologies for hybrid housing/work units.*
    - *Speculative translation of historical utopias into contemporary settlement design.*
    - *Generative AI as a method for overcoming typological conventions.*
2. ***Autonomy and Hyperconnectivity***
    - *Energy as driver: renewable surplus (hydro, geothermal) as infrastructure.*
    - *Food self-sufficiency: winter gardens, hydroponics, circular material flows.*
    - *Settlements as hubs: integrating co-living, data centers, and artisanal production.*
3. ***Settlement Morphologies in Remote Places***
    - *Metabolist modules and plug-in infrastructures as compositional systems.*
    - *Designing at the scale of a small town/hub (Breiðdalsvík).*
    - *Negotiating autonomy and global connectivity through architecture.*

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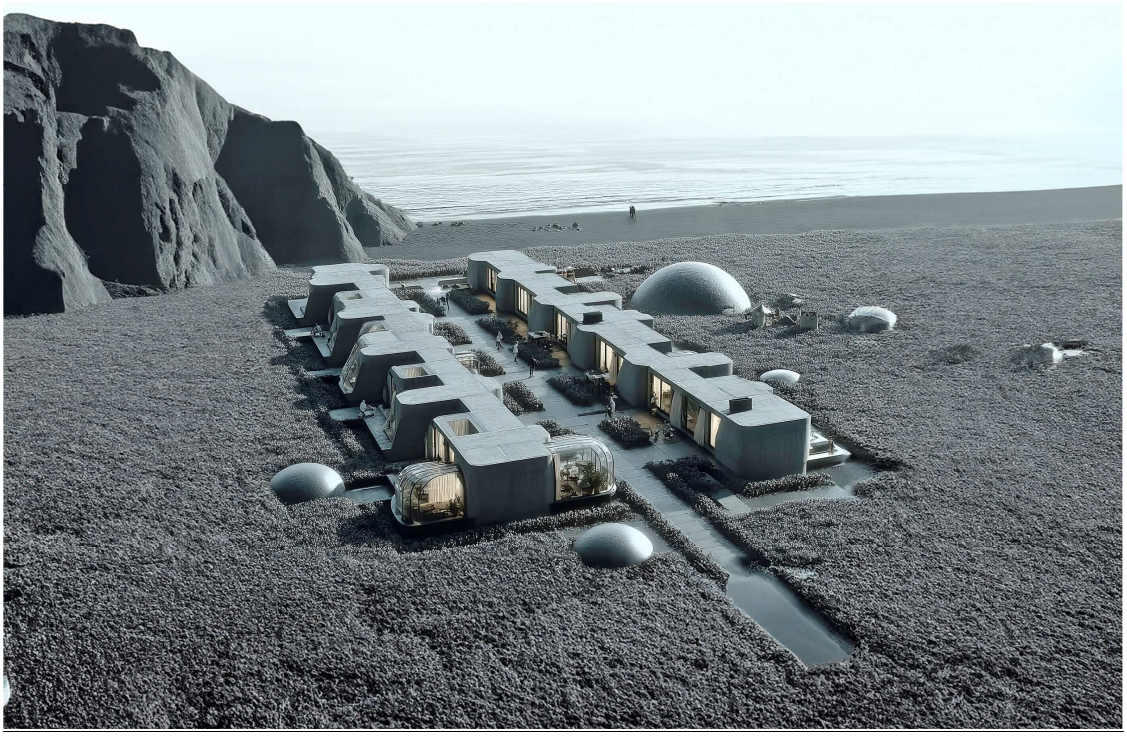
Course Blocks

The course follows a three-block progression, moving from conceptual exploration to design experimentation and final settlement proposals.

- ***BLOCK 1: Conceptual Knowledge – Histories & Conditions***
  - *Study of speculative urban projects (Metabolism, Archigram, Broadacre, Habitat 67, New Babylon).*
  - *Definition of Remotelessness as a new conceptual framework for architecture.*
  - *AI experiments translating historical diagrams into new morphologies.*
- ***BLOCK 2: Procedural Knowledge – Designing Remote Hubs***
  - *Computational strategies for modular and adaptive settlement morphologies.*
  - *AI-driven form-finding and testing of typological hybrids.*
  - *Analysis of energy, food, and data infrastructures as architectural elements.*
- ***BLOCK 3: Practical Knowledge – Settlement Proposal***
  - *Development of a masterplan for Breiðdalsvík as a Remote Work Hub.*
  - *Integration of housing, co-working, and productive typologies.*
  - *Final visualization: drawings, diagrams, AI-generated perspectives, physical/digital models.*



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Methodology

*The course employs a **research-by-design** methodology, integrating theoretical research, AI-driven speculative design, and architectural production.*

1. ***Research & Theoretical Framework***
    - *Reading and analysis of speculative architectural precedents.*
    - *Definition of Remotelessness as a conceptual category.*
2. ***AI as a Generative Tool***
    - *Workshops using MidJourney, Stable Diffusion, RunwayML.*
    - *Training datasets informed by diagrams, morphologies, and urban precedents.*
3. ***Settlement & System Design***
    - *Integration of renewable energy, local resources, and data infrastructures.*
    - *Designing circular economies through architecture.*
4. ***Final Proposal***
    - *Full settlement design for Breiðdalsvík as a Remote Work Hub.*
    - *Public presentation with panels, models, and AI-visualizations.*

Course Structure & Organization

Students will work individually. Each session will contain a theoretical lesson, deskcrits and specific software tutorials needed for developing the project. Progress will be reviewed weekly at the studio.

NEEDS:

Material Requirements:

Students need to bring their own laptops. Software will be accessible through educational licenses.

Tools and Techniques:

In order to apply this specific methodology, students will be instructed in specific software. No previous experience on the software will be required.

Final Deliverables & Requirements & Assessment (OLAT):

Complete graphic description of the project is expected, including visualizations, drawings, diagrams, research material, and any kind of visual information that support the entire comprehension of it.

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SUBMISSION

Grading Procedures:

Grades are determined based on the quality of work produced, progress and improvement over the course of the semester, completion of project requirements, quality of participation, attendance, attitude, and ethical conduct. Grading policies will be discussed during the first weeks of the studio, and any questions regarding grades or policies should be directed to the instructors. A passing grade in the course requires committed completion of all projects, including the institute archive in proper formats. Incomplete work will not be evaluated until the submission is completed. A failing grade is given whenever cumulative work, final work, and/or attendance are unsatisfactory. It is also given when a student fails to submit a final project or fails to take a final examination without prior approval from the instructor.

Academic Integrity:

The integrity of the work of individuals is first and foremost a grading milestone. Student work that delivers the ideas or words of others as the student's own adversely impacts the whole faculty. Academic dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism, commissioning academic work by others, or performing academic work on behalf of another student, is strictly prohibited and would result in a negative grade.

Plagiarism:

This includes but is not limited to; copying words, images, or other material from a source without using appropriate citation rules such as quotation marks, footnotes, references, or other indications of the original source, paraphrasing another person's ideas in your own words without crediting the original source, taking sole credit for assignments without giving credit to those who worked with you, submitting work for a course that has already/also been submitted for another course or internet plagiarism, such as submitting work either found or paid for online, failing to cite any internet sources used, or cutting and pasting sentences from various websites to create a collage of uncited words.

Incomplete Work & Extension of time:

A student may receive a negative grade or no grade when the work is incomplete at the evaluation date by the end of the semester. By requesting permission from the instructor in good time prior to the date of the final examination or presentation, this can be avoided. Permission will be granted only under extraordinary circumstances and usually for medical reasons, requiring a medical document proving the situation. Incompleteness must be fulfilled to the instructor's satisfaction no later than two weeks after the end of the term.

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Archiving:

Students are required to submit physical examples of their work or digital examples no later than one week after the end of the term to their instructors or administration for archiving. This is a chance for students to have their work displayed or exhibited online and potentially featured in future institute publications or research projects. The instructors will provide a document titled the Einwilligungsformular that allows the institute to keep track of the agreement; if you wish not to permit this archival material to be published, please contact the institute secretary in good time.

Learning Policy (Studios and Seminars):

Attendance is mandatory at critiques, pin-ups, and reviews. If you do not present your work regularly, you will not receive a passing grade for the course. Students must have all required work related to the course during course hours (not at another location or other time). Students should not use course time to leave school to procure materials, run errands, etc. All activities that require one to be away should be scheduled to occur outside of course hours. Leaving in the middle of or before the end of regularly scheduled course times will result in an absence unless discussed with the instructors. Grades will be determined by the quality of work produced, an improvement over the course of the semester, completion of project requirements, quality of participation, and attendance.

All electronic recordings, image captures/screenshots (during zoom meetings), or audio recordings are strictly prohibited unless agreed upon or discussed beforehand with the instructors and participants.

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