ARCH 515: Sustainable Systems I
Energy, Territory, Climate & Life

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Time: Fall 2015, Lectures: Thursday 10:00 – 12:00 Seminar Sessions (time and location varies)

This course will introduce students, aiming to participate in the design of the built environment, to a range of perspectives comprised of theories, histories, manifestoes, tropes, and exemplary practices that will assist in positioning new thinking and actions within complex terrestrial systems.

The course will span domains of environmental thinking from the planetary to the surficial, quantitative and qualitative, theoretical and applied in order to formulate possible ways design might operate within these cascading and networked fields. A series of topical lectures will complement weekly readings and detailed discussion sessions that together aim to unpack contemporary views on sustainability.

The semester is organized into four segments: Energy, Territory, Climate & Life: each addressing a significant category of environmental consideration that extends beyond the immediate scale of building design, yet proves consequential for architecture’s conception, production, and participation within urban and territorial systems. Within these four larger themes, weekly lectures will address subthemes through theories, concepts, and design examples. Lecture content will complement and expand on ideas introduced by weekly readings from a range of perspectives, including landscape architecture, ecology, science and technology studies, environmental history and others. Students will discuss and synthesize readings and lectures during the weekly section meetings structured around a series of prompts distributed in advance of the session.