

# HIGH-DENSITY

## Spatial Investigations into Urban Density

**ARCH 506 Winter 2025**

**Theory and Methods Seminar**

**Seminar:      Thursdays, 8:30 AM-11:30AM, Location:A+AB 2210**

**Instructor:   Claudia Wigger (cwig@umich.edu)**

**BRIEF\_**As the majority of the world population resides in urban regions, the design of high density cities has become increasingly more important. With limited amounts of space and resources we need to think carefully about how we use the space we have and plan for livable cities offering a high quality of life.

This experimental seminar will research the context of urban density, verticality, food, infrastructure, ecology and program and their integration into the design of high-density cities. The aim of the course will be to fully understand the evolution and dynamics of selected cities but as well to describe and analyze spatial characteristics and qualities of urban space.

**METHOD\_**The seminar will introduce key ideas through lectures, film screenings and reading assignments that will be developed in smaller group discussions in which students will share and respond to individual case studies.

Lecture topics will cover an introduction to urban density, urban voids, urban infrastructure and high-density urban typologies such as hybrid buildings that place the role of urban density into a historical and theoretical context and locate it's significance within contemporary urban design practice and utopian ideas.

Through collecting data and building critical analysis of different contemporary, unbuilt, utopian and failed high-density cities the seminar will develop a set of graphic tools to represent urban density and its conditions both quantitatively and qualitatively. The semester concludes with work on a speculative design project that joins various findings of individual research and collective knowledge gained throughout the semester.

All students will upload their work to <https://highdensity.cargo.site/> during the course of the semester.

HIGH DENSITY includes:

The Why Factory, Joseph Fenton's Hybrid Buildings, Delirious New York, Tokyo's Voids, Kowloon's Walled City, Hong Kong's stacked building typologies, Bladerunner, The Fifth Element