

Course Syllabus

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Cross-Species Test Sites

Building Science & Technology Elective - A4863-1

Columbia University | GSAPP | 115 Avery | Fall 2019

Tuesdays, 7-9pm (office hours on request)

Instructor: Chris Woebken hello@chriswoebken.com

Course description

This course investigates the complex relationships between humans and non-human urban inhabitants. Students study urban animal wildlife, indicator species, and microbial communities and work with biologists and ecologists to identify new potentials in designing for biological systems. Through the process of fabricating, situating and testing prototypes, we aim to create a reflective space for deeply considering the details of these new interactions, and to discover unforeseen opportunities, twists and challenges. Project outcomes are physical devices in the form of multispecies interfaces, bio-receptive materials, and infrastructure modifications that propose new multispecies collaborations across all scales.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Introduce speculative thinking as well as rigorous experimental design to their practice
- Materialize concepts with new strategies for rapid product prototyping
- Explore new roles for design and new forms of critical engagement through collaborative work across disciplines
- Introduction to fabrication strategies at 1:1 product scale
- Draw on aesthetic innovations developed in fields of fine art and tactical media
- Critical evaluation and design iteration