

Syllabus

Instructor:

Marcela Tovar-Restrepo

Thursdays 2-4 pm

Office Hours: By Appointment

Planning for Resilience: Practicum on Santiago de Los Caballeros Dominican Republic

The aim of this course is to propose sustainable interventions in the site: pedestrian street "Benito Moncion" (BM) and "Mirador del Yaque" (MY) located in Santiago de Los Caballeros (Dominican Republic). Our client is the Cities Lab. - Housing and Urban Development Division at the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). Our seminar will be partnering with 100RC Project (Rockefeller Foundation) and the Center for Resilient Cities and Landscapes at Columbia University (CRCL). By identifying current challenges, potentialities and social and economic dynamics taking place in BM and MY, our team work will propose practical and comprehensive interventions involving public space, transportation and connectivity, informality, waste management, water management and risk/disaster prevention. We will be applying ethnographic qualitative and quantitative research tools such as: semi-structured interviews, participant observation, stakeholder analysis and actor's maps, and some quantitative indicators (when necessary). This research will be developed during a week of fieldwork. Our outcome will include and consult best practices and lessons learned at both local and international levels, as well as results from previous workshops done by the IDB with different stakeholders in Sgo de Los Caballeros.

Context Description

With 850,000 inhabitants, Santiago de los Caballeros is the second largest city in Dominican Republic. This agglomeration has a strategic location due to its proximity to the key port of Puerto Plata; it is also in the center of the Cibao valley, which possesses the most fertile insular soil; and it is crossed by the Duarte highway, the main road artery in the country. All these factors have given Santiago a strong commercial identity. Since 2014, the IDB has been implementing the Emerging and Sustainable Cities (ESC) program to contribute to a sustainable urban and territorial development. Last year, after a Participatory Design Workshop, the IDB, international experts, local authorities, think tanks and civil society designed the project "Vive el Yaque." This project contains three transformative actions (1. Parque Norte y Reserva Nicolás Vargas; 2. Corredor Ecológico Yaque; 3. Mirador Yaque) that, circumscribed in a critical territorial extension, have the capacity for addressing multiple challenges.

An important transformative action is focused on Pedestrian Street Benito Monción (BM) located in the Historic City Center of Santiago (HCCS). HCCS is dominated by commercial activities, where land use is 54% retail and other commercial, and only 19% residential. It is a nomadic space – in 2006 the area had 9,500 permanent residents and received 393,727 visitors per week. Flows of visitors are mostly connected to commercial and service activities, which have a very limited timetable and, therefore, during the evenings the center stays empty. There is a lack of data on the HCCS; the last study done was the “Estudio Socioeconómico del Centro Histórico de Santiago” (CDES 2006), in which 234 people were interviewed. A similar study was done 10 years earlier in 1996 by the Centro de Estudios Urbanos y Regionales (CEUR). The street Benito Monción is the only (partly) pedestrianized street in Santiago de los Caballeros. It connects the Yaque River with Las Carreras, the northern boundary of the HCCS. On its approximately 600 mt (8 min walking distance) track, it connects the most emblematic spaces and institutions of cultural heritage in the city: Catedral Santiago Apostol, Parque Duarte, Instituto de Cultura y Arte, Palacio Consistorial, Centro de Recreo, Casa de Arte y La 37 por las Tablas.

In 2014, the municipality closed off 2 blocks of Benito Monción for traffic and made some interventions for pedestrianization. Being the first pedestrian street in the city, the project was received with a lot of objection by local neighbors and merchants. Subsequently, one section was opened for traffic again. In the section which today remains pedestrianized, positive impact on local economy and public life can be observed. Cultural institutions organize regular street events to activate public space and 4 new restaurants opened, which use the street as their terrace. The vision of the municipality is to pedestrianize the whole stretch of Benito Monción to connect HCCS with the Yaque River. The space currently used as a parking lot, “Calle Pantalón”, should be transformed into a public plaza. The challenge is to reach consensus between the different stakeholders that are influencing the street and find tools for good design solutions.

- PICTURES - Benito Moncion-

General Objective

In 2018, the IDB will carry out pre-feasibility studies on riverside and environmental restoration, as well as urban revitalization. To complement these studies, the IDB would like to collaborate with Columbia University to conduct an exploratory, data-driven study on environmental, economic, and social challenges to support the design and assess the progress and impact of public spaces activation. Considering previous literature and fieldwork findings, the first step is to elaborate a diagnosis of the (1) Benito Monción (as a site) and in connection with Mirador del Yaque and its surrounding areas. The main objective is to get a better understanding of current dynamics and opportunities for local economic and urban development. Based on this diagnosis, the IDB would seek to test potential uses for the site by combining different experimental urban and social qualitative and quantitative techniques. With a specific focus on the local uniqueness of Santiago and its competitive advantages, the team should propose the design of temporary and permanent interventions.

Specific Objectives:

1. Objective 1: Understanding of local dynamics (mainly cultural, mobility, and commercial dimensions):

Activities:

i) Collect and analyze workshop (July/2018) results and documents prepared by IDB / 100RC and CC in/about SDC – Responsible: UP Students Pontificia Universidad Catolica Madre y Maestra;

ii) Prepare Fieldwork Materials – Rapid Ethnographic Assessment: Semi-structured interviews and/or focal groups with key informants to create an actors map: traders, waste pickers, informal operators of interurban transportation (conchos, guaguas), civil society organizations, public sector institutions, local authorities, private sector.

Responsible: UP Students + local students

iii. Collect quantitative data relevant to our case: a) General Info SDC (Population, poverty/income distribution, productive activities, water and sewage management, Climate change/impacts, Information shall be desegregated in gender basis etc.); b) the different urban sectors: public space, transportation and connectivity, waste management, risk/disaster prevention.

Responsible: UP Students (should consult IDB info.) + local students

iv. Understand, collect and compile the legal and planning framework for SDC (i.e. urban plan, CC normativity (from International Agreements such as Paris A. to National/local regulations).

Responsible: UP Students + local students

v) Coordinate and Plan with CRCL – 100RC workshop to be run at SDC. Responsible: UP Students, CRCL, 100RC

vi) Fieldwork in SDC: Apply research techniques (Day/night) + Public life data (people moving count, age and gender tally, stationary activity mapping, quality criteria, façade activation survey).

Responsible: UP Students + local students

Out-Comes:

1. Draft report on quantitative data available and relevant to the urban sectors being addressed.

Responsible: UP Students

2. First draft report on qualitative data gathered during the workshop and the implementation of qualitative research techniques (Audios, interviews, cognitive/actor's maps, pictures).

Responsible: UP Students – CRCL 100RC

2. Objective 2: Data Analysis

Activities:

i. Establishment of a baseline: it should include indicators such as number of informal traders, goods by category, number and extension of dumping sites, disaggregated crime rates, or other indicators for livability and mobility. This information shall be compared and put into BM and MY context in order to make a more accurate analysis of the working site. In the same manner, qualitative information shall be compared and contrasted to qualitative sources of information in order to take into account key stakeholders lived perceptions, opinions and practices of MY inhabitants.

Responsible: UP Students - IDB in Collaboration with the RD-Lab5

Out-comes:

1. Baseline shared with Cities Lab IDB and CRCL

3. Objective 3: Identify tools and strategies to design and implement interventions in MY (i.e. experimental design proposals for implementation for example: the ones suggested by IDB such as: Behavioral economics analysis, Tactical urbanism, Urban acupuncture: the proposed uses include options such as pedestrianization of BM and promotion of alternative mobility, temporary closure of Mirador del Yaque Avenue, a market for local producers and traders, cultural events and other outdoor activities)

Activities:

i. Identify tools and strategies based in best practices and lessons learned internationally and locally.

Responsible: UP Students

ii. Draft concrete proposals to intervene MY. Responsible: UP Students (consult and coordinate CRCL)

iii. Put into contexts identified best practices. They should be according to the Dominican context⁹ to address local challenges. Responsible: UP Students (consult and coordinate CRCL)

Outcomes:

1. Draft Report on Strategies, Best Practices and Potential Interventions

4. Objective 4: Final Report for IDB and Sgo de los Caballeros Key Stakeholders

Activities:

Draft Final Report – Coordinate with CRCL. Responsible: UP Students and CRCL

Outcomes:

1.Final Report. Responsible: UP Students and CRCL

METHOD OF INSTRUCTION

The course will follow a seminar format focused on the topic and the readings of each week. The instructor will introduce the topics of the week and moderate a class discussion where all are expected to participate. **Within their groups each student is expected to introduce/present at least one topic during the semester**kicking-off the in class discussion. Lectures, guest speakers, and documentaries will occasionally complement the basic pedagogical format of the seminar.

Visual Tools

Students are strongly advised to strive for ways of appreciating the physical characteristics of the places mentioned in the readings and class discussions and explicitly engage the socio-spatial dimension of such places in their essays and discussions. The internet offers a variety of tools to visualize place: Google Earth, Google Maps, Google Images, their equivalent in Yahoo and other browsers, YouTube, Flickr, etc. To expand the visual and other sensorial appreciation of international places, readings in this course are also complemented in class as appropriate with pertinent films and documentaries.

EVALUATION

Individual Presentations and Memos	20 pts.
In class group work	20 pts.
Midterm Exam	15 pts.
Final paper	25 pts.
Participation and attendance	20 pts.
TOTAL	100 pts.

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DELIVERABLES

1.Groups' Presentations:

Student's teams will be responsible for doing two presentations: 1) Midterm presentation and a 2) Final presentation. These presentations shall focus on the planning and architecture challenges in our sites: BM and MY meeting the objectives that we have established for the different phases of our work. These will include: the information analysis, planning methodologies and urban interventions proposals developed by the different groups.

2. Individual Assignments and Take-Away Memos

Students are required to deliver a (five to seven pages max. – two pages min.) with the “Assignment and Take-Away Memo” after each session. These contents are the core material for your final report and presentations. Based on the assignments and the contents discussed in class, the memo shall address the following questions:

i) Contents of Assignments

ii) Identify existing synergies between the contents discussed in class and our planning challenges in Sgo de los Caballeros, more specifically BM and MY. This is: in what way the discussed contents and readings can inform our work when taking into account a specific urban problem or planning methodology in the context of BM and MY?

Memos shall be handed-in in the following week. Memos can include graphics and images in the third or fourth pages in case students would like to add them.

3. Team Groups - Final Report:

This report will build on the final presentation students have prepared in their groups. It will include their bibliography and fieldwork information in case students think it will be illustrative and support their arguments and proposals.

4. Participation and Attendance

I conceive my role as instructor of the course as one of a facilitator, i.e., I will strive to optimize and monitor the conditions for learning to occur during the semester. Learning, however, is co-produced and hence a shared responsibility of all course participants. Participation in this context is indispensable. Students are expected to come to class prepared, having read and reflected on the readings of the week, and ready and willing to make substantive contributions in class.

Attendance is mandatory and can only be excused by medical or familial emergency with written notification. Attendance failure results in loss of participatory opportunities and therefore the loss of participation grade. When possible, announce your absence prior to class.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE AND READINGS

1. Week 1 — Sept 6. Introduction

Description of course’s content and structure, context and relevance. We will start by introducing our case study in DR and the different actors involved in our studio. We will identify key theoretical and practical tools for our work.

Required Readings:

- Patel, Kamna (2015) Teaching and learning in the tropics: an epistemic exploration of “the field” in a development studies field trip, *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*, 39:4, 584-594, DOI: 10.1080/03098265.2015.1084499

- Sletto, Bjorn [2012] Insurgent Planning and its Interlocutors in Sto Domingo in Journal of Planning Education and Research <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0739456X12467375>
 - Posted presentations about BM and IDB Project and interventions in DR and Sgo de los Caballeros.
2. Week 2 – Sept 13. Understanding and mapping: local dynamics (mainly cultural, mobility, and commercial dimensions), main actors (CBOs, NGOs, Public Sector National-Local Authorities, Private Sector (Formal and informal)

Guests: Tamara IDB – Michelle CRCL

Readings and visual material:

- Fieldwork Results Workshop IDB in SC (Posted on Drive)
- Fieldwork Results Visit CRCL to SC (Posted on Drive)
- Tool Kit: Local Planning Team Hamilton, 2012. Neighborhood Action Planning PP-1-18 (Posted on Canvas)

Assignment:Based on the materials and information provided by IDB and CRCL, as well as further research at the library, students will start to document basic qualitative and quantitative information that is relevant for our case study at: i) the international level (international agreements, platforms and commitments done by RD such as SDG; Paris 15 Climate Change agreement, etc); ii) National Level and city levels such as population, employment, type of government, poverty/income distribution, productive areas especially at SC (tourism); services such as water provision and sewage management, climate change impacts; informality. Also please check National Development Plan/ City Plan; CC Plan (If any). Please identify all Information that is desegregated on gender basis. Work shall be distributed among students. Each student will be responsible for a specific aspect.

3. Week 3 – Sept 20. Fieldwork Research Techniques – Rapid Ethnographic Assessment: i) Fieldwork Diary; ii) Participatory assets mapping, iii) Moblogging mapping, iv) Sensorial maps, v) Semi-structured interviews, actor's map (Night/day); vi) focal groups with key informants: (commerce and traders (formal and informal), waste pickers, informal operators of interurban transportation (conchos, guaguas), civil society organizations, public sector institutions, local authorities, private sector.

Guest: Tom Herrera: Planner and a practitioner (DR) (TBC)

Readings – Group Work readings to be distributed among groups

- Brown, T. and J. Wyatt (2010). Design Thinking for Social Innovation, *Development Outreach*, 12 (1), pp. 29-43 (Posted Canvas)

- Handwerker, W. (2001) Quick Ethnography. USA: Altamira Press (sections TBA)
- Merriam, S. and Tisdell, E. 2016. Qualitative Research: A Guide to design and Implementation. Part II. Reserve Library Call Number:LB1028 .M396 2016
- Dana H. Taplin, Suzanne Scheld, and Setha M. Low, (2002). *Rapid Ethnographic Assessment in Urban Parks: A Case Study of Independence National Historical Park* Human Organization, Society for Applied Anthropology Vol. 61, No. 1, 2002 (Posted CW)
- Stanton, F., Jay T., O'Neil, E. and Penn, A., [2012]. My neighborhood: studying perceptions of urban space and neighborhood with Moblogging in Pervasive and Mobile Computing, [Volume 9, Issue 5 \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](#), October 2013, Pages 722-737
- Sletto, Bjorn. We Drew What We Imagined Participatory Mapping Performance and Art of Landscape Making in Current Anthropology, 8/1/2009, ISSN: 0011-3204, Volume 50, Issue 4, p. 443 Available at CLIO Electronic Catalog

Assignment:i) Identify research techniques different student's groups will be applying during the fieldwork visit; ii) Using the actor's map (draft) identify what, how, why, when you will be applying your technique(s) and how you will be recording and documenting your data; iii) focus groups with key informants: traders, waste pickers, informal operators of interurban transportation (conchos, guaguas), civil society organizations, public sector institutions, local authorities, private sector.

4. Week 4 – Sept 27. The Street: Public Space and Connectivity

Guest: Dr. Paola Jiron – Universidad de Chile expert on Mobility and Connectivity

- Speck, J. (2012) Walkable City: how downtown can save America. Part II. Pp. 65-252. Available Avery **Call Number:**HT175 .S64 2012
- Reid, E. and Bartolomew, K. (2013) Pedestrian and Transit Oriented Design. Urban Land Institute. American Planning Association. Washington DC. Chp. 3,4,5 & Conclusions. On-Line Clio Cat. Online
- Massengale, J. And Dover V. (2014) Street Design: the secret of great cities. Wiley: Hoboken New Jersey. Chapt.2: "Pedestrian Passages and Steps Streets"; Chap. 4: "Pedestrian and Shared Space"

Assignment:Students shall prepare the schedule and activities to be performed and implemented during their fieldwork.

5. Week 5 -Oct 4 - Presentation Fieldwork Prospect – CSCL

Guest: Dr. Clara Irazabal Planner(expert Planning Studios in LA)

Groups' presentation of assignment and fieldwork agenda

6. Week 6 - Oct 8 to Oct 12. Fieldtrip –TBC.

7. Week 7 – Oct 18 - Fieldwork Debriefing

Group work: mapping and debriefing collected qualitative information

Assignment: Organize and present fieldwork products

8. Week 8 – Oct 25. Data Analysis

Groups Work: Establishment of a baseline: it should include indicators such as number of informal traders, goods by category, number and extension of dumping sites, disaggregated crime rates, or other indicators for livability and mobility.⁴ This information shall be compared and put into the BM and MY contexts, in order to make a more accurate analysis of the working site. In the same manner, qualitative information shall be compared and contrasted to qualitative sources of information in order to take into account key stakeholders lived perceptions, opinions and practices of MY inhabitants.

Assignment: Baseline. Qualitative and quantitative indicators

9. Week 9 – Nov 1 **MIDTERM**– Presentation

10. Week 10 – Nov 8. Identify tools and strategies to design and implement interventions

Guest: Dr. Bjorn Sletto Anthropologist and Planner Expert in DR

Identify tools and strategies to design and implement interventions in BM and MY (i.e. experimental design proposals for implementation for example: the ones suggested by IDB such as: Behavioral economics Analysis, Tactical Urbanism, Urban acupuncture: the proposed uses include options such as pedestrianization of BM and promotion of alternative mobility, temporary closure of Mirador del Yaque Avenue, a market for local producers and traders, cultural events and other outdoor activities)

Assignment: Define the urban planning methodologies and techniques to be used in your report.

- Alyson, M. and Garcia, A. 2015. Tactical Urbanism. Washington, DC: Island Press, 89-209. Available in CLIO Cat Electronic Resources
- Lerner, Jaime. 2014. Urban Acupuncture. Washington, DC: Island Press/Center for Resource Economics, Island Press Chapters: “People in the Streets”, “Street Sounds, Colors and Scents,” “Markets and Street Fairs”. Available in CLIO Cat Electronic Resources

11. Week 11 – Nov 15. Best Practices and Lessons Learn: Pedestrian Streets and Public Space

Guest: Dr. Jesus Rodriguez - Expert on DR

Identify international best practices and lessons learned of pedestrian streets and street design. These should be put into Sgo de Los caballeros context addressing local challenges.

Readings:

- Chor, Chin Hoong and Yuen, Belinda Pedestrian Streets in Singapore in Transportation August 1998, Volume 25, [Issue 3 \(Links to an external site.\)](#)[Links to an external site.](#), pp 225–242 Available in Clio Cat. Electronic Resources
- Robertson, K. 1991. Pedestrian streets in Sweden's city centres in Cities [Volume 8, Issue 4 \(Links to an external site.\)](#)[Links to an external site.](#), November 1991, Pages 301-314. Available in Clio Cat Electronic Resources
- Oranratmanee, Rawiwan and Sachakul, Veera. 2014. Streets as Public Spaces in Southeast Asia: Case Studies of Thai Pedestrian Streets in Journal of Urban Design, 3/15/2014, ISSN: 1357-4809, Volume 19, Issue 2, p. 211
- Project of Public Spaces access on-line: <https://www.pps.org> [\(Links to an external site.\)](#)[Links to an external site.](#)
- Zonas Peatonales en Huesca (Espana)
<http://www.huesca.es/areas/movilidad/servicios/zonas-peatonales/>

Assignment: Define four examples of best practices and lessons learned around the world to be included in your final report. These should be inspiring but at the same time realistic enough acknowledging the local reality and planning challenges.

12. Week 12 – Nov 22 – Thanksgiving

Assignment: Draft Final Report

13. Week 13 – Nov 29. Final Report

Group Work: Finalize Final Presentation and Report

Assignment: Final Report

14. Week 14 – Dec 6 Final Report Presentation LAST DAY OF CLASSES

Additional Sources:

- 1) Some databases may be available from Waze sources and MIT's projects.
- 2) The RD-Lab will be financed with the technical cooperation Innovation and Territorial Intelligence Laboratory for Dominican Cities (DR-T1160). Please find additional information at:

<https://www.iadb.org/Document.cfm?id=EZSHARE-59702191-3>

3) Hospedaje Yaque (HY) is a historic market located in the neighborhood La Joya. Born in the early 20th century as a dynamic place to trade farmer's production, nowadays HY and its surroundings have been described as disorganized, chaotic, and insecure. This place has 50 dumping sites, high visual and noise pollution, lack of regulation on food stores, which often do not meet local health standards, disorganized transit and prostitution. HY condense informal practices in the areas of transportation, solid waste management and trade, which has been considered critical by local authorities.

Source: Revista Urbana. (2014). Hospedaje Yaque. Caos y retos de la vida productiva. Available on

https://issuu.com/planestrategicosantiago/docs/urbana_no._4

4. Massengale, J. And Dover V. (2014) Street Design: the secret of great cities. Wiley: Hoboken New Jersey. Chapt.2: "Pedestrian Passages and Steps Streets"; Chap. 4: "Pedestrian and Shared Space"

5. Safikhani-Kin and Salomón, Seth. (2017) Street Fight: handbook for urban revolution
6. Schwartz, S. and Rosen, W. [2015]. Street Smart: the Rise of Cities and Fall of Cars. Ny: Books Group
7. Duany, A. And Speck J. 2010. The smart growth manual. Chapter: The street. Center for applied transect studies