

## LA 4/510 Issues in Infrastructures

### *Contingencies, peripheries, and possibilities in infrastructure*



Infrastructures of River Crossing I  
Puerto Lleras I Meta I COLOMBIA

Time M | 10:00am - 11:50am

Location TBD

Credits 2

Instructor Zannah Matson  
Department of Landscape Architecture  
Lawrence Hall, Room 316 [Office Hours Tuesday 1:00 - 3:00pm]  
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**Course Description** Taking as a starting point Akhil Gupta's call "for a view that looks at infrastructure as an open-ended process,"<sup>1</sup> this seminar considers some of the many ways that infrastructure is woven throughout our lives. The seminar examines how infrastructures are contingent on—and contingently shape—relations with more-than-human actors, expanding an understanding of built infrastructure to include the systems that uphold and dismantle its construction. Central themes for investigation include the relationship between infrastructure and modernity, the power relations embedded within infrastructural design, infrastructure and time, exclusion and infrastructural construction, methods for critical infrastructural studies, and the labor of infrastructural maintenance and repair.

This seminar engages in the critical study of infrastructure across scholarship from the design disciplines, geography, science and technology studies, and anthropology. It relies on close readings and analytical conversations about infrastructure, while encouraging projective proposals for what infrastructure could become. While the primary focus of the seminar will be on built physical infrastructures, we will further consider how these systems are co-constituted alongside symbolic representations and material processes of production and consumption. Accounting for the specific interests of those engaged in the seminar, the specific infrastructural forms that we examine will be determined by the seminar group in the first week of class. Similarly, where possible, summative coursework for the seminar will be tailored to support major student research projects.

1. Akil Gupta, "The Future in Ruins: Thoughts on the temporality of infrastructure," in *The Promise of Infrastructure*, eds. Nikhil Anand, Akil Gupta, and Hannah Appel. Durham, NC: Duke University Press: 2018

Syllabus  
Winter 2020

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Prerequisites	None.
Curricular Context	This class is an elective open to all students.
Class Format	Dedicated class time for this seminar will be devoted to discussions of selected course texts, with the opportunity for short lectures and guest lectures along with student presentations. Outside of class time, students will be responsible for close and critical readings of selected texts, writing analytical readings, preparing for discussions and presentations, and developing final research projects on course themes.
Modes of Inquiry	The seminar will be based on critical reading and short written responses that will inform shared discussion during class time. Summative assignments will range in deliverables based on student research, but could include written reports, mapping projects, or a series of drawings to express course themes through the study of an infrastructural system.