



Vertical Studio 2011 *Rural Future: Enabling a Bold Rural Future for the Great Plains*

The University of Nebraska has launched a new initiative called **Institute for the Rural Future**. The goal of this initiative will be to engage with rural communities to address how the landscape of rural Nebraska needs to develop in the coming decade. This futuristic and forward-looking approach will address the hard questions of what rural Nebraska needs to become in the future as compared to attempting to preserve the infrastructures of the past that was built around a complete different set of dynamics as compared to those found in today's information and technology-based economy.

Vision *The desired collective outcome of this initiative will be a 2.5% reduction in the median age and 2.5% or greater increase in the population of nonmetropolitan Nebraska by 2025, accompanied by growth in median income at a rate of less than national median income growth driven by a vibrant economy, access to technology and resources and ultimately enhanced quality of life for rural residents.*

Partnering with a rural community, this studio will discuss, examine, and apply fundamental organizing, planning, and design principles and strategies for community design while incorporating participatory community-based development, site-specific design criteria, technical standards, and regulatory requirements. Community planning and design involves facilitating change in municipalities while taking into consideration development processes and zoning requirements; development initiatives driven by the economics and the highest and best use of land; and individual property owners and neighborhood's concerned about property values, taxes, sense of community, and appearance. Physical design of a community addresses the relationship and interrelationship between the historic land and development patterns, and current and future land use, transportation, architecture and open space.

Studio Structure An interdisciplinary learning environment, including architects, landscape architects and planners, will be established where students will interact in interdisciplinary teams and across teams to explore the challenges and opportunities related to the rural future of a great plain's community.

This course combines two pedagogical approaches: problem-based learning and service-learning. Service-learning is a teaching and learning strategy where students address a partner's need(s) while learning in their discipline. A fundamental concept that drives efforts to achieve high quality in combining service and learning focuses on the notion of reciprocity. Reciprocity suggests that every individual and entity involved in service-learning functions as both a teacher and learner. Participants are perceived as colleagues, not as servers and clients, such that all participants are learning from and serving each other.

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