



ARCH 304/406 – Vertical Studio A

THE NATIONAL ICON

Simone Kosremelli and Karim Nader – Fall 09/10

Course Syllabus



COURSE INFORMATION

The National Icon is a vertical studio open to architecture students in the 3rd and 4th years of the regular curriculum.

7 credit course – class meets twice a week.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Through the theme of the representation of national identity, the objective of this course is to develop a relevant and strong position in relation to the proposed theme through spatial and material means.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will be able to:

1- Work and elaborate on the national identity theme:

- › Conceptually
- › Materially
- › Structurally
- › Environmentally
- › Programmatically
- › Sequentially (across programs, scales and sites)

2- Research:

- › Identity and representation questions
- › Site and relevant analysis
- › Case study analysis
- › Relevant literature review
- › Programming.

3- Design complex small-sized to big-sized buildings in:

- › Detailed plans
- › Detailed sections
- › Detailed elevations
- › Advanced 3D drawings (parallel or perspective)
- › Conceptual drawings / Visionary drawings.
- › Conceptual models / Visionary models.
- › Model-making at various scales, urban, architectural, detailed.

4- Present a project:

- › Orally
- › In Written format, write a conceptual statement.

5- Master the notions of:

- › Advanced spatial planning
- › Advanced circulation systems
- › Advanced structural systems
- › Advanced material choices
- › Advanced contextual integration
- › Basic landscaping

6- Develop a sense of engagement through the practice via:

- › Social and national responsibility
- › Personal engagement
- › Ecological engagement

7- Discover a personal voice.



THE NATIONAL ICON

Today, more than ever, 'Lebaneseness' remains a disputed concept. On the one hand, multiple religious identities dominate the political scene maintaining the sectarian status quo of distribution of power. On the other hand, international politics exert a strong influence upon the local scene to the extent of gelling progress and leaving all initiative to the private sector. If the 'West' is a dream of identity for ones and 'Arabian belonging' an expected reference for others, some feel to belong to a multiple culture that does not necessarily need to come from the outside.

This studio will be an attempt at defining and expressing a certain concept of national identity through programmatic, spatial and material means. The observation of the complex and multi-faceted nature of the Lebanese culture not giving the expected answers, it will therefore be the work of the students to produce their own operative definition of national identity in order to create an architectural expression that triggers the relevant sensations and emotions.

In a first round, the studio will look at Martyrs' Square with its associated layers of history, capitalism and politics. The project will aim at the creation of a visitable national icon right at the center of the Lebanese capital.

In a second round, and in preparation for round III, research will be undertaken on the level of program, site, architectural language, review of relevant literature as well as case study analysis. This research will be presented in the form of a mini final project thesis reference document.

Finally, the main project of this studio will be the design of the Lebanese embassy in country X. This time, the national icon will be confronted to the local culture of the hosting country, once again affirming the hybridity of an architecture that is always in change and a profession that requires more and more often an architect who's willing to travel physically, mentally and culturally.

PROCESS

Every week, class will meet twice for four to five hours (M-F). Some of the Wednesday sessions will be dedicated to movies screenings, thematic presentations and discussions. Other Wednesdays will be regular working sessions.

DISCIPLINE

On every session you are required to be on-time in class, that is: not outside in the lobby, nor on the street. Attendance will be taken at 2:00 pm SHARP at the beginning of every session. You are required to stay in the studio or pin-up area during the whole length of the session that is until 7pm. Absence or late-coming to a presentation will result in a 40 for the presentation. Whenever we take a 10 min break, you are required to be BACK IN CLASS after 10 minutes. Mobile phones should be completely silent during class time. Depending on the project, computers might be allowed or not, but design feedback will only be given on printed material.

GRADING

The icon	20%
Research	20%
The Embassy	50%
Participation and progress	10%
Total	100%



COURSE CALENDAR

<i>Date</i>	<i>Session content</i>
Week 1	
M 05 Oct	Course syllabus - registration
W 07	Site Visit
F 09	Charrette
Week 2	
M 12	Jury
W 14	
F 16	Desk-Crit
Week 3	
M 19	Desk-Crit
W 21	
F 23	Due + Jury
Week 4	
M 26	Desk-Crit: Case Study + Literature Review
W 28	
F 30	Jury: Case Study + Literature Review
Week 5	
M 02 Nov	Desk-Crit: Site
W 04	
F 06	Jury: Site + Case Study + Literature
Week 6	
M 09	Desk-Crit: Program
W 11	
F 13	Jury: Program + Site + Case Study + Literature Review
Week 7	
M 16	Desk-Crit: Vision
W 18	
F 20	Jury: Research Book + Vision on site.
Week 8	
M 23	
W 25	
F 27	



Week 9

M 30

Adha - No Class

W 01 Dec

F 03

Week 10

M 07

W 09

F 11

Week 11

M 14

W 16

F 18

Hijra New Year - No Class

Week 12

M 21

Graded Pin-up: Embassy in progress

W 23

F 25

Xmas - No Class

Week 13

M 28

Xmas - No Class

W 30

F 01 Jan

Xmas - No Class

Week 14

M 04

W 06

F 08

Armenian Christmas - No Class

Week 15

M 11

W 13

F 15

Week 16

M 18

Final Due Date

W 20

Final Jury I

F 22

Last Day of Classes - **Final Jury II**

M 25

Reading Period

S 06 Feb

Fall ends