

# ARCH 407/507 Refugee Settlements

## Urgent decisions, lasting impact

Tues Thurs 12:00-1:20pm, 278 Lawrence CRN 26738 / 25713  
Instructor Nancy Cheng, [nywc@uoregon.edu](mailto:nywc@uoregon.edu), 541-346-3674



*Haiti's Corail camp, north of Port-au-Prince, was built to accommodate displaced populations after the 2010 earthquake in Haiti. (left, IOM 2010) Aerial view of the site (Shaun Scales/NRC 2010), and satellite views of the area, with the site's planned footprint outlined (Google Earth). Images collected by Daud Shad, IOM.*

By the end of 2023, 117.3 million people worldwide were forcibly displaced (<http://unhcr.org>), requiring mass resettlement either into existing cities and towns or by creating new settlements. While the camps are supposed to be temporary, migrants typically stay for 10 to 15 years. Urgent shelter and settlement design decisions can have lasting effects on the surrounding areas.

This course will introduce students to global humanitarian design needs and how architects can support and empower people who have lost their homes. It will explain emergency design and planning in a larger context using case studies so students can understand how shelter and settlements are part of a larger umbrella to address basic needs. Appropriate design changes from as the first days grow into weeks, months and years with local materials, expertise and technologies shaping the transition to long-term situations.

Each person will research a specific location with challenges from a natural disaster or conflict. The objective is to understand a person's journey from an emergency through transitional situations. We aim to see the human experience of internally displaced people and refugee communities in the context of larger forces such as governing policies, on-site management, watersheds, ecosystems and infrastructure. Studying how communities approach resilience preparedness, disaster response, and transition to recovery can provide avenues for contributing to a better response.

From taking this course, students will be able to

- Describe the stages of humanitarian response to forcibly displaced people.
- Identify key tasks, roles and information needs in addressing basic needs
- For a specific situation, identify global organizations and local stakeholders shaping the disaster response, in terms of shelters and settlements
- Describe how designers can work with displaced persons for shaping new possibilities with the built environment

Students are invited to bring personal experiences to inform the educational experience. While this course focuses on the global context, the design approaches are relevant to U.S. situations. More info: <http://adaptiverefugeehousing.com> or email [Nancy Cheng](mailto:Nancy Cheng).