ARCH 573
Hospital in an Inhospitable Land: an off-the-grid hospital in Afghanistan

Students may choose to concurrently take:
ARCH 576: Healthcare Architecture in an Era of Radical Transformation
for a more thorough understanding of the design issues.

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Practice Critics:
David Kuffner, AIA, Principal, OWP/P Cannon Design
Patty Looker, FACHE, Principal/Healthcare Director, VOA Associates

Summary
“When aid agencies build healthcare clinics, they tend to be either for immediate
disaster care, or urban settings. They are either small and temporary, or large and
infrastructural. The 100 bed model has the flexibility to provide both experiences.
It is large enough to demonstrate a permanent commitment to the community,
yet small enough to be placed in villages, near rural areas. In these areas there is
no grid for water, power and waste. The ability to package these improvements, at
the right scale, is one of the vectors through which these projects can transform
the community. The 100 bed hospital is small enough to operate off the grid, yet
large enough to achieve an economy of scale in water and power production.
There have been many architectural competitions about bringing, small, portable,
often temporary, healthcare facilities to underserved populations. This project goes
in the opposite direction: a permanent, site specific, building that encourages the
participation and investment of the locals.”

The intent of this course is to design a one hundred bed, critical access, off-the-
grid, hospital, in rural Afghanistan. The hospital will be site specific and responsive
to differing concepts of the human body as expressed through religion and
culture. Traditional tribal and ethnic practices will be supported by the hospital.
Religious and cultural practices regarding medicine, health, burial and the human
body will be supported. The hospital will be responsive to the extremes of Afghan
summer and winter conditions.

Field Trip
Students will make one field trip to Chicago to tour the sites of two new hospitals
under construction and the recently completed Prentice Women’s Hospital.

Guest lecturers and collaborators
• HOK Sheila F. Cahnman, AIA, ACHA, HOK Vice President/Principal of Healthcare Design.
• Jeff Mark, President, JSMA Healthcare Consultants + Architects
• Sara Marberry, Executive Director, Center for Health Design
• Enrique J. Unanue, AIA, NCARB, ACHA, Principal, Code Services, LLC
• George J Mann, AIA, Professor, The Skaggs - Sprague Endowed Chair of Health Facilities Design, College of Architecture, Texas A&M University