Prof. Takeyama, Peihong Han, Murong Xu, Phillip Fernberg, Josh Black, Xiaoman Ji, Mai Nguyen, Kade Jones, Bruce Sharky, Yuta Masakane, front row: Yue Zhang, Sophie Lott, Chadd Hippensteel, Surabhi Jain

LA 7051 Advanced Topic Studio Class, Fall 2018. • LSU Robert Reich School of Landscape Architecture
Aerial view of Tavira (Google Map)

Tavira located by red pin
Narrative

Over the last several years, the 3rd-year MLA design studio has been designed around a field study program in such locations as several US National Parks in Alaska, the South Platte River in Denver, Colorado, Buffalo Bayou in Houston, Texas, and Bosque Chapultepec, Mexico City. The underlying purpose of the studio is to immerse the students in an environment having a set of ecological, social, and cultural attributes different from what they are not accustomed to. They are guided to explore for themselves a range of design issues based on their personal experiences of a new place. The fall 2018 semester 13 students traveling with their studio professor to Portugal conducted extensive field studies for 10 days. The purpose of the studio field trip was to conduct field analysis and documentation of our project site and visit a menu of historic and cultural sites in the Algarve, Lisbon, and the historical city of Leiria. We used public transportation most of time as well as exploring on foot and bicycle. Prior to their time in Tavira the students visited museums, historical neighborhoods, and public spaces in Lisbon with a day trip to the UNESCO World Heritage city of Leiria, north of Lisbon. Throughout the field studies the students were charged with maintaining a sketching journal including line drawings and water colors with the idea of exploring the potential of hand drawing to become critical viewers of what they experienced.

Our semester studio is located in the town of Tavira on the Algarve Coast in Southeast Portugal, 40 km from the Spanish border. The project includes a large expansive of salt-drying ponds, and dispersed collection of remnant structures of 19th and 20th Century fishing, brick making, and other industries. The salt ponds were first constructed by the Phoenicians and later managed by the Romans. Many of the ponds are still active but many other have been abandoned. The ponds were built on what was extensive coastal marshes. Tavira, like many coast communities along the Algarve Coast have become highly desirable tourism destinations and part-time winter snow birds from Northern Europe. It is one of the last of these coastal communities to be transformed by tourism. The ambition is to not simply keep Tavira and the salt pond area as is but to find alternative strategies for preserving and at the same time incorporating potential development while retaining the qualities that make Tavira as a healthy but authentic eco-cultural tourism destination. Students will explore alternative futures for maintaining the national patrimony of a rich cultural history of the salt pond dominated landscape. Central inquiry of the studio: Explore ways of accommodating tourism and economic development while maintaining the integrity of the historical, cultural, and environmental patrimony of Tavira. Sound interesting?
Volunteer plants on wall in Leiria

Residences on east bank of Gilao River in. Tavira
View looking South over Tavira from Castle walls
Josh Black

Fortress do Rato, Tavira

Sunrise in Tavira
Mai Nguyen

Scenes along the edge of River Gilao
Yuta Masakane

Tavira by back road, in the salt pans, along the river and at a resting spot
Yue Zhang

At the Gulbenkian Museum and the maritime plaza in Lisbon

Tavira castle grounds and old commercial street in Lisbon

Xiaoman Ji
River Gilao at high and low tide in Tavira

Sensitive water level
Surabhi Jain

Looking south from the St. George Castle in Lisbon with the Tejo River in background

Tavira at night

Phillip Fernberg
Boats moored on the Gilao River, Tavira

Lisbon at the Tejo River

Old shopping street in Lisbon

Lisbon metro station

Peihong Han
Scenes during our days exploring Lisbon
Chadd Hippensteel
Kade Jones

Tavira church

Entrance stairs to Castle in Leiria

Students biking in Tavira

Late afternoon stroll in Tavira
Bruce’s Photos

Typical of the stone pavement patterns set in sand for sidewalks, streets, and most public spaces throughout Portugal
Hugo Alves briefing students before tour of historic Leiria
Beach at Luz

Salt pans in Tavira
The MLA Studio V Class of fall 2018

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