ARC 5935 Special Topics (3 credits): Coursework on a particular aspect of architecture under the direction of faculty in a classroom format. Prerequisite: Program Approval.

Seminar Topic: Contemporary Japanese Architecture and Urban Grass Roots
This course is intended to aid students to gain direct contact with extraordinary build work. Visiting extraordinary architectural work has been a traditional part of architectural education since the Académie des Beaux-Arts - later known as the Ecole des Beaux-Arts- was founded in France around 350 years ago. The “Grand Tours” of the Académie and the Ecole des Beaux-Arts to Italy were among the most celebrated and almost mandatory trip Architects and Artists had to engage as part of their education for several centuries. Japan, and Tokyo in particular, offer today one of the largest examples of seminal architectural work developed in the past 15 years. This course will be focused on the analyzing the emergence of major and universal contemporary Japanese Architects.

The first half of the class will be dedicated to lectures presenting the work and design investigations of several leading Architects such as Toyo Ito, SANAA, Sou Fujimoto, Junya Ishigami, Kengo Kuma, and Atelier Bow Wow. The lectures will also look at its roots, its relationship with contemporary Japanese Art, contemporary urbanity, traditional Japanese aesthetics, and its parallels with new automation aesthetics. In the second part of the class the students will develop individual projects based on the observations they made during the trip to Japan and which were referenced in the first part of the class.

Japan Trip
Students will be spending two weeks in Japan. During this time the students will be able to visit a large number of the highly published build projects (more than 100), contemporary art, and neighborhoods such as Shinjuku, Omotesando, Akihabara, Ropongi, Ginza, and Yokohama to situate the ideas presented in the class. During the trip students will document certain urban conditions in modern and traditional neighborhood and will critically investigate both conditions based on some of the situated contextualized techniques developed by Atelier Bow Wow. The individual projects developed in the class will be documented in a book format.
**Course Evaluation**

Students will be evaluated upon performance in the projects. While a satisfactory grade in the course may be attained by the completion of all work required to the satisfaction of the professor, individual initiative and investigation of design and research issues that extend beyond the basic requirements are strongly encouraged. Grading will be based on the University system. Class attendance is mandatory. Tardiness is disruptive to class and will definitely affect grades. Two tardiness equals one absence. **Four absences will automatically result in a failing grade.** No late work will be accepted failing the corresponding grade segment. Absenteeism or tardiness at mid-term or final review will result in a failing grade. Students must be present during the entire length of major reviews.

**Student Rights and Responsibilities**

It is the student's responsibility to obtain, become familiar with, and abide by all Departmental, College and University requirements and regulations. These include but are not limited to:

- The Florida International University Catalog Division of Student Affairs Handbook of Rights and Responsibilities
- Departmental Curriculum and Program Sheets
- Departmental Policies and Regulations

**Student Work**

*The School of Architecture reserves the right to retain any and all student work for the purpose of record, exhibition and instruction. All students are encouraged to photograph and/or copy all work for personal records prior to submittal to instructor. Selected student work might be displayed at the School of Architecture Gallery.*

**Midterm and Final**

Midterm and Final presentations are mandatory. Un-excused student absence will result in a fail grade. You are encouraged to contact the instructor as soon as possible in case of a personal emergency.

**Selected Reading References**

- Geeta Mehta and Deanna MacDonald. *New Japan architecture : recent works by the world's leading architects*. Tokyo ; Rutland, Vt. : Tuttle, 2011 (NA1555.6.M44 2011)

**Grades**
35% Pre-Mid-Term assignments and Mid-Term exam
65% Final exam and post-midterm assignments (including book requirement)