Note: Syllabus from Fall 2021; updated syllabus will be posted at the beginning of the term.

­­Fall Term

Graduate Levels

4.288

SMArchS Computation: Thesis Preparation

Prof. Larry Sass

[lsass@mit.edu](mailto:lsass@mit.edu)

*All classes Tuesdays 4:00-7:00 pm*

(2-0-4) Credits

**Introduction**

This subject is the second of two subjects that prepare you for doing a *SMArchS* thesis. The goal of this subject is to help you to:

Develop an original and relevant thesis topic that will contribute new understanding to the area of design and computation

compile the necessary background material to validate and support your thesis exploration

define methodologies and strategies to begin your thesis work in the following semester

complete a formal thesis proposal for the SMArchS degree and decide on your thesis committee

In addition to class meetings, each student is required to meet and consult individually with his or her academic advisor or proposed thesis advisor to assist in the development of a thesis topic.

**Requirements**

Students are expected to complete three assignments, participate in class discussions and reviews, and present their thesis proposals at the December15 all-SMArchS review.

**Grading**

* Assignment 1 Exploratory thesis ideas (20%)
* Assignment II Thesis idea refinement and bibliography (20%)
* Assignment III Thesis Proposal, including the public review in which students present their thesis topics and methodologies to their thesis committees and invited reviewers (40%)
* Class participation (20%)

**Meeting 1 - Introduction**

* Sept 14
* Assignment I handout

**Meeting 2 - Exploratory thesis ideas**

* Sept 21
* Assignment I discussion
* Assignment II handout

**Meeting 3 - Thesis ideas (Faculty Guest Critics)**

* Oct 12
* Assignment II discussion
* Assignment III handout

**Meeting 4 - Thesis ideas (PhD Guest Critics)**

* Oct 26
* Assignment III discussion

**Meeting 5 - Marylin Levine**

* Nov 16
* Assignment III discussion

**Meeting 6 - Thesis proposal presentation**

* Dec 10 (Fri)
* Assignment III discussion

**Other Important Dates**

Oct 15, noon (Fri) -Confirm name of thesis advisor emailed to Tessa McLain <tmclain@mit.edu>

Dec 6 - Digitally submit pre-thesis materials for the SMArchS review booklet (TBA)

Dec 13 - Deadline to submit a signed copy of the thesis proposal form and thesis proposal to Tessa McLain <tmclain@mit.edu>

Dec 10 - All SMArchS thesis proposal presentations

Dec 13. - Thesis Proposal Due - Assignment III