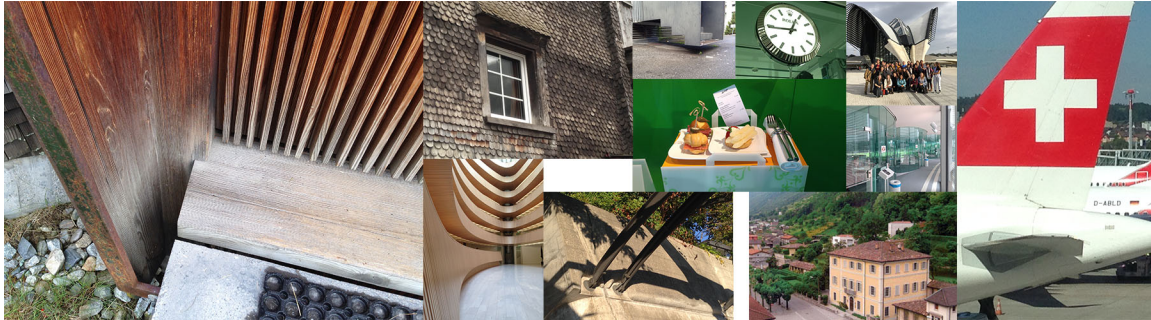


**School of Architecture + Design (A+D) Study Abroad Residency Program  
in Riva San Vitale, Switzerland  
Fall Semester 2018 (dates TBD)**



**Faculty Member of Record:** A+D ARCH Professor **Henri T. de Hahn**  
**Title:** Study Abroad Residency Program  
**Required course Numbers:** ARCH 4015 Architecture IV (required lab, 7cr)  
ARCH 4214 Europe Studio/Culture Studies (3cr)\*  
ARCH 4974 Independent Study (3cr): suggested course in city mapping  
ARCH 4974 Independent Study (3cr) –possible additional course based on the faculty's research expertise (TBD). Suggested seminar: [An Italian Way of Thinking...](#)  
**Recommended Course:** ITAL 1204 Italian Language and Culture (1cr)  
**Note:** Equivalent graduate courses will be offered based on graduate participation. They are welcome and encouraged to apply.

**Introduction**

The Riva San Vitale Program located at the *Steger Center for International Scholarship* in the Italian part of Switzerland has been offered as an A+D signature program for over two decades. Contrary to the concept of an off-campus program, Riva is a study abroad RESIDENCY program –a program whose locus is based on the idea of residency in Riva for the entire semester. However, it has been a long-standing tradition that the faculty of record conduct a number of short and weeklong group field trips in order to immerse students in the study of architecture through site visits. This is offered in addition to those trips that the students take independently during their stay. Henri T. de Hahn, architecture professor at the School of Architecture + Design (A+D), will be the faculty of record for Fall 2018 and intends to offer undergraduate and graduate students a particular insight into the culture of three countries – Switzerland, France and Italy and their ensuing urban, architectural, landscape, and interior design productions.

**Program description:**

Modern as well as contemporary European architecture remain a model for an integrative practice of architecture spanning from early design schematics to completed built work. The resulting artifacts often forcefully and unabashedly exhibit their presence by being *contemporary*, yet mostly balancing a 'wow' factor with more humble testimonies that subtly integrate each intervention within a historic fabric. This attitude to ground a project has, over the recent decades, shown architecture's great dexterity in handling complex urban left over spaces, interstitial spaces, and concerns about historic preservation, in particular within the historic fabric of European city centers. While it is particularly important to expose fourth year students to a more complex and socially rich environment at the urban scale, notions of a *culture of construction* with the accompanying superb detailing, and an *economy of means* when it comes to the act of building is something undeniably Swiss. This way of thinking is noteworthy as most architectural artifacts are recognized internationally as superbly crafted and subtly integrated within the environment. Above all, these architectural forms legitimize that design excellence, design ethics, and design thinking is possible and necessary for a rich environment.

While de Hahn was born in Canada, he spent most of his formative years, including those of his graduate studies and early teaching responsibilities, in Switzerland and has gained an innate appreciation of the cultural, social, and overarching design issues that are part of the Swiss national brand –this of course beyond being an expert in cuckoo clocks and Swiss chocolate! He speaks fluent French and German and with a refresher in Italian, is set to share his love of Europe with you.

**Proposed itineraries:**

The proposed itineraries are tailored to build on seminal building types, spaces and places as well as on the content of the ARCH 3134 History and Theory class taught during the 2017 Spring semester. On overarching emphasis will be placed on Swiss architecture and its four important linguistic regions. Of course, the buildings of non-Swiss architects will be included in the proposed visits:

**Switzerland:**

- **Italian speaking Switzerland:** The Ticino region is renowned for the Ticinese School of architecture whose key protagonists are: M. Botta, Mario Campi, A. Galfetti, Reinhart & Reichlin, L. Snozzi, and Livio Vacchini.
  - **Romansh speaking Switzerland:** The Grison is known for innovative “mountain” architecture. The key protagonists are, among others, Andrea Deplaze, Gigon & Guyer and most importantly Peter Zumthor\*\*. The Grison has some wonderful female architects who have accomplished spectacular buildings (<https://architektin.wordpress.com/2014/05/28/?architects-of-the-grisons/>). Towns to be visited: Chur, Illanz and Davos.
  - **German speaking Switzerland:** While too numerous to enumerate, these are key players: Atelier 5, Santiago Calatrava, Le Corbusier, Gigon/Guyer, Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron, Valerio Olgiati, and Peter Zumthor. Cities to be visited: Bern, Basel, Luzern, Winterthur, and Zürich.
  - **French speaking Switzerland:** Key players are Atelier Cube, Geninasca & Delefortrie, Ivo Frei, Pieter Versteegh and Bruce Dunning, Le Corbusier, Patrick Devanthery & Ines Lamunière, SAANA, and Bernard Tschumi. Cities to be visited: Neuchatel, Lausanne and Geneva.
- \*\* Overnight stay at the baths in Vals is part of one trip

**France:**

- As France is immediately north of Switzerland and easily accessible, visits to Le Corbusier's work in Ronchamp, La Tourette (with an overnight stay); Calatrava's Lyon Satolas train station; and the city of Paris will constitute an extended weeklong group excursion. De Hahn is very familiar with all proposed sites and has visited and lived in Paris. More details for this trip will be forthcoming.

**Italy:**

- Located half an hour south of Riva, Northern Italy will be a natural extension of our visits during the semester. However, de Hahn intends to host a two-day trip to Como and a more extensive one-and-a-half week long trip to the *Serenissima* city of Venice with stops in Genova, Milano, Possagno, Vicenza, San Vito di Altivole, and Verona to see first hand the key Renaissance architecture of Andrea Palladio, the exquisite works of Carlo Scarpa, and the Architecture Biennale in Venice which promises to be nothing less than extraordinary. The Biennale is held every two years and hosted in the famous Giardini di Venice –it is a rare treat to be able to visit the Biennale as well as the annual Film Festival on the Lido. De Hahn has lived in Venice at two occasions in addition to frequent shorter stays, and is very familiar with the proposed itinerary. More details for this trip will be forthcoming.

While the above group trips are suggestive at this moment, discussion with participants may include additional trips to cities such as Berlin, Barcelona, Madrid and Vienna. Of course, individual and/or non-faculty led faculty group trips are encouraged and de Hahn will lend his expertise to any of the trips stimulated by the students' curiosity outside of the Villa.

The intended visits will allow for a comparative discourse between religious, institutional, civic, real estate developments, private and social housing, and commercial interventions within both urban and rural contexts. Noteworthy, a number of impromptu and scheduled discussions regarding the understanding of each city will be held, as the urban European morphologies are integral to how building types are generated. Discussions will pay particular attention to the students' introduction to foreign cultures and to the spaces and places they have visited prior to their arrival in Riva.

**Pedagogical intent:**

A more extensive pedagogical description will be included in the final syllabus. However, at this time, de Hahn's intent remains similar to other off-campus programs offered at VT and in his previous institutions.

The faculty's pedagogy will emphasize that learning (what will the student know; what will the student be able to do; and what intellectual value can be added to the students' experience upon completion of this program) is aimed to produce articulate and confident students who are capable of understanding new spaces and places in a short, simultaneous and targeted manner, making obvious interdisciplinary and methodological links between select A+D disciplines –the urban landscape, the built and domesticated natural environments, and constructed artifacts. Students will be able to appreciate Western cultures that make up the complexity of Europe –both past and present. In addition, students will be able to:

- Raise clear and precise questions, use abstract ideas to interpret information, consider diverse points of view, reach well-reasoned conclusions, and test them against relevant criteria and standards.
- Demonstrate basic critical thinking to gather, assess, record, apply, and comparatively evaluate relevant information with taught coursework.
- Investigate through various drawing and digital methods (photography, video and sound recording) a research agenda to understand, record and connect in an autobiographical manner what is experienced in a holistic manner.
- Develop an intellectual capacity to establish connections between taught material and on-site learning opportunities – a Hands-on, Minds-on approach.

In addition, the US National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB) Student Performance Criteria (SPC) in place for fourth year at A+D will be incorporated as appropriate during this residency program.

**Learning Indicators:**

- Active participation by the students in pre-departure module and information sessions
- Students must demonstrate competent design skills while working in a foreign environment
- Students will reflect on skill building exercises and cultural immersion through visual and text based documentation.

**General logistics:**

The Steger Center provides

- Complete studio/classroom facilities. These are fitted with modern technology and accommodate a spacious architecture studio, multiple study rooms, a library, and a creativity room. WIFI is available throughout the Steger Center but not in the apartments
- Room and board. Students live in shared double, triple or quadruple dormitory rooms either at the historic Villa Maderni or in apartments in Riva. Rooms are fully furnished, with bed linens, set of towels, and hangers. Laundry facilities are available and the Center provides free washing powder, but the laundry is at the student's cost. Recreational bicycles and safety helmets as well as sport equipment such as tennis, Ping-Pong, soccer, basketball are available
- Board includes breakfast, lunch, and dinner that are served at the Center (brunch on weekends). Free coffee & tea, juice and milk, and fruit are served.

**Preliminary Financial Program Estimates:**

Please refer to Prof. Heiner Schnoedt's comparative chart of A+D's signature programs for Fall 2018. This information will allow interested students to make an informed decision based on the above content as well as the financial implications that the Riva program entails. There are three separate charges for this program:

- (University determined) regular VT Tuition (minus comprehensive fees)
- (University determined) Steger Center Room and Board Fee, currently \$7,100
- Architecture Estimated Program Fee, currently \$6600.

In addition to the above fees, the following fees apply to the Center

- Architecture + Design Fee, currently at \$475
- Steger Center –Student Activity Fee, currently at \$100

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- Visa and Swiss registrations permits, currently at \$150
- Technology Fee, currently at \$37
- Library Fee, currently at \$48
- *Commonwealth Facility & Equipment Fee* (Non-resident only), currently at \$302

Both tuition and the Steger Center Residency Room and Board Fees are posted at VT Bursar's website (currently under Special Rates - Center for European Studies and Architecture). The Board of Visitors will set the new rates in the spring of 2017.

\* May be counted toward the B.Arch. Degree as Elective, Professional Elective, or Area 7 CLE requirement.