

**University of Hartford**  
**College of Engineering, Technology, and Architecture**  
**Department of Architecture**

**ARC 611 Graduate Architectural Design Studio**  
**Fall Semester 2007**

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**Project #4: Islamic Center of Doha**

**Goal**

The goal of this design problem is to work with a building type and a context that you might have little or no first-hand experience with: an Islamic Center to serve the Muslim community in the city of Doha, Qatar. It is a place that will express the religious and cultural values of Islam. The Islamic Center of Doha will be a religious building, but it will also include social, cultural, and educational spaces that are not expressly for worship: classrooms, meeting rooms, spaces to gather in community and share meals, a library and a visitors' center. The Islamic Center must respond to the tenets of the Islamic faith, but it is also a place where non-Muslims can learn more about the religion and the activities of this congregation in Doha.

**Overall Context**

The major city of Qatar is Doha, a capital with more than 90% of the population of the country that reached a little less than a million including professionals from other countries. Historically, Doha was a fishing and pearl-diving town. Up to the mid 1960s, the majority of the buildings were individual traditional houses that represent local responses to the surrounding physical and socio-cultural conditions. During the 1970s the city has witnessed great transformation into a modernized city. However, in the 1980s and early 1990s the development process was slow compared to the prior period due to either the overall political atmosphere or the reliance of the country on the resources and economy of other neighboring countries.

Since the late 1990s, the country has witnessed an explosive growth. The recent rapid development of Doha is associated with a fast-track urbanization process, marked by large scale office towers and mixed use developments. In its modernization process and the attempt to follow the neighboring city Dubai as an example of a global urban image, the city has adopted international building standards, state-of-the-art glass towers with few attempts to fuse the modern with the traditional, here and there around the city. The government is supporting large-scale infrastructure projects and high profile institutional and cultural building projects, the majority of which are designed by name international firms and star architects. Despite the merits and demerits of the swift urban development process and the resulting architecture, the built environment of Qatar represents a rich soil and a unique opportunity for many to learn from.

**Site Context**

The Islamic Center is to be built in one of the important sites on the peripheries of Doha city, Qatar, named Algharrafa district. The site will attract people of the Islamic faith for prayer and fellowship, as well as many from the different expatriate communities who are working in Qatar.

It is expected that the local community which is basically Muslims will interact with the expatriate community which includes people of all faiths. The design of the building must respond to various functional requirements, but more importantly it must be symbolic. As well, it should address the contextual aspects in the city.

As a religious building in a country that has a local population of nearly 250,000 people and expatriate multi-cultural communities of nearly 750,000 people from all corners of the globe, North America, Europe, Middle East, and Far East, it should be expressive of the beliefs and culture of those who gather there to worship. As a building in the State of Qatar it might reflect the architecture and building traditions of the city of Doha and the Arabian Gulf region. The form of the building, its decoration, and the choice of materials, colors, and details should be a way of expressing the Islamic Center's role in the community and its function as a place of worship.

### **Objectives**

*The goal and type of this project aim primarily to help students:*

- Recognize different approaches to the design of traditional mosques found in pre-contemporary eras and how contemporary Islamic centers may differ.
- Articulate how religious activities of the Islamic faith can be accommodated in spiritual responsive space, while they are integrated into other activities for the purpose of interaction with people of other faiths.
- Understand how contextual information can be translated into comprehensive design solutions.
- Recognize different approaches and mechanisms for architectural intervention in an extreme desert environment.

### **Critical Thinking as a Major Learning and Process Outcome**

An essential component of learning outcomes in this project is Critical Thinking. It involves the development of a number of students' abilities at this senior stage:

- Judge the credibility of sources
- Identify conclusions, reasons, and assumptions
- Judge the quality of an argument, including the acceptability of its reasons, assumptions, and evidence
- Develop and defend a position on an issue
- Ask appropriate clarifying questions
- Define terms in a way appropriate for the context
- Be open-minded
- Try to be well informed
- Draw conclusions when warranted, but with caution

### **Work Mechanism**

The first part of this project will be a crash course in Islamic and mosque architecture and decoration. A studio team will be responsible for a Powerpoint presentation to the entire studio on the elements of Islamic and mosque architecture and design, the role and function of the mosque in the Islamic faith, Islamic decoration, and the local and expatriate communities of Qatar. A second team will be responsible for a Powerpoint presentation on site analysis, considering climatic influences and prevailing winds, site access, traffic, public transportation, historical context, shadow studies, views onto and off of the site, prevailing winds, noise, etc.

In the second part, each student will be working individually on his/her project utilizing the conclusions resulted from the group research effort.

**Team 1 (Islamic and Mosque Architecture)**

Rhucha Parab  
 Carey Williams-Ramino  
 Arturo Arroyo  
 Jason Farquharson

**Team 2 (Site Analysis)**

Tyson Dorman  
 Edwin Canales  
 Vinny Molluzzo

**Program**

The program from the building reflects its multiple uses: worship, teaching, meeting, outreach, community.

<b>Ground Level</b>		<b>Upper Level</b>	
• Prayer Hall	5000 SF	• Womens prayer	2500 SF
• Library and Visitors Center	2000	• Ablution (women)	500
• Entry Hall men	1200	• Womens restroom	240
• Coat storage	120	• Childcare	500
• Office #1	120	• Classrooms (2, each)	250
• Office #2	170	• Mechanical	500
• Ablution (men)	400	• <u>Circulation (approx.)</u>	<u>640</u>
• Mens restroom	210	• Total (Upper Level)	5130 SF
• 2 stairs	500		
• Elevator	100		
• Mens shoes storage	80		
• Misc. storage	120		
• Entry hall women	1000		
• Womens shoes storage	80		
• Circulation (approx.)	2000		
• Community meeting room	1200		
• Kitchen (near meeting room)	200		
• <u>Mechanical</u>	<u>500</u>		
• Total (Ground Level)	15,000 SF	Total SF for building:	20,130 SF

A parking for the Islamic Center is designated in a nearby site and therefore is not included in the project site. However, surface parking of 12 lots will serve the employees of the center.

It should be noted that the above areas do not include such features as minarets, domes, outdoor plazas which you may include in your design.

**Presentation and Required Drawings**

Each student's project should be rendered graphically with drawings and a model. Color must be used throughout the drawings, but is optional on the model. The presentation materials are as follows:

- Site plan at 1/32-inch scale. Please indicate ground materials, adjacent buildings and streets, roof plan, numbered parking spaces, site furniture, outdoor areas, landscaping, etc.
- Parti diagram (no scale) illustrating your design's basic concept, and a verbal statement that reflects your concept
- Floor plans at ground level and second level at 1/16-inch scale, showing door swings, windows, furniture, and textures/patterns (lightly). Use color on the floor plan to communicate different space functions.
- Four elevations at 1/16-inch scale.

- Two building sections at 1/16-inch scale, with cut through the entire building perpendicular to each other. One of the sections must cut through the worship space, showing men's prayer hall below and women's prayer hall above.
- Full typical exterior wall section at 1/2-inch scale, calling out all materials.
- At least one interior perspective of the worship space.
- Exterior model at 1/20-inch scale, showing full site contours and access, exterior building massing and details, ornament, material patterns, paving patterns, parking, etc. The model should be made of high-quality cardboard or bass wood.

### **Project Schedule**

November 16: Project Assignment/Visit to Berlin Mosque

November 26: Powerpoint Presentations

December 3: Design Scheme Pinup

December 14: Final Design Review

