Introduction: This studio is an antidote for restlessness, aimed at those nomadic souls among us who are going stir-crazy in the time of Covid-19. During the semester, we will travel virtually, fanning out far and wide across the globe. Channeling those great adventurers who take off on pious pilgrimages and rowdy road trips, each student will plot a journey and retell their adventures through the design of an accommodation.

Psychologist Jean Piaget proposed there are two ways of processing new information and experiences. The first is through assimilation, where new knowledge is filed into existing mental categories or schemas. The second, of particular interest here, is the more difficult accommodation which requires reshaping an existing category, or in some cases, creating a wholly new category to accommodate unfamiliar, incoming information.

Our conversations this semester will focus on how to make encounters with new precedents productive in the design process; this will include discussions about schemas and types, fuzzy sets and basic level categories. We will consider the role of metaphors, chance and arbitrary ordering systems (like grids and alphabetizing) in the formation of new types, and explore the distance between expectations, reality, perception and memory. Short readings will be pleasurable and wide-ranging, from Henry David Thoreau’s “Walking” and excerpts from Umberto Eco’s Infinity of Lists, to Rafael Moneo’s seminal text “On Typology.”

Week 1: Meet and greet, Course introduction
Weeks 2-3: Trip prep: Plotting the route, anticipating rendezvous with fellow travelers/potential collaborators, packing, site selection and analysis
Weeks 4-8: Travel: Accommodating relevant precedents encountered along the route
Week 9-13: Design development

Program: In this studio, architectural program is defined as architectural agenda, including, but not limited to, the function of a building. Students will design an “accommodation” (as defined by each student) for travelers.

Site: The accommodation will be sited in the city of origin.

Routes: Anchorage to Accra, Buenos Aires to Beijing, Cairo to Calgary, Dhaka to Dallas, El Paso to Edinburgh, Fez to Fukuoka, Guangzhou to Granada, Hong Kong to Hollywood, Istanbul to Ibagué, Juneau to Jerusalem, Kansas City to Karachi, Lima to Lagos, Mexico City to Melbourne, New Orleans to New Delhi, Oslo to Osaka, Pretoria to Paris, Quito to Quebec City, Rio de Janeiro to Riyadh, Santiago to Shanghai, Tokyo to Tehran, Ulaanbaatar to Urbino, Vladivostok to Valparaiso, Wellington to Wichita, Yagoua to Yuma, Zurich to Zamboanga