

Wesleyan University Architecture
Research - Design - Build
Spring 2008 Studio

Architecture II: The Sanctuary is a design-build studio focused on a single, semester-long project. Working through a sequence of Research, Design, and Fabrication phases, the studio is producing a bird viewing platform for the Helen Carlson Wildlife Sanctuary (The Sanctuary) in Portland, CT, under the purview of the Mattabesec Audubon Society (MAS). Formerly in operation as a commercial cranberry bog, the 19-acre site is contiguous to the Meshomasic State Forest. The principal design challenges of the studio have been determining an approach to sustainability, developing possibilities for the relationship between architecture and landscape, and formulating the role of the project within the environment of which it will be a part. Complementing the studio's three project phases, there have been a series of sessions led by scientists in related fields who have presented work and ideas intended to complement and extend the design-focused research of the studio.

The work of the studio has relied both on individual effort and on collective capacity. Over the course of the project, there have been three different working scenarios - individual (design), team (research and design), and studio (construction) - each tailored to best address the specific challenges the studio has faced. As the project has progressed, additional design, representation, and production tools have been introduced and used for developing work for the project, from graphics software to the laser cutter.

