Detroit’s past financial issues caused a housing crisis and population flight. Over the past two decades, Detroit’s population has declined by approximately 33%. In response to crime & fire incidents in the homes and structures that were left behind, the city has become a national leader in removing blighted structures quickly and efficiently. Residential blocks that experienced the greatest number of demolitions have witnessed the greatest reduction in crime. However, what happens to the land after the house is removed? What does Detroit do with all of this vacant land? Often, demolition are isolated, dark, to dumping, all residents feel of vacancy also market value of and challenges to provide basic have been neigh- which propose parks, greenways and mixed use development on vacant parcels. Still, vacancy (and the blight which follows) persist as city-wide issues which beg for a comprehensive and strategic approach.

This interdisciplinary seminar will examine the issue of vacancy across the entire city of Detroit. During the seminar, students will investigate the history of settlement, segregation, urban renewal, flooding, and industry which have all had an impact on where people live, and why some areas have been harder hit than others. Students will tour Detroit, interview city officials & supporting agencies, meet with resident stakeholders, and design professionals who have completed relevant projects in the city that respond to these challenges.

Autumn 2022
Monday
9:10–11:55pm
(1–2 times a month + fieldtrip to Detroit)

Matt Williams
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