

Supported Independence

Around 1,200 Texas Children age out of Foster Care each year. An estimated 1 in 4 will be unhoused within 4 years of leaving the system.

Students in this section will identify the challenges these young adults face and explore an architectural response that addresses those needs in the form of a Supported Independent Living facility. What are the aspects of architecture that can heal trauma, enhance self-worth, create connection to opportunity and provide a foundation for success in the real world? What are the design strategies to enhance affordability?



Research phase: Students will identify the challenges facing this group of young people and identify facilities and programs that have had success in lifting these people up from their circumstance. They will also engage in a rigorous analysis of site, as site selection is the first design decision that impacts the success the project. Students will investigate and analyze site options, located in Marfa, Texas, and in Lubbock, to determine which site best fulfills the needs of the program as they see it.

Design Exploration: Once the site has been determined, students will design a housing module. This portion of the design will be designed as if they could be pre-manufactured, transported to and assembled at any site. From that module students will explore methods and strategies of arrangement that offer varying levels of privacy and autonomous living, moving the module from micro to macro. The program will include space for support services, supervisory housing and other elements that are determined through during the research phase of the semester.

Design Development: Students will further develop their conceptual designs through the integration of building systems, and explorations of materiality.

Throughout the semester, students will be challenged to develop their own convictions regarding the role of architects and architectural design in society.