

# OAXACA

TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE AND URBANISM  
SUMMER SCHOOL

*June 22th to July 5th, 2025*



GENERAL INFORMATION

*intbaumexico@gmail.com*

*<https://intbaumexico.com/>*



## TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE AND URBANISM SUMMER SCHOOL IN OAXACA

The Mexican chapter of INTBAU is organizing the 2025 edition of the Mexico Summer School in the state of Oaxaca, which will take place from June 22 to July 5. The Summer School is composed of a series of theoretical-practical workshops with internationally renowned professors.

For this edition, the workshops emphasize the vernacular and traditional architecture and urbanism of the southern region of Mexico. The summer school offers a great opportunity to learn about local traditions of building construction and urban planning; local construction traditions are the key to the sustainable development of a modern society.

The curriculum is composed of visits and classes aimed at understanding the Oaxacan region, with the aim of making different proposals: improving public space, interior spaces (patios, atriums, parking lots, etc.), and exterior spaces (facades, streets, plazas, alleys, etc.).

The motivation to create a summer school in Oaxaca arose from current problems in the construction industry. Due to constant seismic emergency and society generational changes, gentrification; traditional construction techniques and classic or traditional urban design have been forgotten. This neglect has resulted in the degradation of several public spaces of Oaxacan neighborhoods, including private and commercial buildings.

INTBAU MEXICO firmly believes that the re-incorporation of local traditions in current construction will create highly functional, durable, and attractive buildings and places.

## PROFESSORS

Esteban Martinez – *INTBAU Cuba*

Jonathan Weatherill – *(Rome Global Gateway) University of Notre Dame*

Ettore Mazzola – *(Rome Global Gateway) University of Notre Dame*

John Onyango – *University of Notre Dame*

Maria Sánchez – *Estudio Urbano*

Pedro Godoy – *Estudio Urbano*

Isis Juarez – *Hereditas*

Arq. Edward McGrath – *McGrath Architects*

Isaac Tame – *Universida La Salle / Universidad Iberoamericana*

Sara Bega – *University of Notre Dame*

Roberto Rodriguez – *Arquitectura Clasica*





## DESCRIBED ITINERARY

### Sunday - June 22nd

We will begin the event with a formal introduction to INT-BAU Mexico, the Summer Program, as well as to the professors, students, and community members participating. This session will establish the academic and cultural framework of the course, highlighting the importance of preserving and adapting architectural and urban traditions in the contemporary context.

Next, a lecture will be offered on the importance of traditional architecture in contemporary times, emphasizing its role as a tool for cultural identity and sustainability.

To begin understanding the urban structure of Oaxaca, we will take a guided tour of the historic center, where we will observe firsthand the relationship between colonial architecture and pre-existing indigenous elements. This will allow us to analyze the urban morphology, materials used, and the integration of architecture within the natural and cultural context of the region.

### Monday - June 23rd

We will visit the Historic Center of Oaxaca, where key examples of traditional architectural typology and its evolution over time can be studied. The visit will include the Oaxaca Cathedral and the Museum of Cultures of Santo Domingo, where we will explore how colonial structures adapted to indigenous materials and techniques.

We will begin identifying and cataloging the main architectural and urban elements present in the city, such as windows, doors, patios, ornaments, and finishes. This exercise will allow us to create a collaborative abacus that will serve as a tool to analyze and understand the formal characteristics of traditional architecture.

An introductory class will be given on the urbanism and architecture of Oaxaca, focusing on pre-Hispanic influences, the arrival of colonizers, and how these phases are reflected in architecture and urbanism. The scope and objectives of the project to be developed will also be detailed, emphasizing the importance of cultural contextualization and respect for local traditions in contemporary design.

### Tuesday - June 24th

The visit to the historic center will continue with a deeper focus on the analysis of traditional construction elements such as adobe walls, tile roofs, arcades, and the construction of interior courtyards. These aspects will be documented to continue completing the collaborative abacus.

We will also visit museums and iconic sites that illustrate the historical and cultural richness of Oaxaca, such as the Ethnobotanical Garden, where we can observe examples of the integration of landscape and architecture.

A class will be held on traditional architecture and urbanism techniques in Latin America, explaining how the city was organized around the landscape, the pre-existing layout, using endemic materials and principles of classical architecture. We will discuss how public spaces, squares, and markets are essential to urban life.

To consolidate what has been learned, we will conduct a site analysis in teams, exploring solutions to revitalize the urban space while respecting the scale, materials, and traditional organization of the city, complementing the existing master plan.

### Wednesday - June 25th

We will begin the day with a visit to the archaeological sites of Monte Albán and Atzompa, where we will study pre-Hispanic construction techniques, focusing particularly on urban planning and the architectural solutions



adopted by the Zapotec and Mixtec civilizations. We will analyze the orientation of the buildings, local materials, and the urban strategies used to create a harmonious relationship with the natural environment. The analysis will focus on the adaptability of materials and how pre-Hispanic cultures utilized clay, stone, and wood to create durable and functional structures. The session will continue with the completion of the abacus, examining the materials and construction techniques at the archaeological sites and their impact on contemporary architecture. The class titled \*The Search for Beauty\* will delve into the relationship between proportion, symmetry, and scale in architecture, and how these principles are applied in both classical architecture and traditional architecture in Oaxaca. The day will conclude with more teamwork, conducting a site analysis and examining the implications of ancestral building methods.

### Thursday - June 26th



We will visit the archaeological site of Mitla, known for its intricate geometric ornaments and the use of wood and stone in its architecture. We will study Mitla's unique construction system, which includes dry stone walls — a technique that evokes resilience and respect for the environment.

The work session will continue with the analysis of ornamental and construction elements in order to complete the abacus of traditional architecture.

A class will be held on how traditional architecture and vernacular urbanism can be adapted and enriched in contemporary design, particularly in growing urban areas.

Students will begin developing their urban proposals, incorporating the principles of traditional architecture into their designs and respecting patterns of sustainable growth.

### Friday - June 27th



A detailed introduction to the history of classical orders in architecture and their influence on urban planning and design will be offered.

Next, we will hold a drawing and architectural analysis workshop focused on the principles of proportion and scale that have governed both Western and vernacular architecture, and how these principles are reinterpreted in the Oaxaca tradition.

A class will be taught on classical architecture and how its architectural language (columns, pediments, architectural orders) can influence the application of designs more respectful of the context and local techniques. The day will conclude with a quick evaluation of the teams' proposals, aimed at refining the ideas presented.

## Saturday - June 28

The traditional construction techniques used in the region will be explored in detail, with a focus on sustainable building systems. The workshop will include the practical application of adobe and lime as local materials, emphasizing their thermal, acoustic, and ecological advantages. A hands-on demonstration will take place with the participation of the local community, who will share their knowledge of traditional construction and finishing techniques in both rural and urban contexts.

The graphic representation workshop with watercolor will provide students with the tools to visually capture their ideas, interpreting traditional architecture in an artistic and accurate way. The day will conclude with the development of urban proposals, followed by a free visit to the historic center of Oaxaca to study the interaction between traditional elements and new developments.

## Sunday - June 29th

We will continue with the workshop on applying on-site construction systems, perfecting the use of adobe and lime as essential materials in traditional Oaxacan construction. At the same time, students will continue working on the graphic representation of their proposals through watercolor. The development of urban proposals will continue on an optional basis, allowing participants to refine their projects before the final presentations.

## Monday - June 30th

A workshop on design, order, and proportion will be held, focusing on the application of these principles to the urban projects of Oaxaca. Students will learn to integrate elements of classical order and vernacular design into their proposals. The individual work will continue with the development of a parti for a selected building, taking into account the relationship between the building and the surrounding urban space.

A class will be held on participatory urban design, addressing how to involve the community in creating urban spaces that respect their needs and traditions. Students will continue working on their projects, adjusting their proposals according to the principles learned.

## Tuesday - July 1st

Individual work will continue in the studio, with special attention to the development of project facades. Emphasis will be placed on the relationship of the facades with the street and the urban context, taking into account the traditional characteristics of Oaxaca's architecture, such as proportion, the use of local materials (such as adobe and stone), and the human scale that seeks to integrate the buildings with their surroundings.



A class will be offered on the construction of traditional cities in contemporary times, analyzing how principles of vernacular urbanism — such as organic growth, connection to the natural environment, and the creation of public spaces — can be applied in modern urban projects. Participants will learn about the processes necessary to implement urban projects that respect architectural traditions while responding to contemporary demands for sustainability and functionality.

Work in the studio will continue, with participants refining their proposals and adjusting their designs according to the knowledge acquired about traditional architecture.

## Wednesday - July 2nd

Individual work will continue, with a more specific focus on developing the site plan. Students will work on the spatial organization of their projects, drawing on the characteristics of Oaxaca's traditional urbanism, which is marked by the interrelationship between public and private spaces, space hierarchy, and flexibility in building arrangement. The second evaluation of individual work will take place, where parti, facades, and the building plan will be analyzed. This evaluation will review the integration of



the projects within Oaxaca's urban context, ensuring that designs respect the city's traditions, scale, connectivity with public spaces, and integration of the natural landscape.

### Thursday - July 3rd

Individual work will continue in the studio, with a focus on the development of building sections and detailed analysis of its interior. Students will work on resolving the relationship between interior and exterior spaces, considering how traditional architectural principles — such as the arrangement of courtyards, natural ventilation, and the use of traditional materials — can be applied to create functional and comfortable spaces.

A class will be offered on the contemporary application of classical architecture in an international context, exploring how classical and vernacular architectural principles can be merged to generate designs that respect traditional construction techniques while also responding to contem

### Friday - July 4th

Students will work on the development of perspectives and sketches to visually explain their projects, representing both architectural elements and their integration within Oaxaca's urban and landscape context. This exercise will allow students to highlight the views of their projects from various perspectives, contextualizing their proposals in relation to traditional urban patterns and the natural environment.

Work in the studio will continue to perfect proposals and ensure that urban harmony and traditional materiality principles are respected.

The third evaluation of individual work will take place, analyzing sections, perspectives, sketches, and the overall project. This evaluation will verify that the projects continue

to maintain an integrated approach that is coherent with local construction techniques, ensuring that each design is both sustainable and faithful to the architectural traditions of the region.

### Saturday - July 5th

We will make the final adjustments to the graphical representation of the project, focusing on precision in lines, shadows, and architectural details. This is the final step in perfecting the visual presentation of the projects, ensuring they reflect not only the students' innovative ideas but also respect for Oaxaca's architectural tradition and urban context.

The final presentation will be held before a jury composed of invited professionals and prominent members of the local community. Students will present their projects, highlighting how their designs integrate the principles of traditional urbanism and vernacular construction techniques in a contemporary context.

Finally, we will close the program with a farewell toast, celebrating the conclusion of the Summer School and the achievements made by each participant in their learning and professional development process.



## ITINERARY

### Sunday - June 22nd

- 14:00** Welcoming INTBAU Mexico event.
- 17:00** Lecture: *Importance of traditional architecture.*
- 18:00** Guide tour of the Historic Center of Oaxaca.

### Monday - June 23rd

- 7:00** Breakfast.
- 9:00** Guided Tour of the Historic Center Of Oaxaca. (*Oaxaca Cathedral. Museum of Cultures of Santo Domingo*)
- 13:00** Lunch.
- 14:00** Drawing workshop on the site- *Identifying and cataloging architectural elements (Windows)*
- 17:00** Lecture: *Urbanism and Architecture of Oaxaca*
- 18:00** Site Analysis Studio
- 19:00** Dinner

### Tuesday - June 24th

- 7:00** Breakfast.
- 9:00** Guide Tour of the Historic Center of Oaxaca
- 13:00** Lunch.
- 14:00** Drawing workshop on the site- *Identifying and cataloging architectural elements (Doors)*  
*Visit museums and iconic sites*
- 17:00** Lecture: *Traditional architecture and urbanism techniques in America*
- 18:00** Site Analysis Studio
- 19:00** Dinner.

### Wednesday - June 25th

- 7:00** Breakfast.
- 9:00** Visit to Monte Albán and Atzompa.
- 13:00** Lunch.
- 14:00** Abacus- *Ornaments and Constructive elements*
- 17:00** Lecture: *The Search for Beauty*
- 18:00** Development of Master Plan Studio
- 19:00** Dinner.

### Thursday - June 26th

- 7:00** Breakfast.
- 9:00** Visit to Mitla.
- 13:00** Comida.
- 14:00** Abacus- *Construction elements.*
- 17:00** *Architecure and tradicional urbanism now.*
- 18:00** Development of Master Plan Studio.
- 19:00** Dinner.

### Friday - June 27th

- 7:00** Breakfast.
- 9:00** *Introduction to the history of classical orders*
- 10:00** Drawing workshop - *The classical orders.*

**13:00** Lunch.  
**14:00** Design Studio.  
**17:00** Lecture: *Classical Architecture*.  
**18:00** Master Plan development.  
**19:00** Dinner.

#### Saturday - June 28th

**7:00** Breakfast.  
**9:00** *Traditional construction techniques*.  
**10:00** *Hands-on - construction workshop*  
**13:00** Lunch.  
**17:00** *Graphic representation workshop*  
**18:00** *First evaluation: urban analysis*.  
**19:00** Dinner.

#### Sunday - June 29th

**7:00** Breakfast.  
**9:00** *Vernacular Architecture in Oaxaca*.  
**10:00** *Hands-on - construction workshop*  
**13:00** Lunch.  
**17:00** *Graphic representation workshop (opt.)*.  
**18:00** Workshop on Architectural Parti (opt.).  
**19:00** Dinner.

#### Monday - June 30th

**7:00** Breakfast.  
**9:00** *Design, Order and Proportion*.  
**13:00** Lunch.  
**14:00** Development of Architectural Parti.  
**17:00** Lecture: *Participatory Urban Design*.  
**18:00** Design Studio: Parti.  
**19:00** Dinner.

#### Tuesday - July 1st

**7:00** Breakfast.  
**9:00** *Development of project facades*.  
**13:00** Lunch.  
**14:00** Design Studio: Facade.  
**17:00** Lecture: *Master Plan for a New Town*.  
**18:00** Design Studio: Facades.  
**19:00** Dinner.

#### Wednesday - July 2nd

**7:00** Breakfast.  
**9:00** *Development of Site Plan*.  
**13:00** Lunch.  
**14:00** Design Studio: Architectural plans.  
**16:00** Analysis of parti, facades and the building plan. *Second evaluation*.  
**18:00** Design Studio: Plan.  
**19:00** Dinner.

#### Thursday - July 3rd

**7:00** Breakfast.  
**9:00** *Development of building sections and interior*.  
**13:00** Lunch.  
**14:00** Design Studio: Sections.  
**17:00** Lecture: *Contemporary application of classical architecture in an international context*.  
**18:00** Design Studio: Section

#### Friday - July 4th

**7:00** Breakfast.  
**9:00** *Development of perspectives and sketches*.  
**13:00** Lunch.  
**14:00** Design Studio: Perspectives.  
**16:00** *Third evaluation of proposals*.  
**18:00** Design Studio: Perspectives and sketches.  
**19:00** Dinner.

#### Sunday - July 5th

**7:00** Breakfast.  
**9:00** Final adjustments to the graphical representation of the project.  
**13:00** Lunch.  
**14:00** Final Presentation.

*Conclusion of the Second Summer School organized by INTBAU Mexico.*

The final project aims to formulate a Master Plan for a neighborhood in the City of Oaxaca, which includes the integration of mixed-use spaces and a sequential arrangement of public spaces and interior courtyards. Each student will develop a specific site, incorporating the necessary architectural components and a deep analysis of the local context.

This project seeks to promote a participatory design, involving both community members and invited professionals, fostering a collaborative approach and exchange of knowledge.

The transformation of cities and the world, as well as the evolution of our lifestyles, depend on the active participation and constant learning of community residents. The incorporation of successful techniques and their adaptation to existing conditions, along with the use of local construction traditions, while respecting the landscape, the environment, and the people who inhabit it, are essential to preserve both cultural identity and harmony with the surroundings.



## APPLICATION

Those interested in joining the INTBAU Summer School in Oaxaca, Mexico, should take into account the following information

### *Application process*

Applicants must send a motivation letter by email to [intbaumexico@gmail.com](mailto:intbaumexico@gmail.com) before **May 3rd, 2025**. This letter must be a maximum of two pages long and detail the reasons for attending the summer school. In addition, a 10-page portfolio demonstrating drawing and design skills is required.

### *Cost and coverage*

Early Bird Fee: **950 USD** (Apply until March 3rd)  
Regular Fee: **1250 USD** (Apply until May 3rd)

The cost includes tuition fees, access to study spaces and archaeological sites, on-site transportation, some materials, lodging. Registration costs **150 USD** (or its equivalent in MXN), which is deducted from the total amount. The remaining balance can be divided into monthly payments that should be completed before June 5th, 2025.

### *Financial support*

Nationals and developing countries participants may apply to a **30%** reduction over the regular fee.

If you previously participated in INTBAU Mexico workshops, summer school or you have been an active volunteer a **50%** fee reduction applies.

If the applicant needs extra financial assistance, he or she must mention it in his or her motivation letter and the board will review the case.

### *Results and additional requirements*

Acceptance decisions will be sent two weeks after the application was sent. Selected students must sign a letter of responsibility and have health insurance.

It is important to note that the registration fee is paid independently of the award of a scholarship. In addition, there will be no refund of the registration fee if you do not continue in the summer school.

We will provide some materials but students are expected to bring some.

This is a unique opportunity for those looking to delve deeper into traditional architecture and sustainable urbanism.





Thanks to the support of:



We express our gratitude for the contributions made by Stefanos Polyzoides – Dean of the University of Notre Dame, Juan Carlos Gómez – Director of the *Academia del Renacimiento*, the esteemed professors who will participate in this school, the community of Oaxaca, as well as all the volunteers and members of INTBAU Mexico whose support has been essential in bringing this project to fruition.

Organized by:



**Board of Directors:** Nadia Samir Rincon, Ale Arturo Lebrija Nuñez, and Andrea Gonzalez Guzman.

**Advisors:** Flavio Diaz Miron Rodríguez, Esteban Martinez Hernandez, Isis Juarez, Edward McGrath, Jose Yanez, Maria Sanchez, Tiffany Abernathy, Jonathan Weatherill, Julio Cesar Perez, Rodrigo Bollat, Tiziano Leoni, Roberto Rodriguez.

**Working Group:** Fernando Sanchez, Miriam Samir, Cynthia Arias, Nadia Medrano, Grecia Vargas, Ricardo Ortiz, Edith Estrada, Andrea Delgadillo, Martin Guadian, Adriana Quevedo, Isaac Tame, Octavio Lopez, Jair Hernandez, Ileri Loza, Yuri Rios, Luis Cruz.

The work of INTBAU Mexico has been carried out through the volunteer efforts of a multidisciplinary and passionate team, united by the mission to promote and create places with beauty, functionality, and resilience as fundamental elements of the universal development of humanity.