Client: Rutgers Department of Transportation Services (RU-DOTS)

Initial problem statement: The Rutgers-New Brunswick bus system is one of the largest college transit systems in the world, with roughly six million passenger trips each year. Growth in the student body will further tax the system in the coming years. Increasing reliance on contingent faculty means a growing population of Rutgers employees who may not be familiar with the bus network, and therefore require different navigation and reference tools to help them understand the system. While RU-DOTS and campus planners conduct demand forecasts and passenger surveys, this studio will allow more “outside the box” thinking regarding service planning, information design, and attendant policies and plans that can strengthen the bus network’s usability.

Likely tasks:
- Literature review
- Review of peer systems (national and international)
- Rider survey (identify needs, desires, points of confusion/conflict)
- Campus stakeholder engagement (DOTS, planning, others)
- Demand analysis and development of route alignments, possibly
- Information design: maps, schematics, route signage
- Welcome toolkit: pamphlet for new employees and students
- Policy review: attendant policies to improve bus operations
- Final report and public presentation(s)

Studio “staffing” needs: The studio is principally designed for transportation planners, as most of our tasks will fall squarely in the remit of transportation planning. However, design-oriented students may be interested in participating due to the focus on information design and system legibility (signage, maps, etc), though this will primarily be related to graphic design, and only potentially to urban design. The studio does not, I think, have strong needs for land use, housing, or community development analysis; students in these concentrations are encouraged to join the studio only if they are interested in having a “transportation studio” experience, though of course along the way we may discover unanticipated needs related to other areas of concentration.