

ARTH 103-001 -- Introduction to Architecture Fall 2012

Professor Lisa Passaglia Bauman

Class times: TTh 10:30-11:45

Class room: Robinson B 113

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Office hours: Th 1:30-3:00; F 10:30-11:20, or by appt

Office: Robinson B 373A

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This is a course in the history of architecture. It is a general art history course on the introductory level and while **it fulfills the University's Gen Ed Arts requirement**, it is also intended to serve as an introduction to other more advanced courses within the discipline of art history. It is not introductory in the sense that it is somehow supposed to be simple or that it is concerned with "appreciation." While we will look at some spectacularly beautiful buildings, it will be a very boring fifteen weeks if all we do is sit around and say how beautiful they are. Art history employs many different approaches to an object. (They are called *methodologies*.) Sometimes we will be concerned with the very concrete issues of technology and construction (ouch! pun intended!). Other times we will be examining politics and patrons, money and its message. Every now and then, we will be concerned with the more abstract notions of architectural theory, aesthetics, and the psychology of architecture. All of these methods are a way of presenting the richest possible understanding of architecture. Remember that when you want to ask me at the end of a lecture which parts were important; they all are.

Some of the major themes we will cover include:

1. systems of building and techniques of construction
2. development of building typology, such as tombs, palaces, and temples, followed by religious buildings, and domestic and commercial architecture
3. decoration of buildings including sculpture, painting, and mosaics
4. the larger context of the building. What is the nature of the building's immediate environment? What is the urban context? What is the impact of the topography?
5. the design of landscape, especially the evolution of gardens

Course objectives include:

- to have a thorough command of the terminology of architecture
- to recognize the shape and space concepts of different trends in Western architecture, their constructive logic and their ideological intentions
- to know paradigmatic buildings in relation to the artistic, intellectual and socio-political context in which they originated.

This course is my responsibility; don't hesitate to come to me if you have a problem or complaint. I can't promise I'll fix things, but I will do my best.

TEXT: Michael Fazio, Marian Moffett, and Lawrence Wodehouse, *A World History of Architecture*, second edition (McGraw-Hill, 2008). At the bookstore new, it is over \$100; used, about \$80. But the exact same book is available at Amazon for \$57 + free shipping, \$43 for a used one.

Any other readings will be available on e-reserve.

TECH SKILLS REQUIRED: Please activate and check your GMU e-mail account regularly for any communication regarding the class. I will also make some material available in my Dropbox and you'll need email to access that as well.

READINGS, ATTENDANCE, AND LECTURES: The schedule of lectures lists the reading in the text and/or on e-reserve for each class. You are expected to come into class prepared with that day's reading assignment completed. Every teacher I know says this in their syllabus; few students I know actually do it. Is this a problem? Depends on how you absorb material. Coming to class and looking at work which is completely new and foreign to you is an intimidating proposition. You get so caught up in all the details of individual buildings that you lose sight of (or never really get) the broader historical context or the development of an architectural style. Reading before class introduces you to the story of architecture.

Lecture will unpack that story, breaking it down into key works and terms for which you are responsible. It is essential that you attend every class to learn about those key works. I will be using power point presentations, so all terms and buildings for which you are responsible will be clearly labeled, spelled, dated, and emphasized in class. Thus, regular attendance is necessary. Beginning Thursday, September 6, I will circulate a sign-in sheet each class

and attendance is worth 10% of your final grade. (There are 24 possible lecture days. You are allowed 2 free days. Thus, I will calculate your attendance grade by taking the total number of days you attended class and divide by 22. If you do not use your free days, your additional attendance in class counts as extra credit.) If you miss a class, get the list of key works from another class member. (The first class would be an opportune time to exchange some e-mail addresses with each other.) I will not answer e-mails that ask what we covered in class today. When you go back to your textbook to study, you may skip over the buildings that we are not covering in detail, but I will point out that having already read about those buildings will have provided you with more background for tests. This class is a lecture format, but please do come prepared with questions or comments you would like to present. Again, this is more interesting and useful if you have done the reading.

ASSIGNMENTS – THE EXAMS: There are 3 exams in this course.

Exam #1: Thursday, September 27—worth 20% of your final grade

Exam #2: Thursday, November 1—worth 25% of your final grade

Exam #3: Tuesday, December 18—worth 30% of your final grade. **Please note that this exam is scheduled during final exam week. It is the time slot designated for this class by the registrar's office. Thus, there can be no conflicts with any other classes. If you do have a conflict, it is the OTHER professor who has changed his/her exam date. Consult with them to fix it. Also, please be mindful of this date when making your plans for winter break.**

All exams will test for terms. Exams will also have slide identification of those key buildings that we designate in class – not just the name of the building, the architect, its location, time period, and the style or period to which it belongs -- but also why they are important for the evolution of architecture. This involves knowing something about those larger issues and concepts that we will develop in class. Exams are not cumulative and I will hand out a review guide one week before the exam.

These three examinations are scheduled. You should mark those dates on your personal calendar immediately. I won't give an exam earlier or later than the scheduled slot. Yes, this includes Thanksgiving break, end of the semester, and weekend plans. Please do not request special favors that cannot be granted to all of your peers. Test make-ups are only given if you have a legitimate written medical excuse or police report, on printed letterhead stationery, with a phone number I can call for confirmation. I mean this seriously. Do not e-mail or call me with any excuses about car accidents or bad love affairs—even if it's true. **If you miss an exam without a legitimate written excuse, you will receive a 0 for that exam.** Better to take the exam and get an F than to receive a 0.

Let me say a few things up front about my expectations regarding exams. Art history demands a certain degree of memorization of information about works of art. It is only one part of the work and learning required, but it is an area that demands discipline and regular practice. To begin to understand how and why works were created in a particular time and place, the circumstances and background behind them, and their continuing role in the subsequent history of art can only be understood once you have a sense of the players involved and the circumstances around them. If you keep up-to-date (flashcards were always my preferred method), memorization of the works will be easy and will help your understanding of new material. If you wait until the exams, memorization will be a nightmare.

A few words about **dates**: Dating a work is essential to understanding its origins and background in a specific period and place. Why? What matters is not so much your ability to memorize a set of numbers, but that you come away from this class knowing that Michelangelo could not have built Rockefeller Center. That said, I will not be testing you on exact dates, but rather on general time periods that we will use to locate objects in history.

And finally, as in any discipline, a student is required to know the material. $2 + 2 = 5$ is not correct, and neither is Mies van der Roeh for Mies van der Rohe. So, yes, spelling counts. I won't take off all the points, but I will take off some.

ASSIGNMENTS – THE FIELD TRIP/ARCHITECTURE CRAWL: There is one written project for this course, based on a field trip to look at buildings in downtown Washington, DC. Think of it as a scavenger hunt where you will be answering questions based on your observations of specific buildings. It will be metro-accessible and should take about an afternoon, especially if you stop for coffee along the way. I will hand out the worksheet in printed form in class which you can use to take notes while on the hunt. I will also send you the assignment via email so that you can type in your answers to me; you will need to hand in this printed out hard copy with your

typed answers on the **due date, Tuesday, November 13**. It is worth 15% of your final grade.

I will take written work late but it will be penalized 5 points for every day it is late. Yes, the weekend counts. After one week, I will not take any late projects. Remember that we are in the computer age where Murphy's Law applies with a vengeance. Assume that your computer will break down, that your memory stick will be ruined, that every other student in the school will be trying to print a paper on the same night, and so forth. Plan accordingly! There are no excuses for turning in a late assignment. You simply take the point deduction. Also, **I will NOT accept projects via e-mail**. Why? Too many problems with viruses, with formatting, with accidental deletions, with deadlines. In the end, it shifts the responsibility from you to me and in this course these assignments are your responsibility. And, **I will NOT accept projects turned into my office mail box**. Again, too many problems to recount—you've turned it in but it's not in my mailbox. Did you put it in the wrong mailbox? Did someone take it out of my mailbox? This kind of situation breeds suspicion and resentment. Let's break the cycle of abuse and dependency! Turn in your stuff in class on its due date. Make the time. It's your job. My job will be to return your work in a timely fashion -- exams and written assignments within two weeks.

GRADING POLICY: In order to receive a grade in this course, students must complete all assigned work. Grades will not be calculated on the basis of a percentage of work completed. **There are no extra credit projects.**

There are often questions about grading and evaluation policies, especially for those who have never taken an art history class before and are concerned about how their work will be evaluated. Grade ranges and a description of the sort of work expected are as follows—please read them carefully.

- A (90-92 is an A-; 93-96 is an A; 97-100 is an A+) Startlingly good, exceeding my expectations, and well-written. Must be imaginative; NOT given for simply following directions.
- B (80-82 is a B-; 83-86 is a B; 87-89 is a B+) Good effort with a good result.
- C (70-72 is a C-; 73-76 is a C; 77-79 is a C+) Perfunctory; or tried but missed the point; or did something well but it wasn't the assignment; or a good idea but careless or sloppy.
- D (60-69) Warning: accepted under protest
- F (Below 60) Unacceptable as college-level work. See me immediately if you find yourself in this situation.

But please remember something. The function of this course is not to enable you to get a good grade easily. Its function is to open up to you intellectual, emotional, and aesthetic skills that you will use for the rest of your lives. All of us, myself included, have taken courses that were FAR from our areas of expertise (for me, Calculus, Baroque Poetry, and Organic Chemistry), in which we did dreadfully grade-wise (don't ask!). But these were vital courses later and in unexpected ways (in my case, returning to school years later to study Landscape Architecture). No employer ever punished us for bad grades in adventurous courses.

That's why you take courses like this. God forbid you should become an art historian—highly unlikely, and I will try to talk you out of it, even though it is the most fun I have (where the music isn't blasting at 1000 decibels, or involving my children, or husband). You take courses like this to be richer in the important ways.

CLASSROOM ATMOSPHERE AND ELECTRONICS: Courtesy and common sense please. We're all adults; sometimes emergencies come up. However, talking to friends during lectures, wandering in and out, and cell phones are all badly distracting to everyone else. Chronic chatters and latecomers are disruptive and will be asked to leave the classroom. If you know you will have to leave a few minutes early, please on the aisle and let me know. Also, I am banning all electronics from my classroom. Obviously, this means cell phones, but it also includes laptops. If you need to use a laptop for note-taking, you must talk to me about it and then you will need to sit in the front row in class.

PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING: These are not fooling-around offences with me. Your writing assignments are to be the product of your own thinking. Ditto with tests. Be warned: **if you cheat, I will send you and your work on to the Dean of Students**. No excuses, no tears, no "I didn't understand about footnotes/talking during an exam" stories. If you decide to work on the scavenger hunt worksheet with a partner, then you need to indicate that to me on your papers and submit them bound together. Obviously then, your grades are bound together on that assignment.

If you are not sure how the University defines plagiarism, please see the Plagiarism Statement in the George Mason University Honor System and Code at <http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm>.

DISABILITIES: If you have a learning disability, it must be properly documented by the Disabilities Service office and I am happy to make the necessary accommodations for those students. I need to see and sign the documentation from the Disabilities Services office well before tests and assignments are given in order to accommodate you. Please contact them for more information.

Important dates:

September 3. Labor Day recess. No class.

September 4. Last day to add classes; Last day to drop a class with no tuition penalty.

September 18. Last day to drop a class with 33% tuition penalty.

September 28. Final drop deadline with 67% tuition penalty.

October 8. Columbus Day recess. No class. **But Monday classes meet on Tuesday that week, so I will not see you on Tuesday, October 9.**

English as a second language: If English is not your first language, please discuss any concerns you might have about the writing assignment with me. Please, however, give me plenty of notice (at least a week) before any due dates. And don't forget about the Writing Center (<http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>).

COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS:

Week 1 (August 28 & 30): Introduction to the course; Basic premises of architecture

REQUIRED READING: Fazio, Introduction, 1-7

Week 2 (September 4 and 6): Egypt: Architecture to die for

REQUIRED READING: Fazio, Chapter 1, 10-16, 20-33

Week 3 (September 11 & 13): Greece: The Classics

REQUIRED READING: Fazio, Chapter 2, page 35 (introduction) and 44-61

Week 4 (September 18 & 20): Rome: Concrete Achievements

REQUIRED READING: Fazio, Chapter 5, 105-131

Week 5 (September 25): Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture: Church and State

REQUIRED READING: Fazio, Chapter 6, 133-146, +151 (conclusion)

September 27: EXAM #1 (The last day to drop this class is tomorrow!)

Week 6 (October 2 & 4): Early Medieval and Romanesque Architecture: A Mighty Fortress

REQUIRED READING: Fazio, Chapter 8, 177-184, 188-211

Week 7 (**NO CLASS TUESDAY, OCTOBER 9**; October 11): Gothic Architecture as Engineering and Poetry

REQUIRED READING: Fazio, Chapter 9, 213-235, 239-249

Week 8 (October 16 & 18): The Renaissance: Age of Rediscovery

REQUIRED READING: Fazio, Chapter 11, 285-337

Week 9 (October 23 & 25): Baroque Architecture: Twirls and Swirls

REQUIRED READING: Fazio, Chapter 12, 339-377

Week 10 (October 30): The Eighteenth Century: Rationalism and Romanticism

REQUIRED READING: Fazio, Chapter 13, 379-399

November 1: Exam #2

Week 11 (November 6 & 8): Nineteenth-Century Pluralism and Developments

REQUIRED READING: Fazio, Chapter 14, 401-449

Week 12 (November 13 & 15): Modernism, Spare and Square; Frank Lloyd Wright: Breaking the Box
REQUIRED READING: Fazio, Chapter 15, 451-484 and 495-499

DC Architecture Crawl due Tuesday, NOVEMBER 13

Week 13 (November 20; **NO CLASS NOVEMBER 22**): The Bauhaus: Industrial Strength

REQUIRED READING: Fazio, Chapter 15, 484-495, 500-505

Week 14 (November 27 & 29): Mad Men: Mid-Century Modernism; Post-Modernism: At Play in the Fields of History

REQUIRED READING: Fazio, Chapter 16, 507-524

Week 15 (December 4 & 6): New Directions: Deconstructionism, Traditionalism, and Architecture as Sculpture

REQUIRED READING: Fazio, Chapter 16, 524-560

“The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum,” in *The Art of Memory: Holocaust Memorials in History*, pp. 89-101. (on e-reserve)

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 18: Exam #3: 10:30-11:45