

## **ARTH 103-001--Introduction to Architecture**

Professor Lisa Passaglia Bauman

Class times: MW 12:00-1:15

Office hours: T10:30-11:45; or by appt

**Fall 2016**

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Class room: Robinson B 113

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### **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 religious buildings, civic and domestic architecture
3. 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?
4. the use of the past

Course objectives include:

- developing a thorough command of the terminology of architecture
- recognizing the shape and space concepts of different trends in Western architecture, their constructive logic and their ideological intentions
- constructing a knowledge of paradigmatic buildings in relation to the artistic, intellectual and socio-political context in which they originated.
- displaying the ability to applying knowledge of building forms and concepts to the design of a building in a specific environment

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

### **TEXTS**

- **Required:** Carol Strickland, *The Annotated Arch. A Crash Course in the History of Architecture* (Kansas City: Andrews McMeel, 2001).
- **Any other readings will be posted on Blackboard**
- **Optional:** Mario Salvadori, *Why Buildings Stand Up: The Strength of Architecture*. Second edition (New York: W. W. Norton, 2002).
  - This book is a more technical text for those of you interested in structural systems. It is written for the "everyman reader" so it's straightforward and can offer another opportunity to delve more deeply or reinforce what I've covered in class about basic structural systems.

### **TECH REQUIREMENTS AND POLICY**

I can only communicate with you via Mason e-mail account or Blackboard, so please activate and check your GMU e-mail account and the Blackboard site regularly for any communication regarding the class.

A successful course is made by the collaborative efforts of the group. That means being engaged—doing the reading before class, taking notes in class. To that end, there are no cell phones in my classroom (unless you are awaiting an organ transplant, are a volunteer fire fighter and may be called into

action, or need to be accessible to young children or elderly parents). Also no laptops, not even for note-taking.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

It's my job to care about your education and I take that charge seriously. I am quite sure it is even more important to you. Since our mutual expectation then is that you are in class, there is no need for me to take attendance UNTIL THE DESIGN STUDIO PORTION OF THE SEMESTER. Until then class is primarily lecture, breaking down the history of architecture into key works and terms for which you are responsible. 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. I will not, however, post those powerpoints to Blackboard. I will answer questions about the material **in class** and discuss assignments **in class**. If you do not understand something that I covered in class, there is no way I can explain that material better in an email. If you missed class, you will need to get notes from a classmate. I'll answer any specific questions you have about that material, but you'll need to bring those specific questions to a meeting in my office. Meeting in person rather than via email allows us to get to know each other better and fosters a more collegial learning atmosphere. When we get to the studio portion of the class, attendance is mandatory every class.

### **EXAMS:** (50% of your final grade)

The first 2/3 of this class is about acquiring content. You're going to come to class prepared and I'm going to lecture and develop ideas for 5 weeks, and then we'll have a test. Repeat. This will take us from Greece through the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

**Exam #1: Wednesday, October 5**—worth 25% of your final grade

**Exam #2: Monday, November 14**—worth 25% of your final grade

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, 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. This idea will also help you develop thoughts for the slide comparison.

Let me give you an example of a slide comparison. Two slides appear on the screen. First, you identify them by title, architect (if known), location, and time period.

- Parthenon, Iktinos and Kallikrates, Athens, Greece. Classical
- Notre Dame, Paris, France. Gothic

Compare the two buildings in terms of their form and function. How have different religious traditions affected their architectural form?

OR

- Agora, Athens, Greece. 5<sup>th</sup> c.
- Forum, Rome, Italy early 4<sup>th</sup> c.

Both are urban open spaces developed for much the same purpose. How do they compare in terms of their layout, and what does this say about the differences between the two societies and how they used space?

A few reminders:

- Exams are not cumulative.
- I will not post the in-class powerpoints to Blackboard.
- I will post a study guide on Blackboard, with some study images, a week before the exams. All slide identifications will be for buildings in your textbook.

These two 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 and weekend plans. Please do not request special favors that cannot be granted to all of your peers. If you cannot make an exam at the specified date and time, you have 24 hours to contact me and provide me with 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. **If I don't hear from you within 24 hours of**

**the exam and if you do not have 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. All make-up exams must be taken within one week of the scheduled date.

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 night before 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 the Empire State Building. 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.

#### **THE FIELD TRIP/ARCHITECTURE CRAWL:** (25% of your final grade)

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. You can work in groups of no more than two, turning in one assignment for the two of you. I will post the worksheet on Blackboard. **You will need to hand in a printed hard copy with your typed answers on the due date, Monday, November 21.** (I don't need to say that we don't submit hand-written work at university.)

I will take your project 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 so 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 or turned into my office mail box.** I will return your work in a timely fashion -- exams and written assignments within two weeks.

#### **THE DESIGN PROJECT.** (25% of your final grade)

For the last four weeks of our class, we will look at modern architecture. But instead of going building by building or architect by architect, I am going to present material thematically, focusing on issues of design—idea, setting and site, plan, skin, details, style--and using modern buildings as examples. I will only lecture for part of the time period, and then you will take that day's idea and incorporate it into your group design project--a replacement building for an existing campus building. This collaborative project mimics the work of a design studio. It is called a *charrette*—an intense period of design activity by a group. You will be placed in groups and work together to produce a finished product; you will have to present a basic idea to the class. All work for the design project will be done in class. I'll provide basic supplies, and we can store your work in my office between classes. You don't need to be able to draw as the bulk of the work here is in choosing and then justifying your choices, but you will be creating and, ultimately presenting, a visual product.

- Attendance is mandatory during the *charrette*. There is no other way to get this information and your allegiance needs to be to your group for these 4 weeks.
- 25% of your grade will be determined by your attendance.
- 25% of your grade will be determined by scores assigned to you by your group colleagues, aka peer review.
- 50% of your grade will be determined by your adherence to the rubric and your justifications for your design choices as determined by me.

- The projects will be due on **Monday, December 19 at 10:30am** in our classroom (this is the scheduled time for our final exam). Everyone will need to be present since this is also the point at which you will provide an anonymous graded assessment of your group-mates, aka the peer review. If you finish early and want to turn your project in early, I'm amenable—as long as every group member can be there—and we can find a mutually agreed on time.

**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, although it is not hard to do well in this course. 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, Physics 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/web surfing 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. I am going to teach this class as if we were in a business meeting twice a week. For those of you who have never been in a business meeting, here's what's acceptable: [http://www.today.com/id/18079593/ns/today-money/t/oh-behave-tips-proper-business-manners/#.U9gJaxrD\\_IU](http://www.today.com/id/18079593/ns/today-money/t/oh-behave-tips-proper-business-manners/#.U9gJaxrD_IU)

Here's another one: <http://work.chron.com/behave-professionally-meeting-6212.html>

**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 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 paper, submit one copy, and prove to me that you both did the work.

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 are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the [Office of Disability Services](#) at 703.993.2474 or [ods.gmu.edu](http://ods.gmu.edu). All academic

accommodations must be arranged through that office.

**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/>).

**IMPORTANT DATES:**

**Tuesday, September 6.** Last day to add classes.

**Friday, September 30.** Last day to drop a class

**Monday, October 10.** Columbus Day holiday. No classes on Monday, but on Tuesday, 10/11, you will follow your Monday class schedule. Tuesday classes do not meet that Tuesday.

**COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS:**

August 29: Introduction to the course; syllabus review

August 31: Basic premises of architecture

REQUIRED READING: *Arch*, Intro, ix-xiv

Optional reading: Salvadori, ch. 1

September 5: NO SCHOOL. Labor Day holiday

September 7: Early architecture: Stonehenge

REQUIRED READING: *Arch*, pp. 4-11

Optional reading: Salvadori, ch. 3, "Dead Load", "Live Load", "Dynamic Load", pp. 43-49 only; and ch. 4, "Tension and Compression", pp. 59-64 only

September 12 and 14: Greece: The Classics

REQUIRED READING: *Arch*, pp. 12-19

September 19 and 21: Rome: Concrete Achievements

REQUIRED READING: *Arch*, pp. 20-29

Optional reading: Salvadori, ch. 9, "Arches," pp. 144-148 only; ch. 13, "Dome as Structure" and "The Pantheon" only, pp. 225-233

September 26: Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture: Church and State

REQUIRED READING: *Arch*, pp. 30-37

Optional reading: Salvadori, ch. 14

September 28: Early Medieval and Romanesque Architecture: A Mighty Fortress

REQUIRED READING: *Arch*, pp. 38-43

October 3: Catch up and review for Exam 1

**October 5: Exam 1**

October 10: NO SCHOOL. Columbus Day holiday. MONDAY CLASSES MEET ON TUESDAY THIS WEEK instead of your normal Tuesday classes.

October 11 and October 12: Gothic Architecture as Engineering and Poetry

REQUIRED READING: *Arch*, 44-53

Optional reading: Salvadori, ch. 12

October 17 and 19: The Renaissance: Age of Rediscovery

REQUIRED READING: *Arch*, pp. 54-67

Optional reading: Salvadori, ch. 13, "Santa Maria del Fiori" only, pp. 233-242

October 24: Baroque Architecture: Twirls and Swirls

REQUIRED READING: *Arch*, pp. 68-79

October 26: Associational Eclecticism: the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries

REQUIRED READING: *Arch*, pp. 80-95

October 31: Iron

REQUIRED READING: *Arch*, pp. 96-117

November 2: Frank Lloyd Wright

REQUIRED READING: *Arch*, pp. 126-129

November 7: Modernism and the Bauhaus

REQUIRED READING: *Arch*, pp. 118-125

November 9: Catch up and review for Exam 2

**November 14: EXAM #2.**

Hand out cards for group formation.

November 16: Studio Day 1. Identification and Articulation (solo)

November 21: Studio Day 2. Evaluate and Consolidate (group)

**FIELD TRIP DUE IN CLASS**

November 23: NO SCHOOL. Thanksgiving holiday

November 28: Studio Day 3. Elaborate 1 (group)

November 30: Studio Day 4. Elaborate 2 (group)

December 5: Studio Day 5. Elaborate 3 (group)

December 7: Studio Day 6. Assemble (group)

**December 19, 10:30-12:00: Project due in our classroom**