

**ARTH 103—DL1: INTRODUCTION TO ARCHITECTURE  
SPRING 2021**



*Welcome to our class! I'm Dr. Lisa Passaglia Bauman, and I will be your professor for this course. I love teaching this class. While I have a PhD in Art History, I am also trained as a Landscape Architect, and this class is a wonderful combination of historical study and analysis with some hands-on creative work of design. An architect is a generalist, not a specialist. While an engineer knows everything about one thing, an architect knows something about everything; they're like the conductor of a symphony, not the virtuoso who plays every instrument perfectly. As we explore architecture as historians and as creators ourselves, you'll find that it is concerned with human interface, with making the stage for the theater of everyday life. If you are wondering how this class will help you in the wider world, art history courses promote a number of skills that are crucial for success in the workplace:*

- *Attention to detail*
- *Critical thinking*
- *Synthesis of different ideas into a coherent whole*
- *Personal responsibility for time management and deadlines*
- *Seeking to understand what the real problem is before chasing after solutions*

*I sincerely hope that you enjoy the material. Please feel free to contact me with questions, and I hope that you will email me for meetings using Blackboard Collaborate Ultra (see below) if/when you have questions.*

*All best,*

*Dr. Lisa Passaglia Bauman*

*She/her/hers*

*If you wish, please share your name and gender pronouns with me and how best to address you in online interactions and via email.*

**COURSE FORMAT:** You have signed up to take a **fully asynchronous class** which means we not have any specific days or times when we all must meet in Zoom. Every Monday

at NOON a new module will open with all of that week's materials available to you. Since this is an art history class grounded in images, the primary course material will include voice-over Powerpoint lectures, but I will also include articles and videos from Kahn Academy and Smarthistory, as well as some required articles.

**HOW MUCH TIME IS THIS COURSE GOING TO TAKE:** If we were meeting in person, this class would meet twice a week for 75 minutes. That's a total of 150 minutes per week. In this online version, there is an **average of 72 minutes of video lecture per week.** (Four weeks are less than 60 minutes, and two weeks clock in around 90 minutes.) Each week I will be giving you an optional set of Study Questions to answer while listening to those lectures, so you will find it takes you longer than the simple running time of the video. Mason is very clear about this; University guidelines say that students should "block out 8 to 12 hours per week for each online class."  
(<https://masononline.gmu.edu/success/>)

Personally, I do not think ANYONE will be spending that much time on this class. And you shouldn't have to. But I don't want anyone to think that because this is an "art class" that there will be 30 minutes of video and a crayon drawing as an exam. This class falls in the department of HISTORY, not Art, so you need to think of it as a history course and adjust your expectations accordingly.

**THAT MASON CORE ARTS REQUIREMENT:** This class fulfills the **Mason Core ARTS requirement** (3 credits), but it is **NOT** a required class. You can choose any of the approved 92 classes here at Mason that will satisfy that Gen Ed requirement. Here is the list: <https://catalog.gmu.edu/mason-core/mason-core.pdf>

So try this class out for a week: check out the course materials, listen to the lectures, and see if you like it. If it doesn't feel right to you, then please drop it and find something else that does. I would hate to see any student be miserable in a class for 14 weeks thinking they had to stay because it was required. It is not, and you are free to find something else that better suits. It is your education after all; have it your way.

### **WHAT AM I GOING TO GET GRADED ON IN THIS CLASS?**

*To make things as simple and as organized as possible, ALL WORK will always be due on Monday BY NOON. ALL EXAMS will always be open 24 hours from Sunday at noon to Monday at noon. All written work will be due on Monday BY NOON. **Monday NOON is our new best friend.** (FYI, this is because if all professors put their deadlines at midnight Blackboard crashes.)*

#### **1. Exams (3). Worth 60% of your course grade**

*Please read the detailed explanation of exam protocol in the separate course document titled Course Policies.*

**What:** There are three exams; all are required. I like to keep the first exam fairly low stakes so that you get a chance to see how they look and if you need to adjust what you're doing.

- Exam #1. Covers modules 1-4. Worth 15 % of your course grade
- Exam #2. Covers modules 5-9. Worth 20% of your course grade
- Exam #3. Covers modules 10-14. Worth 25% of your course grade

**What kind of questions:** Exams will be multiple-choice and short answer questions. Exams are not cumulative; they will only test on the material covered in the specified modules. Exam questions will come from those Study Questions that I post with each module. *Now, let's be real here. I'm not going to do a word-for-word exact copying of the Study Questions into the exam. But if you can answer the Study Questions, you will be able to answer every question on the exams. The answers to the Study Questions come right from the Powerpoints. When you are listening to the Powerpoint lectures, you are listening to answer those questions.*

You will be able to use your notes, your Study Questions, even the textbook if you choose, on the exams. During the 24 hours when the exam is open though, the weekly modules will be unavailable.

**When:** Exams will become available on their specified Sunday at NOON and will remain available for you to take for the next 24 hours until **Monday at NOON.**

**Time Limit:** While the exam is available for you to take at any point in the open 24-hour window, **the exam itself is timed.** Each exam will be open for 90 minutes and the timer will continue to run if you leave the test. When the time expires, the test will save and submit automatically if you have not already submitted it.

**How to take the exams:** Click on the "Exams" tab in Blackboard. The exam will appear as a link to the right.

## **2. DESIGN PROJECT (3 parts). Worth 40% of your course grade**

*I am a firm believer that there are a million ways to learn material and that testing is only one option. Writing, thinking, problem solving, making the material your own—these are also important ways of showing the world that you've learned something. Nearly half of your course grade will come from that sort of critical thinking work.*

Students will participate in a real future project for the Mason campus, working in groups of two to generate ideas for a new Visitors Center. We will approach this project through one of the hottest ideas in the business world today: Design Thinking. Design Thinking is a working method and learning process that can be applied to activities or fields that bridge the humanities, social sciences, science, and engineering. Design Thinking focuses on improving systems--technological, environmental, and social--for their human users. By becoming exposed to the Design Thinking process:

- students will gain analytic and communication skills as they consider user

- behaviors, interactions and experiences
- students will gain teamwork and project management skills as they engage in the iterative process

These skills will prepare you for a workforce that is increasingly demanding skills that enable people to be flexible and adaptable in different roles and different fields over the course of their career. *When you get asked in a job interview what you learned in college, you can say you learned to investigate, you envisioned actual experiences that could happen, and you created ideas that accommodated and enhanced those experiences.*

You will be paired with a partner. I will post a list of partners on Blackboard on Monday, February 8. If there is someone you'd like to work with, please email Ellie your request. [ccanning@gmu.edu](mailto:ccanning@gmu.edu)

This project begins early in the semester in week 3 and will be finished by March 22, week 9. I like to frontload the work in my classes, so that the last 5 weeks of the term you have less to worry about here. You'll thank me later.

There are three components to this project + a peer evaluation.

- Phase 1: Space Planning
  - due 2/22 (worth 10% of course grade)
- Phase 2: Mason Branding
  - due 3/8 (worth 10% of course grade)
- Phase 3: Visual Forms + Peer Evaluation
  - due 3/22 (worth 15% and 5% of course grade)

**Late work:** There is a penalty for late work. See the document labeled CLASS POLICIES in the Course Info tab.

**HOW DO WE COMMUNICATE WITH EACH OTHER:** ([lbauman@gmu.edu](mailto:lbauman@gmu.edu)) You have signed up to take a fully online class. This limits the options that we have for communicating with one another. It is absolutely critical that you check your GMU email at least once a day for the duration of this class since that is my primary avenue for getting information to you.

I will post announcements to our Blackboard home page. These announcements are simultaneously sent out to you as emails through the Blackboard interface, so do not ignore those when they appear in your inbox. If you do not check email or the Announcement section in our home page and miss something important, that is your responsibility.

I can be reached through my GMU email account (not through Blackboard): [lbauman@gmu.edu](mailto:lbauman@gmu.edu). I check my email several times a day Monday-Friday 9:00am -

5:00pm, but less frequently on weekends. I will, however, usually be able to respond to weekend emails by late Sunday afternoon or evening.

When emailing, please include the course (ARTH 103) and your name; I teach multiple classes and this will help to ensure that I answer your question quickly and accurately.

**APPOINTMENTS:** If you would like to talk to me, simply send an email and we will set up a time to 'meet' digitally via Zoom or some other GMU platform. I am always happy to chat with students, so even if it is just a check-in to talk about the material, art history, or the world more generally, my digital door is open.

**TEACHING ASSISTANT:** Ellie Canning, a MA student in the Art History program, will be the Teaching Assistant for this class and will be instrumental in the smooth running of this course. Ellie can be reached at [ccanning@gmu.edu](mailto:ccanning@gmu.edu)

- Ellie will be taking the lead on the design project. For questions about grades on the projects, you should always contact Ellie first. If you still have concerns after discussing the situation with her, then you should email me. Treat emails from Ellie as you would emails from me. You are responsible for responding to them promptly if asked to do so or follow the instructions that they carry.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Architecture is the inescapable art form. It surrounds us all, every day of our lives, shaping and conditioning our experience of the world. In this course, we will explore four paths of inquiry. We will examine how architecture has developed and interacted with culture, religion, and politics, an examination that will help you to "read" the architecture of the world in a critically informed way. We will look at how buildings stand up, analyzing basic structural systems like post and lintel, arch, and truss, as well as common materials like stone, concrete, and steel. We will be concerned with the more abstract notions of aesthetics and the psychology of architecture. And we will also make architecture of our own, engaging in its design process and problem-solving work. Together these methods present the richest possible understanding of architecture. And since buildings are among the chief artifacts that any society leaves behind, the story of architecture is, at its essence, a story of human civilization.

Some of the major themes we will cover include:

- systems of building and techniques of construction
- the development of building typology, such as religious buildings, civic and domestic architecture
- the nature of the building's immediate environment, its relationship to urban context, or the impact of topography
- the use of the past as a symbol

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:** Our learning goals for the semester are:

- to develop 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 understand paradigmatic buildings in relation to the artistic, intellectual and socio-political context in which they originated
- to engage in the design process by confronting a design problem, establishing needs, and visualizing solutions through critical analysis

**TEXTBOOK:** Spiro Kostof, *A History of Architecture: Settings and Rituals*, second edition (Oxford, 1995). New: \$60; Used: \$11. Useful, but **not required**.

ALL other reading will be in Blackboard in the Weekly Module.

**BLACKBOARD:** Activities and assignments in this course will regularly use the Blackboard learning system, available at <https://mymason.gmu.edu>.

- If you are not familiar with Blackboard or want a refresher, the University has set up a convenient Online Learning Basics site that you can access at: <https://masononline.gmu.edu/online-learning-basics/>
- If you encounter problems with online technology, you should contact: <https://its.gmu.edu/help-support/its-support-center/>

**ENROLLMENT IN THIS CLASS:** Students are responsible for verifying their enrollment in this class. Check Patriot Web.

Important dates:

- Last Day to Add: Monday, February 1
- Last Day to Drop with 100% tuition refund: Friday, February, 12

After that, undergraduate students may choose to exercise an unrestricted withdrawal or a selective withdrawal. See the Schedule of Classes for withdrawal procedures.

**IF YOU GOT ALL THE WAY TO THE END, HERE'S MY PERSONAL PROMISE:** I will do everything I can to help you in this course by creating and maintaining an environment of trust. For a professor, that means being clear, transparent, and reliable. 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 everything, but I will do my best.

