George Mason University  
Spring 2022  
ARTh 103 DL1 Introduction to Architecture (online)  
Course No. 202210.24767  
Instructor: Dr. Gail Hook  
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Falling Water, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, 1935

COURSE OVERVIEW

This class is about “understanding our human-made environment.” Through readings, drawings, and field trips, we will study (a) the poetics of architecture; (b) how to “see architecture” and how to draw it; and (c) architectural styles, famous buildings and important architects through history.

As stated by the architectural historian Leland M. Roth,

Architecture is a physical vessel, a container of human activity. But architecture is also a society activity, a social statement, and the creation of a cultural legacy.

This is a fully online, asynchronous course so we do not meet together at a specific time, but there are weekly modules and required discussion groups every week. IMPORTANT: Students should possess college-level reading and writing skills. If you have a question about this, please see the instructor or your academic advisor. No drawing experience is necessary for this class.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

• Students will demonstrate familiarity with the major styles and historical periods of world architecture.
• Students will demonstrate the ability to narrate and explain long-term changes and continuities in world architecture and how it relates to civilizations, cultures, and communities.
• Students will gain basic skills in observing and recording architecture through basic sketching and/or photographic skills
• Students will communicate effectively—in writing—their understanding and response to the idea of architecture as art, as well as “a container of human activity.”

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK and other materials

There is no required textbook for this class. All reading assignments will be posted in weekly modules on Blackboard. If you would like a general survey text for your own interest, I recommend Understanding Architecture: Its Elements, History, and Meaning (3rd Edition, 2013) by Leland M. Roth and Amanda C. Roth Clark (Westview Press). The ISBN is 978-0813349039.

Students will need several #2 pencils and a hardback notebook with plain drawing paper (no lines), preferably 8 x 10” or larger. It will also be helpful to have use of a phone with a camera or a small digital camera, but this is not required.
GRADING AND CLASS PARTICIPATION
A+ = 98-100; A = 93-97; A- = 90-92; B+ = 87-89; B = 82-86; B- = 80-81; C+ = 77-79; C = 72-76; C- = 70-71; 
D+ = 67-69; D = 62-66; D- = 60-61; F = below 60
Final semester grades are based on a notebook that students will individually create and that will be 
graded twice during the semester (30% total), a number of slide identification quizzes (40% total), and 
weekly class discussions in class time (30%).

• ATTENDANCE
  Attendance is determined by participation in the discussion board posts during each class. Students 
  are expected to participate in online assignments and discussions. Be sure to participate in the class 
discussions every week. Stay involved!

• INDIVIDUAL NOTEBOOK
  Your notebook it is a collection of your notes and observations about the readings and the 
architecture we study every week, as well as your sketches or photographs. It can include things we 
  discuss in class.

  It might be helpful for you to use a paper notebook to record your notes and drawings, but every 
  week you will submit new pages for your notebook in the Blackboard “Journal.”

  We will discuss and share your notebooks with the class occasionally, and the professor will make 
suggestions. The notebook will be graded twice during the semester. (Mid-term and final)

  NOTE: You should also choose one topic of special interest to you and start collecting information 
  about it every week. This will be your focus topic for the semester, although you can work on more 
  than one focus topic if you want to. For example, your focus topic can be a particular architect, 
building, style, or construction type. Your focus topic is your choice.

  You will do some research, make notes or sketches, and collect articles and photographs about 
your focus topic every week in your notebook. This is in addition to your usual weekly notes and 
sketches. You might consider setting aside a special section in your notebook for the focus topic.

• SLIDE IDENTIFICATION QUIZZES
  During the semester we will be looking at a lot of slides of buildings. Several times during the 
semester, you will be asked to identify a series of slides with photographs of architecture or 
something related to an architectural style or theory we have studied.

• Understanding your “Grade so far” on Blackboard:
  After a few weeks, in the Grade Center on Blackboard, you will see a column labeled “Grade so far.”
  This shows your current course grade based on the work you have completed and I have graded so 
  far. This lets you know how you have performed in this course so far. It does NOT say “this will be 
your final grade if you stop working now.” So use “Grade so far” to know how you have performed 
so far and to inspire you to keep your work at a high quality for the rest of the semester!

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
Students must be responsible for their own work. Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George 
Mason University Honor Code. Any student found cheating, lying, stealing, or engaging in plagiarism, will 
receive a grade of “0” for the assignment or exam and may also be referred to the Honor Committee for 
additional disciplinary action. If you are unsure what plagiarism is, you should read through this website: 
http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm
UNIVERSITY POLICIES
Students must follow the university policies. [See http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu].

MasonLive/EMAIL (GMU Email)
Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.

Once you sign up for your Patriot Pass, your passwords will be synchronized, and you will use your Patriot Pass username and password to log in to the following systems: Blackboard, University Libraries, MasonLive, myMason, Patriot Web.

RESPONSIBLE USE OF COMPUTING
Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. [See http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html].

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Resources at 703.993.2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

WITHDRAWAL FROM CLASS
If you choose to withdraw from this class, it is your responsibility to check the appropriate deadlines and proceed with the withdrawal process.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE
NOTE: This schedule is an outline only and subject to change. See Blackboard for weekly assignments.
*Each week begins on Monday, on this date*

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**WEEK 1**
* January 24

*Read:* Assignment on Blackboard

*Study topics:* The Art of Shaping Space

**WEEK 2**
January 31

*Read:* Assignment on Blackboard

*Study topics:* Building Functions / Vitruvius

**WEEK 3**
February 7

*Read:* Assignment on Blackboard

*Study topics:* Structure, or How Does the Building Stand Up?

**SLIDE QUIZ #1**

**WEEK 4**
February 14

*Read:* Assignment on Blackboard

*Study topics:* Seeing Architecture / Architecture and Sound
| WEEK 5  | February 21 | **Read:** Assignment on Blackboard  
**Study topics:** Architecture as Part of the Natural Environment / Archaeology and Historic Preservation |
| WEEK 6  | February 28 | **Read:** Assignment on Blackboard  
**Study topics:** The Beginnings of Architecture / Architecture of Mesopotamia and Ancient Egypt / Greek Architecture / Elgin marbles debate |
| WEEK 7  | March 7     | **Read:** Assignment on Blackboard  
**Study topics:** Roman Architecture / Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture  
**SLIDE QUIZ #2** |
| WEEK 8  | March 14    | **SPRING RECESS: March 14-20 (No classes)** |
| WEEK 9  | March 21    | **Read:** Assignment on Blackboard  
**Study topics:** Indian Architecture / Islamic Architecture / African Architecture |
| WEEK 10 | March 28    | **Read:** Assignment on Blackboard  
**Study topics:** Medieval Architecture  
**SUBMIT INDIVIDUAL NOTEBOOKS FOR MID-TERM GRADE on Blackboard no later than 11:59 pm on Wednesday** |
| WEEK 11 | April 4     | **Read:** Assignment on Blackboard  
**Study topics:** Renaissance Architecture |
| WEEK 12 | April 11    | **Read:** Assignment on Blackboard  
**Study topics:** Chinese Architecture / Baroque and Rococo Architecture  
Architecture in the Age of Enlightenment, 1720-1790 / The English Garden / Architecture of the Industrial Revolution / **SLIDE QUIZ #3** |
| WEEK 13 | April 18    | **Read:** Assignment on Blackboard  
**Study topics:** Japanese Architecture / The Roots of Modernism: 19th c. / Frank Lloyd Wright |
| WEEK 14 | April 25    | **Read:** Assignment on Blackboard  
**Study topics:** Versions of Modern Architecture, 1914-1970 |
| WEEK 15 | May 2       | **Read:** Assignment on Blackboard  
**Study topics:** Modernism: 20th c – 21st c |
WEEK 16
May 9

*University Reading Days: Monday, May 9 - Tuesday May 10 (no classes)
*Exam Period: Wed May 11 – Wed May 18

SLIDE QUIZ #4 due on Wednesday May 11
SUBMIT INDIVIDUAL NOTEBOOKS FOR FINAL GRADE no later than Sunday May 15