

The Life of Cities: Modernism in Context

ARCH 4307-001/ARCH 5307-001

Fall 2014 / Th 2:00-4:50 / ARCH 329

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The best way to contact me is through e-mail – but give me a day or two to get to it. Please feel free to come to office hours to discuss course matters or other questions about school life – I am happy to see you! If my door is open, as it often is, feel free to drop in outside office hours as well or make an appointment.

Course description

Often in the history of architecture we view buildings as isolated objects divorced from the fabric of their surroundings. In “The Life of Cities,” we will look at a series of world cities by situating their architecture in context, with a particular focus on public space and the impact of 20th century modernism and postmodernism on city fabric. We will begin by exploring a range of ideas about how we experience cities and how media impacts our expectations for urban experiences, then move to discussing specific theories and methods for analyzing change in architectural and urban history.



Architecture responds to urban settings in different ways in different cultures and helps to create a sense of place and cultural identity. Our focus on architecture will be supplemented by the perspective of film, literature, and popular culture. Over the semester we will return repeatedly to the case study of our home base, Dallas-Fort Worth, as well as spending time in Rome, Los Angeles, Paris, New York, Mexico City, and New Orleans. We will conclude with a series of student presentations on the cities of your choice.

Student learning outcomes

Students will develop research, writing, presentation, and critical thinking skills as well as an ability to evaluate western and non-western building cultures and cities. Architecture will be considered in context according to place, time, and theory with historical city fabric contemplated as the setting for contemporary architectural practice. How architecture creates private and public space and concentrates images of political and cultural power is a continuing theme. In addition, students will develop techniques for critical analysis of the wide variety of architectural writing and attention to its form – whether academic writing, historical writing, travel writing, journalism, or criticism. Students will also learn basic methods for conducting neighborhood surveys. These skills are fundamental for developing an informed professional perspective on the role design plays in the public realm.

Course policies (detailed policies are at the end of this syllabus)

- Attendance, participation, and completion of your work are basic expectations for any class – or any job. I lay out the expectations more specifically in the course schedule below to avoid conflicts and to get us all on the same footing. If at any point you are having trouble, please talk to me outside of class sooner rather than later. I am happy to help you devise work plans and strategies for success but not at all happy to hear excuses after the fact.
- **Attendance is required.** At The University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required. Rather, each faculty member is free to develop his or her own methods of evaluating students' academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance. As the instructor of this section, I have established this policy: more than 1 unexcused absence will be grounds for lowering of final grade by one full grade. This course meets once a week -- if you miss a meeting you will miss an enormous amount of material and lose the ability to learn from and share with your fellow students. Please arrive on time and prepared.
- **Bring a hard copy of the reading to each class meeting.** Take notes – but no laptops or cell phones during class discussion. Even though there are no exams in this class, it will help you focus your thoughts to write down points that are intriguing or elemental to the development of the course.
- **I do not accept late papers.** Due dates are clearly marked on your syllabus. Plan ahead – do not wait until the last minute as my expectations have been laid out well in advance. Papers are due in class – papers turned in after class lose ½ letter grade; papers turned in beginning the following day lose a full grade for each day late.
- **Participate.** Ask questions, share ideas, respond to others – my classes are safe and supportive places to explore and expand your ability to argue a specific point of view. By discussing your ideas and having to defend them to others, they become more real and more concrete. Disagreement and counterpoint are welcome – but respect is essential. Failure to treat your colleagues with courtesy during discussion and peer review will not be tolerated.

Readings

- Course readings: pdf's posted online at <http://blog.uta.edu/~kholli/classes> -- **you will need to print them yourself.**
- Course wiki – get there from <http://wiki.uta.edu> – log in using your UTA EID

Course Evaluation

Class participation (including attendance, weekly discussion questions, and discussion) 20%
 Tenth Street Project: Survey results plus a 5-page report on your work and observations 20%
 World city research project: bibliography 10%, draft project 10%, presentation, 15%, final paper 25%;
 undergraduate paper 10 pages, grad paper and honors paper 15 pages
 All assignments must be completed to receive a passing grade.

A = exceptional work, 90-100%

B = above average work, 80-89%

C = satisfactory/average work, 70-79%

D = below average work, 60-69%

F = unacceptable, 59 and below

Coursework

1) Weekly discussion questions: For each course meeting with assigned reading and discussion, you will prepare a series of short answers to guided questions *and* prepare your own discussion questions. These discussion questions must show that you have digested the material and that you are ready to talk to your colleagues about what you have read. Questions should not be factual, but rather thematic and interpretive. If you do not understand an argument, are not convinced, find something particularly compelling – these are all good things to include in your discussion questions. Upload to the course wiki.

2) Tenth Street Project: bcWorkshop is working with Preservation Dallas and other community organizations to conduct a CAPS survey (CAPS = Community Audited Public Space). On September 27, we will all participate in the survey in teams with other volunteers and neighborhood members. For this course, you will submit both a copy of the audit you complete as well as a 5-page paper discussing the methods, experience, and conclusions you draw from the CAPS project. More information on the assignment will be provided in class.

4) World city research project: We can only discuss a few cities across the course of the semester this project is designed to 1) give you the research and critical thinking skills to continue thinking about cities throughout your career and 2) to share information about a broad range of cities with your colleagues. Each student will choose one city not covered in the course and engage in a multi-step research project that will culminate in a 12 page paper (20 pages for graduate students) and a presentation to the class. The required steps include 1) an annotated bibliography/proposal, 2) a draft (to be returned with comments), 3) draft / comments on/from your colleagues, 3) final presentation, 4) final paper. More information on the assignment will be provided in class.

Course schedule

Please be advised that adjustments to the course schedule may be made to address the educational goals of the course.

Week 1

Thursday, August 21 Introduction

Week 2

Thursday, August 28 How do we see cities?

Kevin Lynch, *Image of the City* (MIT Press, 1960), 1-13, 46-49.

Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (Random House, 1961) chapter 2, 29-41.

Lewis Mumford, "What is a City?" *Architectural Record* (November 1937): 58-62.
 Harvey Graff, *The Dallas Myth* (University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 3-19.

Week 3

Thursday September 4 How do we see suburbs and neighborhoods?

Richard Ford, "The Song of the Suburbs," *New York Times*, 6 July 2013.
 James Kunstler, *The Geography of Nowhere* (1994), 9-11, 85-86, 102-108, 245-249.
 Dolores Hayden, *Field Guide to Sprawl* (Norton, 2006), selections

Week 4

Thursday September 11 Los Angeles: Love or Hate?

Mike Davis, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future of Los Angeles* (1990)
 Reyner Banham, *Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies* (1971)
 Reyner Banham *Loves Los Angeles*, view entire film on [vimeo](#)

RESEARCH PAPER PROPOSAL DUE

Week 5

Thursday September 18 The Power of Place: Urban preservation

Guest lecturer: David Preziosi, Director, Preservation Dallas

Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place*, chapter 3, "Place Memory and Urban Preservation," 44-63.

Preservation Dallas, Guide to the Tenth Street Historic District

Tenth Street Historic District, National Register nomination, 1994.

Supplemental reading (you do not need to print these!):

http://www.preservationnation.org/forum/library/public-articles/PB_AfricanAmericanSites.pdf

<http://www.thc.state.tx.us/preserve/projects-and-programs/historic-resources-survey>

http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=DOC_13716.pdf

William H. Wilson, *Hamilton Park: A Planned Black Community in Dallas* (Johns Hopkins, 1998), chapter 1.

Week 6 **CLASS MEETS ON SATURDAY THIS WEEK IN DALLAS**

Saturday, September 27 Meet in Dallas in Tenth Street Historic District, location to be announced

Week 7

Thursday October 2 Follow up to survey work in class

Discussion and in-class work on paper

BRING YOUR DRAFT of Tenth Street paper WITH YOU TO CLASS

Discussion and in-class work on research project

Week 8

Thursday October 9

Building the Just City

Plan to attend: DILLON SYMPOSIUM SATURDAY OCTOBER 11

Readings TBA

Week 9

Thursday October 16 Paris and Les Grands Travaux
 Charles Baudelaire, *Paris Spleen* (New Directions, 1970; orig. 1869), ix-1, 72-77.
 David van Zanten, *Building Paris* (Cambridge University Press, 1994).
 Paul Goldberger, "In Paris, A Facelift in Grand Style," *New York Times*, 17 May 1987.

Week 10

Thursday October 23 New York and the Grid
 Frederick Law Olmsted, "The Misfortunes of New York," reprinted in Sutton, ed., *Civilizing America's Cities* (MIT Press, 1997), 43-51.
 Hilary Ballon, ed., *The Greatest Grid* (Columbia, 2012), "The Commissioners Plan of 1811" and "Surveying the City"
 Rem Koolhaas, *Delirious New York: A Retroactive Manifesto for Manhattan* (Oxford University Press, 1978), ch. 1.

Week 11

Thursday October 30 Mexico City: The changing meaning of public space
 Richard L. Kagan, *Urban Images of the Hispanic World 1493-1793* (Yale University Press, 2000), 151-69.
 Gonzalo Celorio, "Mexico, City of Paper," in Rubén Gallo, ed., *The Mexico City Reader* (University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), 33-52.
DRAFT of research paper due in class for peer review: MUST BE at least 50% complete

Week 12

Thursday November 6 Student presentations

Week 13

Thursday November 13 Student presentations

Week 14

Thursday November 20 Conclusions: Utopia and Dystopia
FINAL PAPER DUE IN CLASS NB, LAST CLASS MEETING

Week 15

Thursday November 28 NO CLASS – Thanksgiving

Week 16

Last Day of classes is Wednesday, December 3. If anyone would like to meet Thursday December 4 for further discussion, I will be available.

Detailed course policies

Drop Policy: Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance.** Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (<http://wweb.uta.edu/ao/fao/>).

Title IX: The University of Texas at Arlington is committed to upholding U.S. Federal Law "Title IX" such that no member of the UT Arlington community shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. For more information, visit www.uta.edu/titleIX.

Americans with Disabilities Act: The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by the staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

Academic Integrity: Students enrolled in this course are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington's tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.

I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.

UT Arlington faculty members may employ the Honor Code as they see fit in their courses, including (but not limited to) having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System *Regents' Rule* 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university's standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student's suspension or expulsion from the University.

Student Support Services: UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers,

developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to resources@uta.edu, or view the information at www.uta.edu/resources.

Electronic Communication: UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

Student Feedback Survey: At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as “lecture,” “seminar,” or “laboratory” shall be directed to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student’s feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington’s effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

Final Review Week: A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

Emergency Exit Procedures: Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit, which is located on the second floor. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist handicapped individuals.