

The Life of Cities: Modernism in Context

ARCH 4307-001/ARCH 5307-001

Fall 2013 / Th 2:00-4:50 / ARCH 330

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Office ARCH 416, office hours: T, Th 10-11:30

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 – 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 explore a range of ideas about how we experience cities and how media impacts our expectations for urban experiences. 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, Cairo, Los Angeles, 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.

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. 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 your reading packet to each class meeting. Take notes – but no laptops during class. 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. 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 reader, **required** for purchase from Bird's Copies
- 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) 15%

Dallas Top Twenty: List of top twenty Dallas buildings and five short building reports 15%

Reyner Banham Loves Dallas project: 15%

World city research project: bibliography 10%, draft project 10%, presentation, 15%, final paper 20%; undergraduate paper 10 pages, grad paper 15 pages

All assignments must be completed to receive a passing grade.

A = exception 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 must upload 2-3 discussion questions directly related to the reading. These 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 wiki section of our course Blackboard page.

2) Dallas Architecture guide: The [Society of Architectural Historians](#) is working to publish a series of state-by-state guides to architecture. Volume 1 of the [Buildings of Texas](#) appeared this year and work is underway for volume 2. Willis Winters, FAIA, Director of the Dallas Park Department is writing the section for East Texas which will include Dallas. He is working to create a list of 120 important Dallas buildings and we will meet with him to provide student input. You will each create a “top twenty” list along with five detailed building reports. Resources for this project include the *AIA Guide to Dallas* and David Dillon’s *Dallas Architecture, 1936-1986* as well as online research for more contemporary projects.

3) Reyner Banham Loves DFW project: This project provides an opportunity for each student to identify and argue for some element of DFW’s urban geography, whether designed or part of the natural environment, that creates a cohesive and identifiable sense of place. Students will watch Reyner Banham’s BBC documentary on Los Angeles, read *Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies*, and discuss his approach and critical apparatus, and go from there -- more information 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

Week 1

Thursday, August 22 Introduction

Week 2

Thursday, August 29 How do we see cities?: The case of DFW
 Kevin Lynch, *Image of the City* (MIT Press, 1960), 1-13, 46-49.
 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 5 How do we see suburbs?: The case of DFW
 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.
 William H. Wilson, *Hamilton Park: A Planned Black Community in Dallas* (Johns Hopkins, 1998), chapter 1.
 Willis Winters and Virginia MacAlester, *Great American Suburbs: The Homes of the Park Cities* (Abbeville Press, 2008), 23-53.

BIBLIOGRAPHY/ PAPER PROPOSAL DUE in class

Week 4

Thursday September 12 **Field trip to Dallas** (date subject to change)

Meet with Willis Winters, FAIA for downtown walking tour and discussion

In preparation, look at the *AIA Guide to Dallas* and *Buildings of Texas*, volume 1, on reserve in the library

PLEASE CARPOOL!

Week 5

Thursday September 19 Dallas Top Twenty

David G. McComb, "The Case of Dallas Fort Worth," *Legacies* XI (1999), 4-12.

David Dillon, "What Makes Dallas Architecture so Bad?" *D Magazine* (May 1980), 102-05, 107-09, 155, 157-58, 160.

David Dillon, Kate Holliday, "Stay Tuned: Klyde Warren Park," *D Magazine* (2012), 84.

Preliminary lists of Dallas buildings due in class – Plan to discuss your selections and criteria. We will continue to work on your lists in class.

Week 6

Thursday September 26 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](https://www.vimeo.com/123456789)

Thomas Hines, "Wilshire Boulevard: The Linear City, 1895-1945," in *The Grand American Avenue* (1994), 306-337 (excerpts).

Christopher Hawthorne, "Wilshire Boulevard" *Los Angeles Times* online (23 March 2013): <http://www.latimes.com/entertainment/news/arts/boulevards/la-ca-wilshire-boulevard-los-angeles-index-dto,0,4628574.htmlstory>

Week 7

Thursday October 3 Cities in the news: Cairo, Conflict, and Change

Michael Kimmelman, "Who Rules the Street in Cairo? The Residents Who Build It," *New York Times* 27 April 2013.

Nezar AlSayyad, "Bayn al-Qasrayn: The Street Between Two Palaces," in Zeynep Çelik, Richard Ingersoll & Diane Favro, eds., *Streets: Critical Perspectives on Public Space* (UC Press, 1994), 71-82.

Reyner Banham Loves Dallas projects due – plan to defend/ discuss in class

Week 8

Thursday October 10 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 9

Thursday October 17 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 10

Thursday October 24 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 PAPER DUE in class – be prepared to discuss in class. Bring *two* printed copies for peer review.

Week 11

Thursday October 31 New Orleans: What Makes a Disaster?
 Richard Campanella, *Time and Place in New Orleans: Past Geographies in the Present Day* (Pelican Publishing, 2002).
 Kate Holliday, "Whose City Hall Is It?" *Journal of Urban Design* 14, n3 (August 2009): 279-308.
Dallas Top Twenty, final version, due in class

Week 12

Thursday November 7 **NO CLASS** – Dr. Holliday on research trip using an exploratory fellowship, Hagley Library, Delaware. Work on your papers.

Week 13

Thursday November 14 Student presentations

Week 14

Thursday November 21 Student presentations – **NB, LAST CLASS MEETING**

Week 15

Thursday November 28 NO CLASS – Thanksgiving

Week 16

Last Day of classes is Wednesday, December 4. If anyone would like to meet Thursday December 5 for further discussion of your final papers, I will be available.

FINAL PAPER DUE ON WEDNESDAY 12/4 at noon – please bring to my office

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://www.uta.edu/aao/fao/>).

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.