

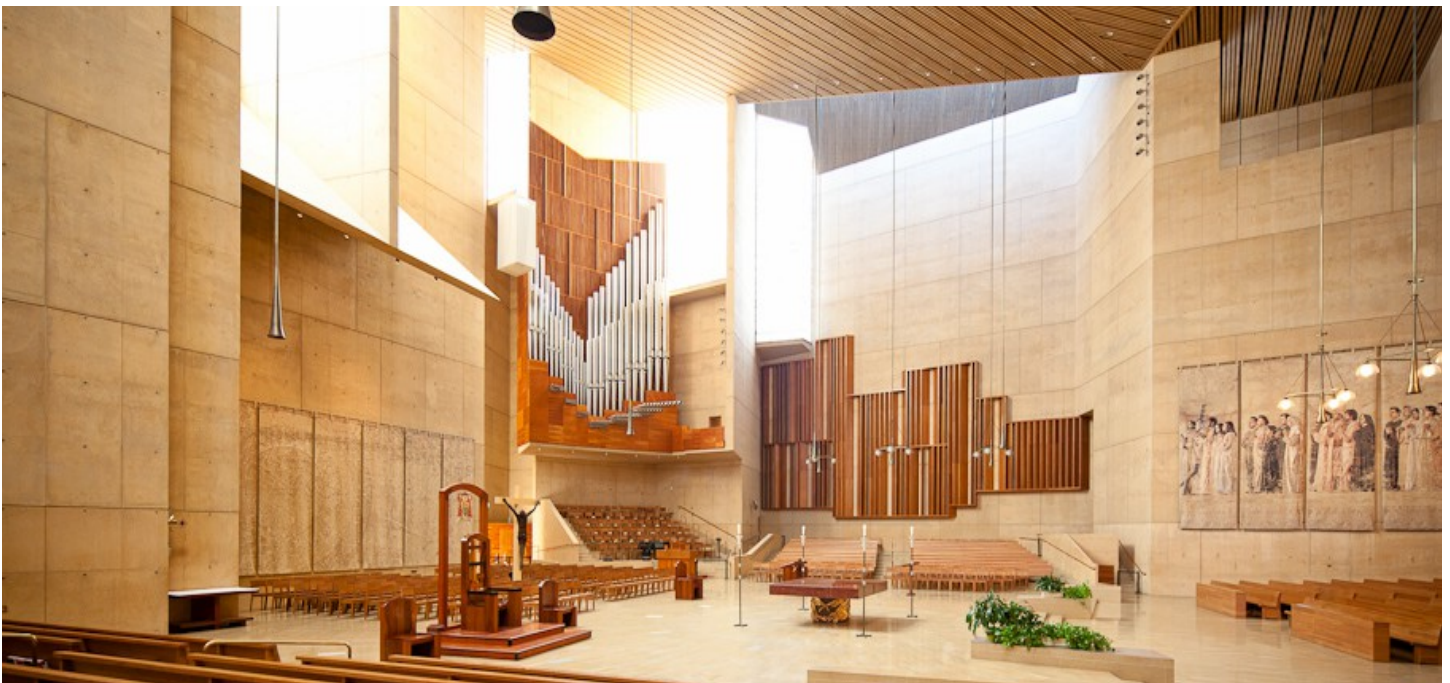
Reyner Banham's Los Angeles



photograph of Downtown Los Angeles at Night_ Unknown, 2011 aprox._ from: <http://www.bigskyline.com>

"Simply to go from the oldest monument to the newest could well prove a short, boring and uninformative journey, because the point about this giant city, which has grown almost simultaneously all over, is that all its parts are equal and equally accessible from all other parts at once."

_Reyner Banham



photograph of Rafael Moneo's Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels_ Erik Bishoff, 2010 _ from: <http://www.bishoffphotography.com>

"Los Angeles is at once the most widely written about and least understood city in the U.S."

_Stephan Thornstrom

Instructor_ Joshua M. Nason, Assistant Professor
 E_nason@uta.edu
 O_Arch_325; Hours: By Appointment

Catalog Course Description_

TOPICS IN ARCHITECTURAL THEORY (3-0) Selected topics in concepts, philosophy, and models of architecture and allied arts of design with specific application to 20th Century problems. May be repeated for credit as specific topics vary. Prerequisite: ARCH 2303, ARCH 2304. Junior standing in program. Restricted to Architecture and Interior Design majors. [3 semester credit hours]

Course Meetings_

ARCH_5311 | ARCH_4311 _001
 Reyner Banham's Los Angeles
 Arch 304 | M-F 01.00-04.50p

Course Goals_

This course seeks to:

- Deepen knowledge of the urban history of Los Angeles.
- Deepen knowledge of the criticism of Los Angeles.
- Establish a momentum of interest and inquiry in respect to cities and urban growth and complexity.
- Apply and refine reading, writing and critical skills.
- Apply and refine research techniques.
- Help students to develop and exercise their ability to read, comprehend, write about, draw and discuss complex ideas in detail.
- Cultivate a spirit of inquiry and action.

Student Learning Outcomes_

Upon satisfactory completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Engage in a critical discourse of city development (most specifically regarding Los Angeles).
- Understand, explain and compare various types of, elements of, and points-of-view in urban criticism.
- Discuss in detail the roles and potential of urban design, criticism, speculation, and discourse.
- Exhibit the beginning of a qualitative understanding of the identity of cities studied.
- Utilize a fundamental analytical tool set to employ in order to gain a contextual understanding of complex systems like as cities.

Assessment_

The expected learning outcomes will be assessed through:

- Evaluation of written assignments completed in response to assignments.
- Evaluation of performance in class based on evidence of both quality and quantity of input and output regarding class assignments and participation.
- Evaluation of participation in class discussions, critiques, presentations, assignments and required trips.
- Evaluation of work submitted physically and digitally to the course website on the college wiki page. That detailed instructions, such as assignments specifics, naming conventions and organization are followed.
- Evaluation of participation in, engagement in and mastery of the content, assignments, and activities of the course.

Assistance_

Be it known that my goal as a professor is to make the content of this course as accessible as possible to all of my students. Please come to me early and often if you need help and I will do my best to administer just that.

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_

All 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.

Instructors 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.

Civility in the Classroom_

Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. To assure that all students gain maximum opportunities from time spent in class; students are prohibited from engaging in any form of distraction. It is essential to understand that in order to cultivate an uninhibited academic environment all are encouraged to share and treated as colleagues and welcomed contributors. Since much of the success of the class hinges on open and engaged conversation regarding the topics discussed it is requisite that all conversation in and regarding the course maintain professional respectful tones, even if disputes or disagreements arise. We do not all need to agree, but we do need to respect one another. Conversation and/or actions to others in the class deemed disrespectful, derogatory or counterproductive will not be tolerated. There will be no bullying or intimidation of any sort (physical, verbal, gestural, etc.) tolerated in the class. Violators will be asked to leave.

This class will always be a place of respect, professionalism, and the inclusion and investigation of ideas. There will be no discrimination - ever!

A Word on Spray Paint_

No spray can painting is allowed on ANY projects turned in for this course. Any sprayed project will not be accepted and no partial credit will be given. Spray booths on campus can be used for water based spray gun painting only.

Retention of Work_

The Professor and School of Architecture reserve the right to retain, exhibit, and reproduce work submitted by students. Work submitted for grading is the property of the school and remains as such until it is returned to the student.

Class Operation + Structure_

This course will be intense. Students will engage in work, learning and discussion in a seminar setting. Students will be required to work in various means in order to gain and retain the information necessary to better understand how urban studies benefit the larger community of intellectual academy. Such means will include (but are not limited to) reading, writing, drawing, building, making, analyzing, testing and proposing. Each student is expected to be present and engaged in ALL classes and work sessions in order to absorb, apply and further the information presented. The course is not merely a class about L.A. but rather a course that uses the city as a means to understand various forms of complex cities, ideas, cultures, and the role of designers. Students are responsible to and should digest feedback from their entire group of peers as well as the faculty member leading discussions and guiding assignments.

As a seminar course, we will engage in critical, in-depth, topical discussions each day. Faculty will lead the general discourse and tone of our meetings, but all students are required to participate in discussion and work sessions in order to enrich, direct and make more applicable each of our conversations. This course will utilize various media and means [both analog and digital in nature] in order to facilitate thorough and effective idea communication within

the work completed. It is the responsibility of each student to check email multiple times each day in case of announcements or directions. Students must also regularly check the course drop box for announcements, resources, directions and other vital issues regarding the class. If something is posted to the drop box or presented to students via email or personal communication it is expected that each student is aware of such communication and therefore responsible for acting in accordance with said communication.

References_**Required Text:**

Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies. Reyner Banham. Publisher: University of California Press (2nd Edition, 2009)
ISBN: 0520260155

Recommended Resources:

We will use several resources in the course, both written and audio/visual in nature. See the course schedule for a more comprehensive list. A student desiring more resources should ask Professor Nason. There is much to be studied and absorbed regarding Los Angeles and Urban Theory. A few more integrated texts are listed below as examples of recommended resources.

Planning Los Angeles. David C. Sloane, ed. Publisher: American Planning Association Planners Press (2012)
ISBN: 9781611900040

The City Reader, Third Edition. Richard T. LeGates and Frederic Stout, eds. Publisher: Routledge (2003)
ISBN: 2888930366

**The instructor reserves the right to add texts or resources as the semester progresses. The course web page and blog will house additional references that will evolve throughout the study.*

Tools_

Note taking is, without question, essential to student success in this course. Each day, students are required to bring with them the resources necessary to take sufficient notes in an organized manner. Included in lecture and discussion sessions will be visual examples of principles and precedents covered. Notes will best serve their takers when imbued with sketches of related examples, problems and ideas.

Cell phone, computers or other devices of distraction are not permitted in the class. At times, some computer usage is acceptable when specifically requested by the instructor in order to provide references, precedents or other specifically supplemental elements to help enrich the conversation.

An array of specific materials will be required for the successful completion of this course - some of which are listed below. Architecture is inherently about making and you should be prepared to commit the necessary resources of time and material in the completion of the work. This does not necessarily mean that exorbitant sums of money need to be spent. Consider options carefully to acquire materials in

the most efficient and economical manner (for example advanced or group purchasing or online/discount vendors), as long as quality is not compromised.

An evolutionary list will be provided during the course of the semester. Although digital modeling will not be the primary mode of idea communication employed in this course, it is possible that some modeling and/or rendering could be used. Any sufficiently robust and applicable software can be used for such explorations. However, be it known that *SketchUp* is neither applicable nor robust and therefore is not allowed in this course.

Initial Materials List

- Codex as a Notebook and/or Sketchbook
- Drawing pens and/or pencils of multiple line-weights (specific weights and colors may vary by student and project)
- Computer equipped with word processing and access to the internet (version 3 or newer)
- Internet access
- Digital camera (video capabilities are a plus)
- GPS tracking device is recommended (a GPS equipped mobile phone is acceptable)
- More to come...

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend all scheduled class meetings for the full class period. It is the policy of this course that a total of three (2) absences is considered excessive, requiring the student to drop the class or receive a grade of "F" in compliance with drop deadlines. All absences are considered unexcused with the exception of those due to religious observance and officially approved trips (according to guidelines specified in the UTA Undergraduate Student Catalog). Necessary absences must be discussed in person with the instructor.

Further, attendance is not merely a matter of being somewhere. It is also a manifestation of engagement. Students are required to be present and engaged in the course for the entirety of each meeting. Anything less can be considered an absence since it will ultimately result in a hindered and ostensibly unsuccessful effort in the course. In parallel, partial effort deserves partial reward - meaning assessment and therefore grades will be affected. Attendance in studio is mandatory during scheduled studio periods. The collective participation in the communal environment of the studio is an explicit pedagogical component of the studio.

Students are expected to comply with University and School of Architecture policies for reporting student illness requiring absence from class or immediate family member deaths.

Attendance is defined as participation in all class activities including lectures, group and individual discussions, presentations, demonstrations, discussions, in-class assignments, and class trips. Attendance requires students to have their tools, materials, and supplies available for all applicable activities. Any tardiness, leaving early, lack of participation, walking in and out of lectures, divided

attention, disruptive behavior, etc. will count as 1/2 of an absence. Students are not allowed to work on assignments from other classes during any of our meetings. Any required materials due on a particular class day are due prior to the beginning of class. All work must be submitted on time and in compliance with the submission deadlines and details for each specific assignment. Students not having materials (models, drawings, printouts, papers) at the start of class will be considered tardy.

Participation in discussions and events outside class is also greatly encouraged and required as it has the potential to greatly impact your education.

Course Work

The semester is broken into two primary phases of instruction: 01_ The Seminar + 02_ The Trip. Approximately the first half of the semester we will focus on meeting in a discussion format, where we discuss readings and videos on selected, specific topic regarding Los Angeles, Reynier Banham, design criticism, urbanism, and more. About the last half of the course we will change location our focus to gaining a first-person understanding of Los Angeles - the focal city of our studies. More details regarding the trip will be forth coming.

As stated above, students will engage in various methods of work through the course of the semester. We will investigate each phase both tactilely and intellectually through such means.

Something will be due each class meeting.

Each day we will engage in a class discussion of the week's assigned reading. It is required that each student would have read and written a response to the assigned reading prior to our meeting. This will ensure that everyone is informed and able to contribute to the discussion. Not being prepared to do so will result in an absence for the day.

Each class meeting we will gather and engage in a group discussion of what is due that day. We will explore every topic in a manner that relates discourse to doing in specific, applicable and poignant ways. I am a firm believer that we, as designers and researchers, cannot separate that which we do from the context in which we do them and maintain any level of efficacy in our work. Believing that there is no harm in removing theory, history, materials, technology, culture, tools or other crucial components and influences from our work is a grave error and a sign of naivety if not blatant ignorance and the shrugging of the professional and societal responsibilities we accept as architects and designers. *We do not live in a vacuum and therefore should never assume that we work within one.*

During our Los Angeles trip there will be sketching and photography assignments that are focused on specific topics of discussion/exploration. There is no way to assume that one student can draw enough to really excavate and communicate the culture of a complex urban environment through a few isolated exercises during one semester. Hence, these assignments will be seen as intimate, incomplete, yet

vital, pieces of a larger puzzle that in whole convey a great and rich understanding of the city. In short, incremental exercises will be completed by every class participant in hopes that these layers when combined will reveal to us the emergent, interrelated, complex characteristics of the cities that we investigate.

In many ways design, travel, and criticism are investigations into human nature - the seeking of individual and communal belonging and the gaining of understanding of contextual relationships amidst innumerable influences and accelerating complexities. The environments in which we live (geographically, politically, socially, culturally, economically, intellectually...) affect us in every way imaginable.

Through such investigations we are attempting to gain understanding of our place and placement in such contexts (systems). This course is solely directed at an attempt to understand a complex city and set of ideas regarding that city as a way of understanding our how we relate to our contextual surroundings.

Submission of Work

All Work will be submitted via digital means. Each item that is due will be uploaded to the course drop box before the beginning of the class when it is due. Each reading assignment will be accompanied by a short written response in which a position on the covered material is given by the student. The said position paper will be posted to the internet before the class period at which it is due the same day. It is expected that all class members be active participants in the course, and this participation is a key element to the grading of the course. Proper digital etiquette will be expected and no cyber-bullying will be tolerated. Neither will any tampering of documents not your own. Any presentations and papers or projects completed for this course will also be turned in both in digital format.

Naming conventions will be given for each assignment. In order for any article, exercise, assignment or component reflective of or comprising work for this course must be turned in, fully complying with all details for its submission, to be considered for evaluation. This includes, but is not limited to sizes, formats, due dates, quantities and/or qualities and naming conventions as specified in the given assignment. Work not in compliance will not be accepted.

Class Travel

It is essential that as a part of this class, we will travel to Los Angeles for our second half of the class in order to investigate the city experientially. Details of the trip will be forthcoming as plans are set and details are secured. Since the entire semester will be focused on the investigation of Los Angeles, it is expected that each member of the class participates in the trip. It will be impossible to really understand the city if we don't go and soak up as much of it as we can. Any concerns with this trip to be conveyed to the professor immediately.

Evaluation + Grading

Grades are faculty deemed evaluations of student work and participation. All evaluations performed in conjunction with this course will be performance based. Grading will follow the criteria of the official college grade definitions and incremental grade reports will be provided as made available by the instructor. Work will be evaluated in terms of Intention, Development, and Resolution on a 0-100 scale. Project weighting for the semester will be:

Weighting

<i>Codex Project</i>	= 50%
<i>Reading Position Papers</i>	= 30%
<i>Participation</i>	= 20%
Total Grade	= 100%

Breakdown

A (89.50 - 100) = Superior_ Exceptional performance strongly exceeding requirements of assignments, demonstrating independent resourcefulness and achieving a high level of conceptual, technical and programmatic resolution.

B (79.50 - 89.49) = Above Average_ Adequate resolution of all programmatic, technical and theoretical issues and evidence of a clear design agenda or idea; demonstration of initiative and development over the period of the project; work exceeds minimum requirements of assignments and presentation.

C (69.50 - 79.49) = Average_ All project requirements minimally satisfied but with an undistinguished result; little evidence of initiative and improvement.

D (59.50 - 69.49) = Below Average_ Inadequate resolution of programmatic, technical and theoretical issues; performance with regard to development, enthusiasm or initiative markedly below that of studio peers.

F (0 - 59.49) = Failing_ Ineffective performance with significant project aspects not resolved and substantially sub-par performance in initiative, attitude and attendance.

I (N/A) = Incomplete_ No "incompletes" will be given except on the basis of compelling, written documentation that you are unable to complete the course.

No extra credit is available in this course. No late work will be accepted. Given the performativity and sequential nature of this course, late or missing assignments cannot be made up; a "0" (zero) grade will be recorded. Students are expected to keep track of their performance throughout the semester and seek guidance from available sources (including the instructor) if their performance drops below satisfactory levels.

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/ses/fao>).

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 a 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.

Expectations for Out-of-Class Study_

A general rule of thumb for the university is that for every credit hour earned, a student should spend at least 3 hours per week working outside of class. Hence, a 3-credit course might have a minimum expectation of 9 hours of reading, study, etc. However, as you all know, design is not a process that lends itself to such input estimations. In most cases it takes more than this fractional investment of time outside of studio in order to successfully complete architecture projects.

Beyond the time required to attend each class meeting, students enrolled in this course should expect to spend sufficient time on their own each week in course-related activities, including reading required materials, completing assignments, drawing, sketching, modeling, attending lectures, visiting architecture and so on.

Grade Grievances_

Any appeal of a grade in this course must follow the procedures and deadlines for grade-related grievances as published in the current undergraduate catalog. For undergraduate courses, see http://wweb.uta.edu/catalog/content/general/academic_regulations.aspx#10

Syllabus Evolution_

**The professor reserves the rights to amend, edit, delete or add to the content of this syllabus in any manner he sees fit and beneficial to the course and its participants with no forewarning. Any changes to this document or any policies or components of the class will be redistributed to the students upon the change taking place.*

Course Schedule_

See Separate Lecture Schedule Poster.