Contemporary Architectural Theory I

Eyes That ~~Do Not~~ See...
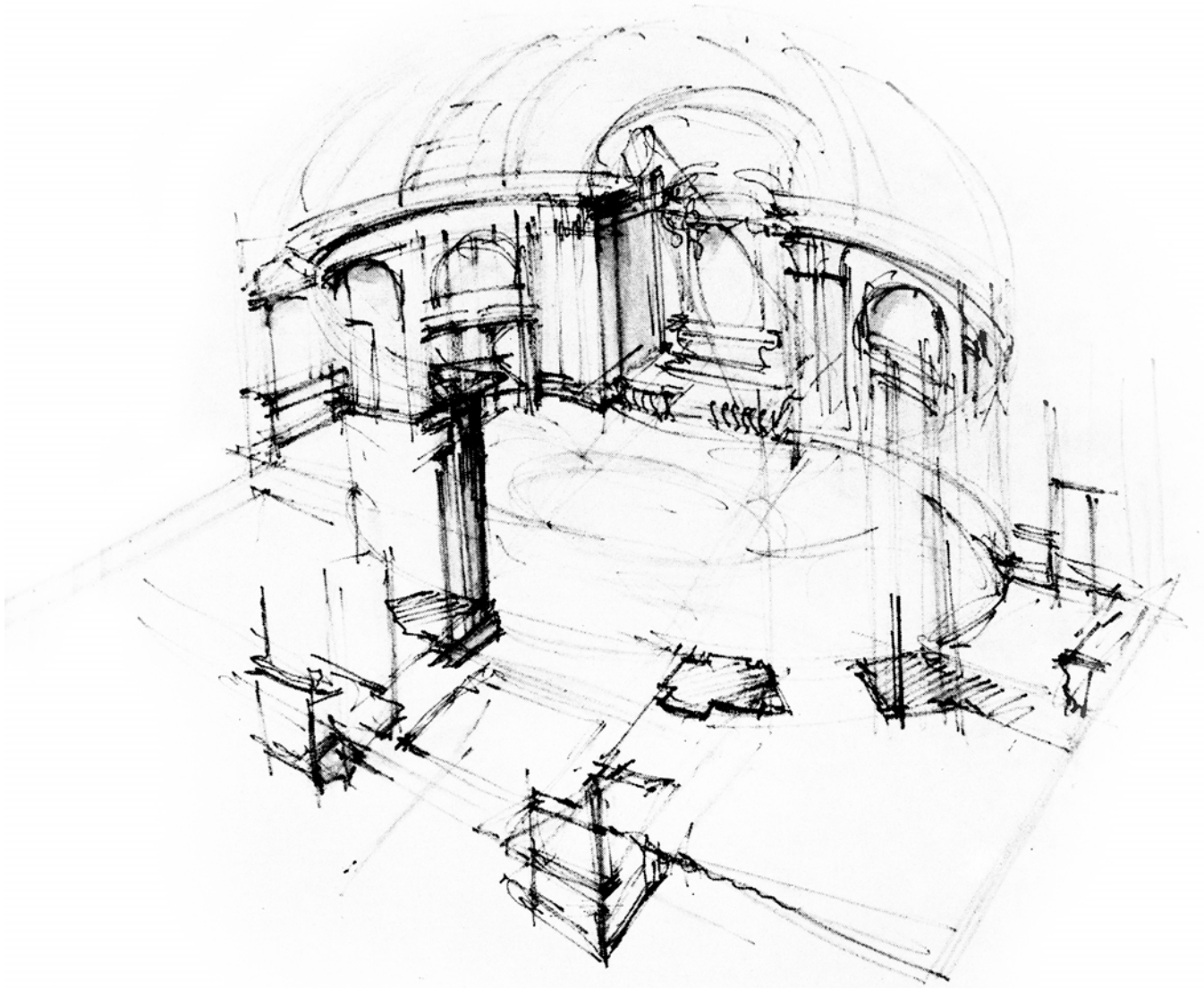
Course Number	ARCH 5362
Credits	3
Meeting Location & Times	Online
	Tuesdays & Thursdays 3:30pm–4:50pm CST
Pre-requisites	None
Instructor	Armando Rigau, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP BD+C
	Lecturer
Email	armando.rigau@ttu.edu (TBC)
Office Location & Hours	Email for appointment
Teaching Assistant	TBD
Email	TBD

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

"Style is a unity of principle that animates all the works of an era and that results from a distinctive state of mind."
– Le Corbusier, *Toward an Architecture*
(Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2007), p. 146.

In 1923, Le Corbusier published *Toward an Architecture* in reaction to the technological and socio-economic advances at the turn of the 20th century. Particularly in the chapter " Eyes That Do Not See," he exhorts architects to *see with fresh eyes* the inner workings of modern engineering. He was arguing for an architecture capable of reflecting the spirit of his times. Like Le Corbusier, architects throughout history have continually looked for "new" theoretical grounds for making buildings.

In this introductory course, students trace how different systems of ideas have transformed architectural production throughout time. While theory addresses an array of topics – including aesthetics and human experience, technological and economic progress, as well as social and political events – this course focuses on how ideas drive design decisions. A general aim to understand *what is architecture* underlies the following questions*:*

*What do architectural ideas entail,
considering both their potentials and limits?*

Where do ideas come from and how are they generated?

How can they manifest – and to what extent – in built form?

How do buildings express ideas and how can these be construed?

"Architecture is the will of an epoch translated into space."
– Mies van der Rohe

The class delves into a variety of approaches that reveal architecture's ever-evolving identity, from Antiquity to today. The course covers prevailing systems of thought that remain relevant to this day, from ancient cultures such as Egypt, Greece, and Rome; the Renaissance and succeeding Mannerist, Baroque, Rococo and Neoclassical styles; to the Modern and Post-Modern Movements, along with emerging contemporary trends. Within this disciplinary trajectory, the history of ideas is seen as a pendulum – rather than as a progression – whose favor fluctuates between sets of irreconcilable concepts:

Object	Subject
Emotion	Logic
Empiricism	Rationalism
The natural	The man-made
The physical	The meta-physical
Artistic experience	Scientific truth
Fictional myths	Historical realism
Phenomenology	Autonomy
The literal & concrete	The figurative & abstract

Previous page: Sketch by
Gian Lorenzo Bernini, Baroque architect

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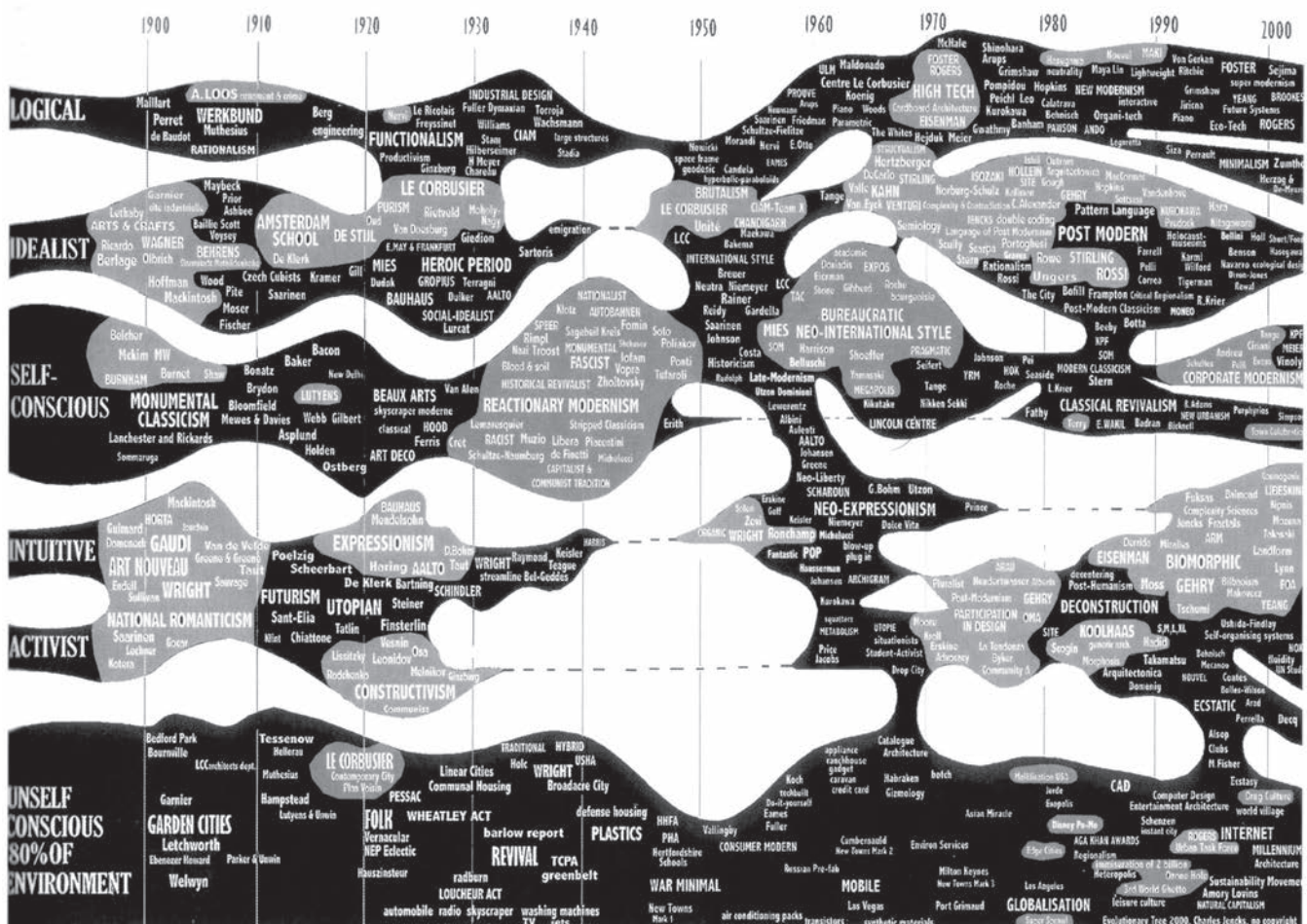*"One must possess an idea before making architecture."*

- Peter Eisenman
in Fernández Gomez, Margarita and María Melgarejo Belenguer, Opiniones sobre Arquitectura: La voz de los arquitectos (Valencia: Ediciones Generales de Construcción), p.131. (personal translation)

- "The Century is Over, Evolutionary Tree of Twentieth-Century Architecture," Charles Jencks, Postmodern theorist
(below)

Historically, individuals and whole groups of people have positioned themselves differently in relation to these antinomies. As a result, they generated and/or adopted particular stances that shaped their professional undertakings. Thus, the course postulates "good" architecture as a happy marriage between both theory *and* practice.

Architectural theory is presented equally as a product of thinking, reading, and writing, as well as drawing, making, and building. On the one hand, students learn basic concepts for ideating the underlying structures of architectural projects; on the other, they refine their skills to represent the construction of space. This ability to "read" a design serves to investigate other works of architecture across cultures from any point in time.

Ultimately, the course is intended to raise enthusiasm for the nature and future possibilities of architectural space, framed within its past and present relevance. In acquiring foundational skills in analysis and criticism, students are expected to see beyond style into the ideas that nurture design and cultivate the discipline and profession of architecture.

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GENERAL OBJECTIVES

"All the techniques of representation [...] are pedagogically useful [...]; but their function is no more than allusive and preparatory to that moment in which we [...] enter and experience the spaces we have been studying. That is the moment of architecture."

- Bruno Zevi, Modern historian

Upon completion of the course, a student should...

1. **Understand** what is architecture theory and its historical and contemporary relevance for how it manifests in design.

2. **Know** a general overview of the history of theory, including its key exponents, texts, projects, and recurrent themes.

3. **Articulate** differences and similarities between theoretical stances across time.

4. **Develop** basic vocabulary and skills, both visual and verbal, for the analysis, interpretation, and criticism of architectural designs.

5. **Grasp** the complementary relationship between theory and practice, as well as architecture's ties to other disciplines, such as art, history, literature, philosophy, and psychology, among others.

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

NAAB's Student Performance Criteria (SPC) met by the course:

Realm A: Critical Thinking and Representation

A.1 Professional Communication Skills: *Ability to write and speak effectively and use representational media appropriate for both within the profession and with the general public.*

A.2 Design Thinking Skills: *Ability to raise clear and precise questions, use abstract ideas to interpret information, consider diverse points of view, reach well-reasoned conclusions, and test alternative outcomes against relevant criteria and standards.*

A.3 Investigative Skills: *Ability to gather, assess, record, and comparatively evaluate relevant information and performance in order to support conclusions related to a specific project or assignment.*

A.4 Architectural Design Skills: *Ability to effectively use basic formal, organizational and environmental principles and the capacity of each to inform two- and three-dimensional design.*

A.7 History and Global Culture: *Understanding of the parallel and divergent histories of architecture and the cultural norms of a variety of indigenous, vernacular, local, and regional settings in terms of their political, economic, social, ecological, and technological factors.*

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CLASS FORMAT & ASSESSMENT METHODS

Bi-weekly lectures are accompanied by required readings, as well as writing and representation exercises. The texts, which can be accessed through Blackboard, cover canonical works and also from other disciplines that have significantly shaped architectural discourse. Student performance is evaluated as follows:

10% Twitter Posts
Each student should post quotes from the readings in the course's Twitter account to reflect comprehension of the assigned texts. To identfy the source of the post, students must use a hastag associated with their initials.

15% Participation
Students should attend class everyday, come prepared, and engage actively in discussions.

30% Assignments
Throughout the semester, different assignments – announced or unannounced – cover writing and visual communication skills that test the knowledge acquired in the course. The lowest grade is dropped. Students are not able to make up for unannounced quizzes, unless for Observance of Religious Holiday.

45% Semester Project
Details of the final project are disclosed gradually throughout the semester. Late submittals result in a five percent (5%) deduction from the final grade for each day that passes.

PARTICIPATION

Attendance is mandatory, as the course heavily relies on weekly lectures and discussions for the development of course information. Class starts on the time scheduled; consequently, any student arriving after is deemed late. On the third (3rd) late arrival, each one results in a deduction of five (5) points from the participation grade. Furthermore, four (4) late arrivals constitute an absence. Four (4) absences constitute cause for dropping a student from the course. All absences count towards the record of late arrivals. In the case of illness or other unforeseen circumstance, please contact the instructor at the earliest convenience to make up for the missed material. In case of a religious holiday, a student is excused as long as he/she notifies the instructor ahead of the absence to make necessary arrangements to make up for any missed material. The course abides by the University Policy for Observance of Religious Holiday: http://www.depts.ttu.edu/opmanual/OP34.19.pdf. Please refer to the Attendance Policy from the University and also the College of Architecture for further explanation: http://arch.ttu.edu/wiki/Attendance_Policy

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GENERAL CONTENT

1. Why Theorize?

Theories of architecture(s)
> Schools of thought and the byproduct of style

How to Read Buildings
> Fundamental design language: points, lines, planes, volumes
> Basic concepts: scale, proportion, organization, and composition

History For/ Against Theory/ Architecture
The Founding Myth: Object-Subject Problem

2. Myths of Antiquity

Architectures of Death and Ancient Greek Revolution
> Sacred rituals of the West in contradistinction to everyday rituals of the East
> The obliqueness of Greece versus the frontality of Rome
> Religious (mis)appropriations: the basilica

Vitruvius' Paradigm and Roman Space

3. Traditional Perspectives and Misbehaviors

Gothic Lightness
The Quattrocento and La Terza Maniera
> Alberti and the "birth" of the architect

The Illusions of the Baroque and the Not-So-Excessive Rococo
Enlightened Rationalism and Illusions
> Restored authenticity or authentic restoration

4. Classical (Post) Modernity

Modern Estrangement
Modern Anti-Space and its "Modest Proposal"
Classical Modernism
> The legitimate illegitimate Modernist offspring: Latin America
> Digesting Metabolism

The Postmodern Condition and its Report on Traditional Urbanism
> Deconstruction's haunt; Crafting tectonics
> The critical along with the regionalism

5. Contemporary Speculation

The Post-Critical
> Mass customization and participation in the digital age
> Sustainability's cradle
> The operations of landscape urbanism
> Thermodynamics, toward a new future?

Whatever Happened to Theory?

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RECOMMENDED READINGS

Bruno Zevi, *Architecture as Space* (New York: Horizon Press, 1974), esp. chapters 1–4.
NA2500 .Z413 1974

Colin Rowe and Robert Slutzky, *Transparency* (Boston: Birkhäuser Verlag, 1997).
NA2765 .R69 1997

Jesse Reiser and Nanako Umemoto, *Atlas of Novel Tectonics* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2006).
NA2760 .R45 2006

Mark Gelernter, *Sources of Architectural Form: A Critical History of Western Design Theory* (Manchester: Manchester U. Press, 1995).
Reference number not available.

Peter Eisenman and Rem Koolhaas, *Supercritical* (London: AA Publications, 2010).
NA737.E33 A35 2010

Rafael Moneo, *Theoretical Anxiety and Design Strategies in the Work of Eight Contemporary Architects (*Cambridge, Mass.: MIT, 2004).
NA680 .M62 2004

Richard Weston, *100 Ideas that Changed Architecture* (London: Laurence King Publishing, 2011).
NA200 .W47 2011

Rem Koolhaas, *Delirious New York*, (New York: Monacelli, 1994).
NA735.N5 K66 1994

Rem Koolhaas and Bruce Mau, *S, M, L, XL* (New York: Monacelli, 1995).
NA1153.K66 S75 1995

CALENDAR OF THEMES, ASSIGNMENTS, & REQUIRED READINGS

Set 00-A *Course Introduction*
Assig. 00: Basic Knowledge (in class)

Set 00-B *Library Tutorial*
Discussion with Librarians about Scholarly Research

Set 00-C *Research Day*

Set 00-D *Semester Project Presentation and Text Primer*

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1. Why Theorize?

Set 01-A *Theories of Architecture(s)*
Assig. 01: Definitions of Architecture

Kate Nesbitt, ed., Theorizing a New Agenda for Architecture: An Anthology of Architectural Theory 1965-1995, *Introduction* p. 16-21

Bruno Zevi, Architecture as Space: How to Look at Architecture, Chs. 1-2.

Aaron Meskin, "The Definition of Art," Podcast.
http://philosophybites.com/2017/05/aaron-meskin-on-the-definition-of-art.html

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Set 01-B *How to Read Buildings*
Assig. 02: Facade Analysis

Colin Rowe, "Mathematics of the Ideal Villa"
in Mathematics of the Ideal Villa and Other Essays, p. 1-27.

Colin Rowe and Robert Slutsky, Transparency, p. 21-82

Colin Rowe, Transparency II.

Set 02-A *History for/ against Theory*
Discussion Assig. 02

Alan Colquhoun, "Three Kinds of Historicism" in Kate Nesbitt,
Theorizing a New Agenda for Architecture, p. 200-210 (in library reserve)

Peter Eisenman, "The End of the Classical: The End of the Beginning,
the End of the End" in Kate Nesbitt, Theorizing a New Agenda for
Architecture, p. 211-227 (in library reserve).

Set 02-B *History for/ against Architecture*

Stanford Anderson, "Memory in Architecture" from Journal Daidalos.

Excerpts from Le Corbusier's *Toward an Architecture*

Peter Eisenman, "3. Textual Heresies" in *Ten Canonical Buildings
1950-2000.*

Set 03-A *The Founding Myth: Object-Subject Problem*
Assig. 03: Cave Diagram

Plato and P Shorey, trans. "The Allegory of the Cave" in *The Republic*

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*2. Myths of
Antiquity*

Set 03-B *Architectures of Death and the Ancient Greek Revolution*

Mario Salvadori, "The Pyramids" in *Why Buildings Stand Up.*

R.D. Martienssen, *The Idea of Greek Space in Architecture.*

Bertrand Russell, "The Roman Empire in Relation to Culture" in
A History of Western Philosophy.

Branko Mitrovic, "II. Aristotle" in *Philosophy for Architects.*

Set 04-A   *Vitruvius' Paradigm and Roman Space*
Assig. 04: New Vitruvian Triad

Vitruvius, "The Education of the Architect"

Richard Weston, "Idea No. 26: Commodity, Firmness, and Delight," in *100 Ideas that Changed Architecture.*

Le Corbusier, "I. The Lesson of Rome" in *Toward an Architecture.*

Le Corbusier, "II. The Illusion of the Plan" in *Toward an Architecture.*

3. Traditional Perspectives and Misbehaviors

Set 04-B   *Gothic Lightness & the Neoplatonic Quattrocento*

Mario Salvadori, "The Unfinished Cathedral" in *Why Buildings Stand Up*

Bertrand Russell, "Saint Thomas Aquinas" in *A History of Western Philosophy.*

Samuel Y. Egerton, Jr., "III. Alberti's Florence" in *The Renaissance Rediscovery of Linear Perspective.*

R. Wittkower, "Brunelleschi and 'Proportion in Perspective'"

Wylie Sypher, "I. Renaissance" in *Four Stages of Renaissance Style*

Set 05-A   La terza maniera

Branko Mitrovic, "Formalism in Renaissance Architectural Theory"

Steven Fong, "Mannerism, Form, and Content at Cornell"

Kurt Forster, "Giulio Romano and Andrea Palladio on Common Ground"

Set 05-B   *Body and Building*
Assig. 05: Debate Short Essay on Body and Building

Korydon Smith, "Chapter 7: Body and Building" in *Introducing Architectural Theory*

Set 06-A   *The Illusions of the Baroque and the Not-So-Excessive Rococo*

Wylie Sypher, "Fictions of the Enlightment"
in *Rococo to Cubism in Art and Literature*

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Wylie Sypher, "Rococo as Style"
in *Rococo to Cubism in Art and Literature*

Fredric Jameson, "Chapter 1: Narrative Bodies: Rubens and History"
in *The Ancients and the Postmoderns*

Set 06-B   *Enlightened Rationalism*
Disscusion on Immanuel Kant's "What is Enlightment?"

Immanuel Kant, "What is Enlightment?"

Set 07-A   *Enlightened Illusions*

Etienne-Louis Boullée, "Architecture, Essay on Art"

Hubert Damisch and Erin Williams, "Ledoux with Kant"

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4. Classical (Post) Modernity

Set 07-B   *Modern Estrangement*
In class film by Jacques Tati

Set 08-A   *Modern Anti-Space and its "Modest Proposal"*

Steven Kent Peterson, "Space and Anti-Space"

Branko Mitrovic, "V. Romanticism and Historicism"
in *Philosophy for Architects.*

Friedrich Nietzche, "How the True World Finally Became a Fable: The History of an Error / The Will to Power as Art"
in *Philosophers on Art from Kant to the Postmodernists.*

Set 08-B   *Classical Modernism*

Stanford Anderson, "The Fiction of Function"
in *Assemblage* No. 2, p. 18-31.

Christian Norberg-Schulz, "Heidegger's Thinking on Architecture"
in *Perspecta* Vol. 20, p. 62-68.

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Set 09-A   *The Postmodern Condition and its Report on Traditional Urbanism*

Kenneth Frampton, "Prospects for a Critical Regionalism"
in *Perspecta* Vol. 20, p. 147-162.

Hal Foster, "(Post) Modern Polemics"
in *Perspecta* Vol. 21, p. 144-153.

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5. Contemporary Speculation

Set 09-B   *The Post-Critical*

Mark Jarzombek, "Critical of Post-Critical?"
in *Architectural Theory Review* Vol. 7, No. 1, April 2002, p. 149-151.

Rem Koolhaas, "Whatever Happened to Urbanism"
in *Design Quarterly*, No. 164, Sprawl Spring 1995, p. 28-31.

Rem Koolhaas, "Bigness"
in *S,M,L,XL*, p. 495-515.

David Harvey, "The New Urbanism and the Communitarian Trap"
in *Harvard Design Magazine*, No. 1, Winter/ Spring 1997, p. 1-3

Set 10-A   *Whatever Happened to Theory?*

Mark Pasnik, "Who's Afraid of Architecture Theory"
in *Cornell Journal of Architecture*, No. 6, 1999, p. 108-121.

Michael Speaks, "After Theory: Debate in Architectural Schools Rages About the Value of Theory and its Effect on Innovation in Design"
in *Architectural Record*, Vol. 193, No. 6, 2005, p. 28-31.

Set 10-B   *Affect Theory*

Colin Rowe, "The Provocative Facade: Frontality and *Contrapposto*"

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CLASSROOM PROCLIVITY

Technology can enhance the way we learn about and discover the world around us. Thus, computers and tablets are allowed for note taking, drawing, researching topics at hand, and other methods that are constructive for class discussion. Nevertheless, to avoid any unexpected disruptions, **texting, emailing, and the use of social media platforms are prohibited for nonacademic purposes.**

CLASSROOM CIVILITY

Texas Tech University is a community of faculty, students, and staff that enjoys an expectation of cooperation, professionalism, and civility during the conduct of all forms of university business, including the conduct of student–student and student–faculty interactions in and out of the classroom. Further, the classroom is a setting in which an exchange of ideas and creative thinking should be encouraged and where intellectual growth and development are fostered. Students who disrupt this classroom mission by rude, sarcastic, threatening, abusive or obscene language and/or behavior will be subject to appropriate sanctions according to university policy. Likewise, faculty members are expected to maintain the highest standards of professionalism in all interactions with all constituents of the university. (www.depts.ttu.edu/ethics/ matadorchallenge/ethicalprinciples.php).

ADA STATEMENT

Any student who, because of a disability, may require special arrangements in order to meet the course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make any necessary arrangements. Students should present appropriate verification from Student Disability Services during the instructor's office hours. Please note: instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodations to a student until appropriate verification from Student Disability Services has been provided. For additional information, please contact Student Disability Services in West Hall or call 806-742-2405.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is taking responsibility for one's own work, being individually accountable, and demonstrating intellectual honesty and ethical behavior. Academic integrity is a personal choice to abide by the standards of intellectual honesty and responsibility. Because education is a shared effort to achieve learning through the exchange of ideas, students, faculty, and staff have the collective responsibility to build mutual trust and respect. Ethical behavior and independent thought are essential for the highest level of academic achievement, which then must be measured. Academic achievement includes scholarship, teaching and learning, all of which are shared endeavors. Grades are a device used to quantify the successful accumulation of knowledge through learning. Adhering to the standards of academic integrity ensures that grades are earned honestly and gives added value to the entire educational process. Academic integrity is the foundation upon which students, faculty, and staff build their educational and professional careers. [Texas Tech University ("University") Quality Enhancement Plan, Academic Integrity Task Force, 2010]

Integrity Matters: *Texas Tech is committed to creating an exciting university atmosphere that is free of academic dishonesty. All members of the university community, including faculty, students, and staff, are upheld to the standard of having integrity in the work they produce. The standard is for all members of the Texas Tech community to contribute to the campus environment in an ethical, fun, and honest manner. Integrity matters because student success matters. [...]*

What is Academic Dishonesty?: *"Academic dishonesty" includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, misrepresenting facts, and any act designed to give unfair academic advantage to the student (such as, but not limited to, submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without the prior permission of the instructor) or the attempt to commit such an act."* For further clarification: http://www.depts.ttu.edu/ opmanual/OP34.12.pdf

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RELIGIOUS HOLY DAY STATEMENT

"Religious holy day" means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Texas Tax Code §11.20. A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence. A student who is absent from classes for the observance of a religious holy day shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence. A student who is excused under section 2 may not be penalized for the absence; however, the instructor may respond appropriately if the student fails to complete the assignment satisfactorily.

DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE STATEMENT

Texas Tech University is committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from gender and/or sex discrimination of any kind. Sexual assault, discrimination, harassment, and other Title IX violations are not tolerated by the University. Report any incidents to the Office for Student Rights & Resolution, (806)-742-SAFE (7233) or file a report online at titleix.ttu.edu/students. Faculty and staff members at TTU are committed to connecting you to resources on campus. Some of these available resources are: TTU Student Counseling Center, 806-742-3674, https://www.depts.ttu.edu/scc/(Provides confidential support on campus.) TTU 24-hour Crisis Helpline, 806-742-5555, (Assists students who are experiencing a mental health or interpersonal violence crisis. If you call the helpline, you will speak with a mental health counselor.) Voice of Hope Lubbock Rape Crisis Center, 806-763-7273, voiceofhopelubbock.org (24-hour hotline that provides support for survivors of sexual violence.) The Risk, Intervention, Safety and Education (RISE) Office, 806-742-2110, https://www.depts.ttu.edu/rise/ (Provides a range of resources and support options focused on prevention education and student wellness.) Texas Tech Police Department, 806-742-3931,http://www.depts.ttu.edu/ttpd/ (To report criminal activity that occurs on or near Texas Tech campus.)

LGBTQIA CAMPUS RESOURCE

Office of LGBTQIA, Student Union Building Room 201, www.lgbtqia.ttu.edu, 806.742.5433

Within the Center for Campus Life, the Office serves the Texas Tech community through facilitation and leadership of programming and advocacy efforts. This work is aimed at strengthening the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA) community and sustaining an inclusive campus that welcomes people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions.