

# ARCH 2362 Fundamentals in Architectural Thinking

College of Architecture, Texas Tech University

Spring 2021

Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:30-1:50pm CST

ONLINE ONLY

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## ***Catalog Description:***

Covers critical works from architecture and other related disciplines; traces how different systems of ideas have transformed architectural production from antiquity to today.

## ***Course Description:***

This course surveys critical discussions in architecture. It frames these critical discussions according to a history of the discipline and field of architecture. The course therefore creates narratives around contemporary thinking in architecture that establish likely foundations and trajectories, as well as manifestations of thinking within the built environment and particular architectural projects. Students will learn how to “break open” contemporary discussions in order to gain their own perspective and develop their own stake.

## ***Student Learning Objectives***

- To understand basic critical thinking in architecture with a special emphasis on the critical project from the postwar period onward.
- To understand and unpack critical concepts in contemporary architectural thinking with an understanding of the concept’s history and lineage.
- To provide a framework of architectural thinking for use in design studio and architectural discourse.
- To further develop the architectural vocabulary within the acculturation of the student of architecture.

## ***Student Performance Objectives***

- To read primary texts and to understand them within their historical contexts.
- To fully comprehend the architectural implications of words and meanings in architecture socially, politically and culturally.
- To meaningfully connect texts, words and intentions to building and design projects over time.
- To write short analyses that merge precedent study with the ideas that drive their disciplinary and professional significance.

## ***Means of Evaluation***

### Deliverables

Students will be responsible for all FOUR TASKS every week for 10 weeks:  
**READ, WATCH, POST, WRITE**

**READ** refers to the required readings for each week. These will be made available to you as PDF's on Blackboard under each week's heading.

**WATCH** refers to watching the lectures, both of the instructor and ALL lectures of the TTUCoA this semester.

Two of the FOUR TASKS require writing:

- I. **POST** is an engaged written discussion in the Discussion Blog section on Blackboard. Each week, there will be an OP written by the instructor. Students are required to respond to the OP once with a 3-4 sentence response AND to 1 other post with a 1-sentence response. POST is graded on thoughtfulness of reply (critical engagement of the subject) and on specificity of the references.
- II. **WRITE** is a short 2-paragraph (about 300 words) analysis that connects concepts to a building of the same intellectual period or movement. WRITE reviews the reading for the week in light of a built work of architecture and compares the message or "agency" in both. WRITE is graded on the connections made between broad concepts and details both in the texts and in the building. WRITE is due as a PDF to Blackboard on the Sunday by 5pm following each week.

### Assessment

WATCH (attendance at lectures) = 10% of total final grade (10 points)  
POST = 30% of total final grade (9 posts, 3 points each, last one 6 points)  
WRITE = 60% of total final grade (9 analyses, 6 points each, last one 12 points)

## **Course Schedule\*\*\*\***

### *WEEK 1*

H 1.21      WATCH: **Introduction to the Course**

### *WEEK 2*

T 1.26 + H 1.28      WATCH: **Introduction to Architectural Theory**

### *WEEK 3*

T 2.2 + H 2.4      WATCH: **Classical to Modernism**

### *WEEK 4*

T 2.9 + H 2.11      WATCH: **Modern Crises of Thought in the Mid-Twentieth Century**

READ:

Jane Jacobs, from *The Life and Death of the American City* (1961)

### *WEEK 5*

T 2.16 + H 2.18      WATCH: **The Development of Postmodernism**

READ:

Robert Venturi, "Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture" (1965)

Charles Jencks, from *The Language of Postmodern Architecture* (1977)

### *WEEK 6*

T 2.23      WATCH: **Deconstruction and Architecture as Meaning**

READ:

Classicist: Alberti, *On the Art of Building* (1450) (Mallgrave I, 34-35)

Modern: Frank Lloyd Wright, from "In the Cause of Architecture" (1905)

Contemporary: Peter Eisenman, from "The End of the Classical" (1984)

H 2.25

POST: Deconstruction in Architecture

<https://www.youtube.com/watch/b6qgGOXvPE0>

WRITE: Take a look at the Fire Station in Vitra by Zaha Hadid (1993) and write a short analysis of it with regard to how Wright views "organic integrity" versus how Eisenman describes fiction. Cite both directly in your text.

*WEEK 7*  
T 3.2

**WATCH: Site and Context**

**READ:**

Classicist: Palladio, from *Quattro Libri* (1570) (Mallgrave I, 46-48)

Modern: Mies Van Der Rohe, from "Office Building" (1923)

Contemporary: Lola Sheppard, "From Site to Territory"

H 3.4

**POST:** Juhani Pallasmaa

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5f6KowAYxPQ>

**WRITE:** Take a look at Pezo von Ellrichausen's Cien House (2011) and determine if it is or isn't "contextual" according to each the readings.

*WEEK 8*  
T 3.9

**WATCH: Feminism and Spatial Theory**

**READ:**

Classicist: Vitruvius, Book III "On Temples" (Mallgrave I, 11-12)

Modern: Catherine Bauer, from *Modern Housing* (1934) (Mallgrave II, 260-261)

Contemporary: Beatriz Colomina, "Xray Architecture"

H 3.11

**POST:** Mimi Zeiger

<https://www.metropolismag.com/architecture/women-feminism-american-architecture/>

**WRITE:** Take a look at Diller + Scofidio's Blur Building and write a short precis on how the building 1) challenges normative assumptions about buildings, and 2) disrupts the visual dynamics described in Colomina's text.

*WEEK 9*  
T 3.16

**WATCH: The Construction of Difference**

**READ:**

Classicist: Vitruvius, "The Education of an Architect" (Mallgrave I, 3-9)

Modern: JJP Oud, from "On Future Architecture and Its Architectural Possibilities" (1921) (Mallgrave II, 185-186)

Contemporary: Mabel O. Wilson, "Notes of the Virginia Capitol: Nation, Race and Slavery in Jefferson's America" (2020)

H 3.18

POST: Mario Gooden <https://www.youtube.com/watch?TeRxuuaY5w>

WRITE: Take a look at Thomas Heatherwick's Vessel, opened in 2019, and then list and describe at least 3 public advantages for it and at least 3 public detriments of it. Of the advantages and detriments, write two more sentences on which you believe are the essential responsibilities of the architect who designed the Vessel.

WEEK 10  
T 3.23

WATCH: **The Construction of Nature and Climate**

READ:

Classicist: Robert Morris, An Essay Upon Harmony (1739) (Mallgrave I, 115-117)

Modern: Ian McHarg, from Design With Nature (1969) (Mallgrave II, 363-364)

Contemporary: Phu Hoang, "Can You Believe the Weather We're Having?"

H 3.25

POST: David Gissen, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dnIskUxdFzU>

WRITE: Take a look at APTUM Architecture's Rhizolith Islands, and describe how the innovations regarding concrete are addressing climate change in the ways that Hoang describes it.

WEEK 11  
T 3.30

WATCH: **Critical Urbanism**

READ:

Modern: Louis Sullivan, "The Tall Office Building Artistically Considered" (1896) (Mallgrave II, 126-127)

Modern: "The Athens Charter" (1943) (Mallgrave II, 250-251)

Contemporary: Rem Koolhaas, from Delirious New York (1978)

H 4.1

POST: Adrienne Brown, "Skyscrapers and Race"  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3d3Es7PC-rM>

WRITE: Take a look at the exhibitions (Venice Biennale, for one) of the Torre David project by Urban Think-Tank. Their book, Informal Urban Communities, may be checked out as an eBook in the Architecture Library. How might you *CONVINCINGLY* describe this project to the authors of the Athens Charter?

WEEK 12  
T 4.6

WATCH: **Ordering Systems**

READ:

Classical: Gottfried Semper, *The Four Elements of Architecture* (1854)  
(Mallgrave I 546-549)

Modern: Le Corbusier, from "Five Points for a New Architecture" (1927)  
(Mallgrave II, 218-219)

Contemporary: Greg Lynn, from *Animate Form* (1999)

H 4.8

POST: Keller Easterling, "Medium Design"

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L0psc\\_K70Rk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L0psc_K70Rk)

WRITE: Examine the relationships between the construction and the technological craft of the screen wall in the Serpentine Gallery pavilion by Frida Escobedo. Try to connect it to a trajectory of time from Le Corbusier to Lynn to Ms. Escobedo.

WEEK 13  
T 4.13

WATCH: **The Global Scale of Architecture**

READ:

Classicist: Heinrich Hubsch, "In What Style Shall We Build?" (1819)  
(Mallgrave I, 407-409)

Modern: Kenneth Frampton, from "Towards a Critical Regionalism"  
(1983) (Mallgrave II, 519-520)

Contemporary: Saskia Sassen, "Scale in a Global Digital World"

H 4.15

POST: Jose Sanchez, "Architecture for the Commons"

<https://woodbury.edu/news/jose-sanchez/>

WRITE: Get on Common'hood by Plethora Project (available on Steam) and try it out. Compare it to the approaches to scale described by both Frampton and Sassen. How does gaming potentially mitigate some of the advantages or disadvantages to the dilemmas of local vs global design?

WEEK 14

4.20 + 4.22

POST: Using the map generated by Lola Sheppard and Mason White in their "Notes on the Activist Tradition in Architecture," choose a project by any firm mapped and share it with the others in the Discussion Blog. Be sure to note the project and describe how it is an example of architectural activism.

WRITE: Write a short manifesto of what you believe are the 3 most important issues facing an emerging architect today. For each of the three issues, describe directly how it might impact architectural techniques (for example, the use of robotic fabrication).

\*\*\*\*These dates are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor and/or the College of Architecture.\*\*\*\*\*

## Required Texts

ALL required texts will be in Blackboard as PDF's

Texts will come from:

H. F. Mallgrave & C. Contandriopolous, Architectural Theory Volumes I and II (Blackwell, 2008), noted here as (Mallgrave Volume Number, page numbers)

AND

Various Handouts

No book purchases are necessary for this course.

## Grading

Grading is determined by one's engagement of the ideas that underlie architectural thinking and how those ideas have changed over time in our field and in our discipline. Students will be rewarded for their demonstrated ability to read and understand buildings and other examples of architecture manifested in drawings, plans, designs, and so on; as well as their ability to communicate their understanding in written form. If writing is a difficulty for you for any reason, please reach out to the instructor right away to find ways to work around any possible disadvantages or bias.

TTU OP. 34.12 on Grading

<https://www.depts.ttu.edu/opmanual/OP34.12.pdf>

[http://arch.ttu.edu/Grade\\_Definitions/](http://arch.ttu.edu/Grade_Definitions/)

## UNIVERSITY REQUIRED STATEMENTS:

### 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 STATEMENT:

Academic integrity is taking responsibility for one's own class and/or course 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 grades are earned honestly. 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]

**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.

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**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](http://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](http://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/tttd/> (To report criminal activity that occurs on or near Texas Tech campus.)

**CIVILITY IN THE CLASSROOM STATEMENT:**

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](http://www.depts.ttu.edu/ethics/matadorchallenge/ethicalprinciples.php)).

**LGBTQIA SUPPORT STATEMENT:**

I identify as an ally to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA) community, and I am available to listen and support you in an affirming manner. I can assist in connecting you with resources on campus to address problems you may face pertaining to sexual orientation and/or gender identity that could interfere with your success at Texas Tech. Please note that additional resources are available through the Office of LGBTQIA within the Center for Campus Life, Student Union Building Room 201, [www.lgbtqia.ttu.edu](http://www.lgbtqia.ttu.edu), 806.742.5433.”