

Introduction to Design and the Built Environment

Last Updated: Mon, 07/14/2025

Course prefix: ARCH

Course number: 1060

Section: MR

CRN: XXXXX

Instructor First Name: Michelle

Instructor Last Name: Rinehart

Semester: Fall

Academic year: 2025

Course description:

Introduction to architecture and building construction through case studies that illuminate past and present practices, as well as future possibilities within the discipline.

The course will introduce students to the world of design and architecture, its concepts, theory, language, practice, and ethics. Students will learn to raise their powers of observation and design awareness as well as increase their sensitivity toward the quality of the designed environment and its relationship to the natural world.

Course learning outcomes:

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

This course is designed to accomplish the following objectives:

1. Provide students with a series of case studies/precedents that will inform their future work and enhance their understanding of the built environment,
2. Engage students in conversations about the built environment and its relationship to societal structures and cultural aspirations, and
3. Strengthen students' powers of observation by close study and analysis of the world around them.

Those students who successfully complete the course will be able:

1. Describe the inspirational nature of designed work,
2. Make connections between human perception and the intellectual/aesthetic concerns of architecture,
3. Describe and catalog the language employed in architectural design,

4. Demonstrate how the built environment reflects the cultural aspirations of a community, and
5. Take effective visual and textual notes to communicate ideas and concepts to those within the architectural community as well as to the general public.

Required course materials:

Course Text

- Goldberger, Paul. *Why Architecture Matters*. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press), 2023 (print and e-book copies available at the bookstore; e-book available for loan through the GT Library). NB: the 2011 edition is also acceptable.
- Additional readings will be provided on Canvas in the appropriate module.
- Moleskine Cahier journals, set of three, Large (5" x 8.25"), plain paper (available at the bookstore)
- Watson-Guption Sketchbook, Large (8.5" x 11"), plain paper (or similar) (available at the bookstore)
- Faber-Castell Goldfaber Sketching Pencil Set (or similar)
- Pilot Precise Rollerball pen, black (V5/V7)

Additional Materials/Resources

The Moleskine journals are the required submission format for assignments. The interior pages must be plain, but students may choose any color of outer cover (and may also customize their journals). When selecting the pencil set, students should (at minimum) purchase four pencils (one each of 2H, HB, B, and 2B), a pencil sharpener, a dust-free plastic eraser, and a pouch or bag to store your items. The exact brands above for the sketchbook and pencil set are not required. Students may select any rollerball pen brand (such as Pilot Precise, Pilot V-Ball, Uni-Ball Vision, etc.), but the Pilot Precise pen is inexpensive and recommended for its overall quality. While the Uni-Ball Vision pen is acceptable, the standard Uni-Ball pen is NOT recommended. Students should NOT select a ball-point pen.

The first two items on the list of materials can be found on the bookstore website, though you can also purchase the last four items at art stores (including Blick Art Materials in Midtown at 878 Peachtree Street NE).

If you are interested in additional books or movies, please visit the Resources for New Architecture Students module in Canvas.

Grading policy:

Work will be graded on a 20-point system using the rubrics found in Canvas and then weighted according to the following percentages of the final course grade. Assignments are weighted as follows:

Assignment. Due Date. Weight

Visual Notes #1. Wednesday, September 11. 15%

Visual Notes #2. Wednesday, October 2. 15%

Visual Notes #3. Wednesday, October 23. 15%

Visual Notes #4. Wednesday, November 20. 15%

Final Project. Friday, December 6. 30%

Attendance/Participation. ongoing. 10%

Your final grade will be assigned as a letter grade according to the following scale:

Letter Grade. Percentage. Learning Objectives

A. 90-100%. Exceeded Learning Objectives; exceptional work

B. 80-89%. Fully Met Learning Objectives; very good work

C. 70-79%. Partially Met Learning Objectives; good work

D. 60-69%. Failed to Meet Learning Objectives even though work was completed; passing work

F. 0-59%. Failed to meet Learning Objectives in a significant way; failing work

No extra credit will be given. All assignments must be completed to receive a passing grade in the class. Incompletes will be granted only under extraordinary circumstances and require a meeting, either remote or in person, of the student and the instructor.

Attendance policy:

- Active Participation at all class meetings is mandatory and crucial to successful completion of the class. Attendance is the precondition of active participation; together they count for 10% of your course grade. You must be in class sessions on time. Each instance of tardiness counts as 70% of one class attendance. Students who arrive late must check in at the end of the class session with a TA to receive credit for attendance.
- Absences will be excused only for medical or family emergencies or for Institute-approved events and religious holidays documented in writing. You must notify your instructor in writing during the first two weeks of the semester about any anticipated absences for religious holidays. Absences due to special and/or unforeseen circumstances must be discussed with the instructor as early as practically possible.

- If you are sick, you should not attend class. If you are not feeling well, you will have one excused absence due to illness. To qualify as an excused absence, you must contact the TA in ADVANCE of the class session. Any additional absences due to illness must be approved by the instructor (not the TA) in advance of the class session.

Academic honesty/integrity statement:

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. All work submitted must be original and properly cited. Plagiarism, cheating, or any form of academic dishonesty will result in immediate consequences as outlined in the university's academic integrity policy.