

ARCH1060 Syllabus

Introduction to Design and the Built Environment, 3 credit hours
Fall 2026

Instructor Information

Instructor

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General Course Information

Description

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

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. Additionally, as a Foundational Course for the Leaders in Progress and Service degree designator, this course will also introduce students to the range of complex societal and environmental problems that architects can address through their work, as well as the practice and ethical problems within the discipline of architecture.

Although the course is required for all undergraduate architecture students, it is also open to students in other majors. It is also a foundational course for Tech's Leaders in Progress and Service initiative.

Course Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Make connections between human perception and the intellectual/aesthetic concerns of architecture,
2. Take effective visual and textual notes to communicate ideas and concepts to those within the architectural community as well as to the general public,
3. Integrate multiple perspectives in defining complex problems,
4. Reflect on their identities as professionals, and
5. Describe how their actions as professionals impact society.

Required Course Materials

Course Texts (all required course readings will be provided in Canvas or available at no cost through the Georgia Tech Library):

- Adams, et al (1986). *An Introduction to First Year Design Studio*. Tulane University School of Architecture.
- McGuigan, C. (4 February 2020). "Will the White House Order New Federal Architecture to be Classical?" *Architectural Record*.
- Bermudez, J. (19 April 2019). "How do we responsibly rebuild Notre Dame?" *The Hill*.
- Kimmelman, M. (13 January 2014). "The Museum With A Bulldozer's Heart," *New York Times*.
- Nugent, C. (21 October 2020). "The Climate is Breaking Down. Architect Bjarke Ingels Has a Masterplan for That," *TIME*.

Additional Materials/Resources:

- Pacific Arc Sketchbook, softcover (5.6" x 8.2"), 130 gsm plain paper (64 pp.)
- Watson-Guption Hardbound Sketchbook (8.5" x 11"), plain paper (or similar)
- Faber-Castell Goldfaber Sketching Pencil Set (or similar)
- Pilot Precise Rollerball pen, black (V5/V7)

The first two items on the materials list can be found on the bookstore website. All four items can be purchased at art stores (including Blick Art Materials in Midtown at 878 Peachtree Street NE).

The Pacific Arc Sketchbook is required to submit your Visual Notes assignment (see below). The interior pages must be plain with a Kraft outer cover (a Black cover is acceptable but not preferred). The exact brands above for the hardbound sketchbook and pencil set are not required. 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. 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.

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 using the rubrics found in Canvas. Assignments are grouped into four overall categories and are weighted as follows:

- Beginning as an Architecture Student (20% of total grade)
 - Visual Notes assignment (15%)
 - Attendance and Participation (5%)
- Developing Your Professional Identity (25% of total grade)
 - Discussion Posts and Self-Assessment (5%)
 - Professional Interview (10%)
 - Professional Reflection (10%)
- Understanding the Challenges of Contemporary Practice (25% of total grade)
 - Four Reading Responses (20%)
 - Integrated Case Studies Matrix (5%)
- Understanding the Trade-Offs of Practice (30% of total grade)
 - Professional Case Study Matrix (20%)
 - Professional Case Study Reflection (10%)

Description of Graded Components

Beginning as an Architecture Student

The Visual Notes assignment will help students to hone their skills of looking at the world around them and understand how we engage in and experience the built environment. Through this assignment, students will also develop their visual and textual communication skills. Associated learning outcomes: #1 & #2.

Developing Your Professional Identity

In these assignments, students will gain a deeper understanding about the profession of architecture. The assignments will also ask students to reflect on their interests in the field and how they imagine engaging with architecture in the future. Associated learning outcomes: #4 & #5.

Understanding the Challenges of Contemporary Practice

In the reading responses, students will be asked to take a position on a range of issues in contemporary architectural practice. The integrated case studies matrix provides an opportunity for students to reflect on a set of case studies presented by practicing architects. Associated learning outcomes: #1, #3, & #5.

Understanding the Trade-Offs of Practice

Students will examine a range of professional case studies and work in groups to understand the many trade-offs that must be made in the practice of architecture. The reflection provides an opportunity to consider what has been learned over the course of the semester and how their thinking about architecture has evolved as a result. Associated learning outcomes: #2, #3, and #5.

In lieu of a final exam, the two reflection assignments above will be due during the final exam period assigned for this course. These assignments will be submitted in Canvas and not in-person.

Grading Scale

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 with a passing grade in the class.

USG Required Course Policies

Attendance and/or Participation

Active participation at all class meetings is mandatory and crucial to successful completion of the course. Attendance is a precondition of active participation together they count for 5% of your course grade. You must be in class sessions on time. Each 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 Integrity

Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. Review [Georgia Tech's Honor Code](#) and the student [Code of Conduct](#).

Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarism on a quiz, exam, or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

Core IMPACTS

This course is NOT a Core IMPACTS course as defined by the University System of Georgia.

Additional Georgia Tech Required Policies

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, [contact the Office of Disability Services](#) (404-894-2563) as soon as possible to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also e-mail me as soon as possible in order to set up a time to discuss your learning needs.

Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement

At Georgia Tech, we believe that it is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. [The Student-Faculty Expectations](#) articulate some basic expectations that you can have of me and that I have of you. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. Therefore, I encourage you to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech while in this class.