



Edgar J. Kaufmann house, "Fallingwater," under construction.  
Courtesy of Avery Library Drawings and Archives

## Modern Architecture in the World

ARCH UN3117 Spring 2021 Tu Th 1:10-2:25

Lecture Zoom Discussion Sec 1 Diana 504, Sec 2 Milbank 227, Sec 3 Altschul 303

### Professor

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### Teaching Assistants

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### Office Hours

Professor: M 12:00-2:00, or by appointment

Teaching Assistants: TuTh 2:30-3:30

## Course Description

How has architecture been “modern”? This course will introduce students to this contentious and contradictory concept emerging across the world during a time in which ideas and tools similar to ours were used for seeing and ordering constructed environments and architectural thinking. It introduces students to the history of modern architecture as an art of building as well as a discursive field, whose historical consciousness played a part in its historical development. Students will learn about the following things (via the structures and institutions through which they were recorded):

Architecture as made, thought, and taught—as enmeshed with power and ideas, social concerns, intellectual and public debates, and diverse forms of cultural production  
Makers, thinkers, and organizers of the designed or built environment  
Material ends and means of extraction, refinement, trade, labor, and construction  
Sites, institutions, media, events, and practices which have come to hold meaning in architectural discourse  
Cultural concerns with the future *and* the past as a basis for architectural theory  
Modernity, modernism, and modernization as drivers for past events as well as their historical narration  
The conceptual writing practices of history, theory, criticism, and revision.

The course is structured chronologically, but rather than presenting a survey of buildings, events, and people, it encourages experiential learning around episodes that informed the development of the built environment and the architecturally “modern.” Students will gain hands-on practice in researching and writing architectural history, theory, and criticism: skills that lie at the basis of conceptual architectural practices.

The components of the course are designed to accommodate multiple styles of learning. These include weekly class lectures and small-group student-led discussions of assigned readings, research and writing assignments designed to allow students to pursue individual interests and develop different types of skills, class visits to Avery Library to work with the collections and specialists, and a class excursion to Philadelphia to visit sites relevant to the historical period we are studying. Critical thinking and reading skills are required for this course, but there are no prerequisites.

## Student Learning Objectives

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

Demonstrate in discussion and writing a critical understanding of modernity, modernization, and modernism in histories of architecture, based on lectures, readings, and individual research.  
Conduct detailed image research and position architectural historical images discursively in writing and presentations, making full use of the material and digital resources of Avery Library.  
Synthesize themes in assigned readings, write brief provocations in response, lead and participate in peer-led research-based debate, articulate and argue original ideas, and exercise a robust practice of spoken and written citation, in weekly discussions.  
Research and write critically, creatively, and rigorously in multiple modes that reflect conceptual practices in architecture, in three major assignments.

## Course Requirements, Evaluation, and Grading

For explanation, see “ASSIGNMENTS” section below.

<i>Participation and overall academic contribution</i>	10%
<i>Reading Responses</i>	15%
<i>Assignment 1: Analytical Essay</i>	25%
<i>Assignment 2: Edited Dialogue</i>	25%
<i>Assignment 3: Exhibition Proposal</i>	25%

## Course Structure and Schedule

<u>01</u>	<u>Tu Jan 12</u>	<u>Modern architecture in the world</u>	
Lecture.			
<u>02</u>	<u>Th Jan 14</u>	<u>Colonialism</u>	
Lecture 18c.			
<u>03</u>	<u>Tu Jan 19</u>	<u>Industrialization</u>	
Lecture 18-19c.			
<u>04</u>	<u>Th Jan 21</u>	<u>Empire</u>	
Lecture 19c.			
<u>05</u>	<u>Tu Jan 26</u>		
Discussion.			
<u>06</u>	<u>Th Jan 28</u>	<u>Archive I</u>	
Avery Library. Lecture 19c. Guests: Jennifer Gray, Pamela Casey, Teresa Harris (Avery Library).			
<u>07</u>	<u>Tu Feb 2</u>	<u>Institutions</u>	
Avery Library. Lecture and Tour 18-21c. Guests: Jenny Davis (Avery Library).			
<u>08</u>	<u>Th Feb 4</u>	<u>Archive II</u>	
Avery Library. Lecture 19c. Guests: Jennifer Gray, Pamela Casey, Teresa Harris (Avery Library).			
<u>09</u>	<u>Tu Feb 9</u>		<u>Assignment 1 DUE</u>
Discussion.			
<u>10</u>	<u>Th Feb 11</u>	<u>War</u>	
Lecture 19c.			
<u>11</u>	<u>Tu Feb 16</u>		
Discussion.			
<u>12</u>	<u>Th Feb 18</u>	<u>Modernism</u>	

Lecture 19-20c.

13                      Tu Feb 23

Discussion.

14                      Th Feb 25              Revolution

Lecture 19-20c.

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SPRING RECESS

15                      Tu Mar 9

Discussion.

16                      Th Mar 11              Urbanization

Lecture 19-20c.

17                      Tu Mar 16

*Assignment 2 DUE*

Discussion.

18                      Th Mar 18              Infrastructure

Lecture 20c.

19                      Tu Mar 23              Archive III

Canadian Centre for Architecture. Lecture 20c. Guests: TBD.

20                      Th Mar 25              Partition

Lecture 20c.

21                      Tu Mar 30

Discussion.

22                      Th Apr 1              Globalization

Lecture 20c.

23                      Tu Apr 6

Discussion.

24                      Th Apr 8              Development

Lecture 20c.

25                      Tu Apr 13

Discussion.

26                      Th Apr 15              Migration

Lecture 20-21c.

Th Apr 22

*Assignment 3 DUE*

## ASSIGNMENTS

Submit assignments as instructed. No late submissions accepted except for students registered to receive academic accommodations or in cases of emergency.

### *Participation and overall academic contribution*

10%

Participation requirements include consistent and punctual attendance, attentiveness in class, thoughtful and respectful interaction, and timely production of assignments. Overall academic contribution refers to diverse forms of dedication to the classroom and the peer learning experience.

While students will build skills to develop a dialogue around assigned material, speaking in class is only one method for this dialogue. Others include: supporting peers through careful listening and sharing notes on readings and class discussions, citing ideas that others have put forth in discussion, writing down questions in advance of asking them, participating in group study outside the classroom, attentive notetaking in class or during preparatory reading, visiting reference librarians in home institution or others, attending professor's office hours, discovering and sharing resources. Attending to the ideas of others is a form of academic contribution as important as expressing your own. This course welcomes and encourages students who learn in different ways, and encourages diverse forms of participation within and beyond the classroom.

### *Weekly Assignment: Reading Response DUE on MONDAYS 24 hours before discussion*

15%

Format: Post in thread using the "Reply" button below the previous post  
Bibliography (citation of texts used)  
Image (curated from reliable archival or scholarly source)  
Caption (including bibliographic citation of texts used)  
Written response (150 words or fewer)

Each week, you will be assigned a prompt in conjunction with the readings, inviting you to respond to a question on the text(s), to study a building, spatial practice, or aspect of architecture culture, or to conduct image research in books in Avery Library or in the Barnard and Columbia Libraries online database. (The texts under "Resources" in this syllabus and the [Avery Library research guides](#) will help you start to find image-rich books or online resources.) Reading responses should be analytical and present a provocation, which will be used to generate discussion in peer-led small group meetings.

### *Grading Rubric*

- + Response is well written and raises the level of the discussion. It makes a clear argument or intervention, and synthesizes/cites work by authors discussed in course, lectures, peers' or instructors' ideas in previous discussions, or independent research.
- / Response is thoughtful and demonstrates engagement with the reading.
- Response has been submitted.

### *Assignment 1: Analytical Essay*

25%

Format: One PDF (Filename format: Last Name\_First Name\_Assignment\_Draft)  
Title page (title, name, date, name of course, semester)  
Text body (1,000 words) and images (3 maximum) with captions (including full bibliographic citation)  
Bibliography

How do scholars approach the writing of history about architecture and the built environment? To explore this, begin by reading the following:

Anderson, Christy. "Writing the Architectural Survey: Collective Authorities and Competing Approaches." *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, "Architectural History 1999/2000," Vol. 58, No. 3 (September 1999): 350-355.

*Optional*

Okoye, Ikem Stanley. "Architecture, History, and the Debate on Identity in Ethiopia, Ghana, Nigeria, and South Africa." *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 61, No. 3 (2002): 381-96.

Cheng, Irene, Charles L. Davis II, and Mabel O. Wilson. "Racial Evidence." *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 76 No. 4 (December 2017): 440-442.

James-Chakraborty, Kathleen. "Architecture, Its Histories, and Their Audiences." *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 77 No. 4 (December 2018): 397-405.

After reading the essay(s), skim through the survey text *Architecture since 1400*. Select a building, figure, media object (such as a film or journal), or architectural event or theme that interests you, which appears in the book. Read and analyze the author's approach to the item you have selected, keeping in mind ideas about surveys, history, debate, evidence, and identity raised in the essays above. (For instance, think of Anderson's claim, "Every survey of architecture begins from a belief in what is good, admirable, and essential in the history of building," or Cheng, Davis, and Wilson's, "To understand the role of racial thought in shaping modern architecture, it is not enough to incorporate objects, buildings, and designers from Asia, Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East into our canonical histories. We must also contend with...the creation of ideologies of human difference and inequality—and how this history of racialization shaped the very definition of what it means to be modern.")

After reading about your chosen subject in *Architecture since 1400*, find another scholarly secondary source that discusses it. Examples include a scholarly book or peer-reviewed essay found in Avery or Barnard libraries, or a video or podcast of a scholar giving a talk on the subject. For a list of texts to help you start, see the "Resources" section of this syllabus, especially "Secondary Research Resources" and "Bibliography." See also the notes and bibliography of *Architecture since 1400*. Write a 1,000-word essay that analyzes the treatment of your chosen subject by both sources.

*Grading Rubric*

- A Paper is well written and comparison of two authors' approaches to the subject produces insight into the subject and its historical context, and may link to a broader historiography. Images are well-selected, and the text directly engages imagery, offering historical analysis of images if possible.
- B Paper is well written and uses images effectively. Comparison of two author's approaches to the subject produces insight into the subject.
- C Paper is well written and analyzes two authors' approaches to the subject.
- D Paper has been submitted but does not meet standards set out in the rubric above.

Assignment 2: Edited Dialogue

25%

Format: One PDF (Filename format: Last Name\_First Name\_Assignment\_Draft)

Title page (title, name, date, name of course, semester)

Brief paragraph introducing object of discussion and partner, with any background information necessary

Text body (1,500 words) and images (3 maximum) with captions (including full bibliographic citation)

Annotated bibliography, minimum 3 scholarly sources

Partner's signed statement that reads: "I permit [name] to record, transcribe, and edit our discussion dated [date], for academic purposes only, not for citation, distribution, or publication. I have [approved/waived approval of] the final version of this text."



How does discourse change an understanding of architectural history? How does it help to theorize architecture? To explore these questions, select from the following list an object that interests you, which you can visit in person, and which is also the subject of a minimum of three scholarly sources:

- a drawing, building, film, book, journal, or other form of media appearing in *Architecture since 1400*
- an object in Avery Classics or Drawings & Archives
- a reading on the syllabus
- an alternate artifact or text approved by the professor

The selected object is a primary source for architectural historical understanding, and the secondary literature will help to put it into context.

After you study the object and read the secondary literature, select a partner with whom to discuss the object, your analysis, and your secondary research. You may select a classmate, a friend, a relative, or any other interlocutor who you would like to talk with, whether an expert or novice in the subject. What matters most is that this must be a person you wish to talk to, learn from, and spend time with. Your partner must consent to and sustain a discussion of not more than thirty (30) minutes on the object of your focus. During or prior to the discussion, you may visit your selected object with your partner or examine your images of it together. This dialogue must demonstrate your knowledge, so it may help to refer to questions or discussion points you have noted in advance.

Record, transcribe, and edit one or more segments of the recording into a 1,500-word essay, supplemented with appropriate images. Transcription of a 30-minute dialogue can take two or more hours. Prior to starting the work of transcription (either during the actual discussion or during a preliminary review of the recording), it is best to notate the time-stamp of segments you wish to transcribe. Supplement the edited dialogue with citations of your secondary literature. You may modify the text for a more coherent written product, but edits to your partner's words require written permission or waiver of approval.

### *Grading Rubric*

- A Paper captures a discourse that demonstrates close study of the object and scholarship on it, and the discussion situates the object in its historical and institutional context. In its edited written form, the dialogue is organized to foreground insights and argumentation raised in the discussion itself or in the author's added commentary. The author demonstrates research through citations of secondary literature during the discussion itself, or added as footnotes into the edited text. Partner is well chosen (for example, facilitates an insightful discussion that is compelling and easy to follow, or adds a historically or theoretically meaningful perspective). Images are well selected to promote detailed discussion, and the discussion and/or edited text is motivated by and reflects directly on the selected images.
- B Paper captures an interesting conversation, and moves between discussion of the material object and ideas in the secondary research to come to new insights about the object and its historical, institutional, social, or political context. Paper includes some (but not all) of the factors contributing to an 'A' paper, noted above.
- C Paper is well written and provides substantial information on the object of study, based on direct observation and secondary research.
- D Paper has been submitted but does not meet standards set out in the rubric above.

### Assignment 3: Exhibition Proposal

25%

Format: One PDF (Filename format: Last Name\_First Name\_Assignment)

Title page (title, name, date, name of course, semester)

Text body (2,000 words), including:

Concept statement

Rationale for site selection

List of objects  
 Source collections  
 Wall text for 3 objects  
 Images (3 minimum, 5 maximum), curated from reliable source, with captions (full citation)  
 Exhibition(s) visited for research (exhibition title, institution, running dates, date of visit) with photograph  
 (include descriptive caption, date, photographer) and written response (150 words or fewer)  
 Annotated bibliography, minimum 5 scholarly sources

How does architecture work at the level of ideas or in public discourse? To explore this, begin by visiting at least one exhibition of your choice, on or related to architecture. (You may visit permanent collections or special exhibitions, in New York or elsewhere.)

Research and propose the concept for an exhibition. Include artifacts for display and logic for a site—institutional, environmental, or other—which work together to execute the exhibition concept and articulate a discursive intervention. Objects must be curated from one or more source collections. Research into the history of the collections and the provenance of the artifacts should inform the overall exhibition concept. The wall text must be brief, informative, and targeted toward the expected audience. (Think about whether the exhibition and site will attract general or specialized audiences.) As you work, imagine: is this an exhibition you would like to visit?

### *Grading Rubric*

- A Paper is well written, and demonstrates excellent secondary research on the subject matter and primary research in the visit to an exhibition. Selected artifacts and site extend the conceptual impact of the exhibition. Exhibition provides an extension or a critique of the existing historical discourse on a subject through its specific combination of research and execution. Examples of discursive interventions include but are not limited to: the histories or counter-histories raised by the overall concept, the understanding of the past or future suggested by the site, or the curation of particular artifacts (for example, in accounting for their provenance, the history of their source collections, or the media selected for visual representations of architecture). The wall text conveys these deeper understandings and engages the expected audience appropriately.
- B Paper is well written and demonstrates extensive secondary research. Selected artifacts and site extend the conceptual impact of the exhibition.
- C Paper is well written and exhibition concept statement, selected artifacts, and selected site execute a clear logic.
- D Paper has been submitted but does not meet standards set out in the rubric above.