Advanced Graduate Architectural Design 3

ARC 6356

Credits: 6

Term: Fall 2021

Studio Meeting: Tuesdays and Thursdays (times to be arranged)

Instructor: Martin Gold

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Course Syllabus

Architecture as Context

*Architecture is bound to situation, and I feel like the site is a metaphysical link, a poetic link, to what a building can be.* – Steven Holl

*I don’t divide architecture, landscape and gardening; to me they are one.* – Luis Barragán

*We do not create the work. I believe we, in fact, are discoverers.* – Glenn Murcutt

*I started out trying to create buildings that would sparkle like isolated jewels; now I want them to connect, to form a new kind of landscape, to flow together with contemporary cities and the lives of their peoples.* – Zaha Hadid

*We don’t have preconceived ideas; we work, we analyze, we read, we step into projects knowing that we’re not the first ones there.* – Elizabeth Diller

*It’s very easy to be different, but very difficult to be better.* – Jonathan Ive

*If you have total freedom, then you are in trouble. It’s much better when you have some obligation, some discipline, some rules. When you have no rules, then you start to build your own rules.* – Renzo Piano

Course Description

Advanced Graduate Architectural Design 3 studio introduces students to the challenges and rigors of developing a philosophical position and research-based design process as the foundation for a career in architectural design and practice. Emphasis concentrates on cultivating self-directed speculation, analytical thinking, and synthetic design exploration within the framework of an organized studio program. The framed program anticipates incorporating multiple trajectories offered by previous courses both within and beyond the School of Architecture and students are encouraged to draw from this knowledge. Students will begin to develop authorship positions and self-directed processes to produce compelling architectural proposals in response to the studio program. Students are expected to develop their ideas philosophically, conceptually, and architecturally to schematic design phase (SD) levels of completion that demonstrate a strong foundation in critical thinking and the translation of ideas into architectural proposals. Students are encouraged to use this comprehensive course to germinate personal scholarship and to develop individual perspectives that will be expanded in their Masters Research Project in the following year and will provide an important foundation for their career as architects.

An introductory three-week long assignment will establish the conceptual and practical frames of reference for the investigations and design proposals for the remainder of the term. Research and analysis, framed and reframed through design synthesis, will provide the intellectual and inspirational foundation from which the students will develop architectural responses to program, place, and time.

The primary studio project will investigate relations among the public realm (civic space), modern culture, ecological context, human mortality and the funerary chapel as a cultural architectural typology. Students are asked to question memory and memorial in both specific contemporary cultures through the design of a new funerary chapel that is inspired by the lives that have been lived and inspires those that will live on with the memories of loved ones who have passed on from our physical realm.

What is the ritual of death in our cultures as both an inevitability and as a symbolic measure of life? And, as a place of ritual, and cultural marker in the urban fabric, how should this place be inhabited, perceived, and embodied as architecture? The majority of the semester will be devoted to developing philosophical and cultural positions on funerary rituals and how those ideas can be translated in architectural proposals. These issues will guide contextual analysis in terms of siting the project and operate through the organization, materiality, climate response, light, and detailing at the schematic level of design.

Pedagogic Objectives

1. To engage students in context analysis, architectural programming other pre-design activities as primary generators affecting design processes;
2. To encourage and refine speculative procedures of investigative production and collaboration as an integral component of design activity;
3. To intersect architectural disciplinary modalities and thinking with broader cultural developments and contextual responses as fundamental design skills;
4. Translate philosophical and conceptual ideas into architecture through comprehensive design including technical documentation incorporating life safety and accessibility;
5. To nurture independent and critically aware graduate students with strong visual, verbal and written communication skills.

Pedagogic Methods

1. Making the familiar unfamiliar – finding the extraordinary within the ordinary and challenging ‘known’ contexts as places of renewed speculation and inspiration.
2. Engaging modalities of individually motivated inquiry and comprehensive design that is based on a variety of related precedents and best practices.
3. Emphasis is placed on visual communication, self-assessment and critique to establish and convey intellectual positions, frames of reference, and architecturally appropriate responses to the cultural and contextual issues introduced within a given project.

Pedagogic Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Construct motivating narratives to direct and qualify design objectives. Ground these objectives in research, reflection, and iterative design studies.
2. Shape program and built form to embody, communicate, and/or express the design intent. Respond to the motivating ideas and issues of the project program and its context.
3. Investigate the effects of a particular climate (light, heat, humidity, etc.) on the experience of architecture, and how tectonics can engage these climatic characteristics.
4. Translate ideas into buildings that have sophisticated architectural definition, including clear structural ideas, circulation strategies, exterior envelopes, life safety systems, and specific material qualities.
5. Deploy architectural components both pragmatically and poetically.
6. Make appropriate public places that are responsive to specific programmatic objectives as well as context.
7. Demonstrate visual and verbal communications skills necessary to communicate design intent.

Process

The semester is built around three interrelated investigations – context (site and culture), typological precedent, and inspired design proposals. Students will explore the physical and cultural context through site visits, field studies, precedent studies, stakeholder presentations and discussions, and traditional scholarly research. Students will develop philosophical and conceptual ideas that are both personal and drawn from the project context – these core ideas will provide the basis for master planning and architectural design. Students will use a hybrid design process including traditional sketching and schematic physical models along with CAD software, parametric plug-ins and other analysis software, and rendering software to translate contextually driven ideas into schematically resolved architectural proposals. The studio will require ever advancing design iterations that become more complex in their architectural detailing, philosophical exploration, and refinement of personal architectural vocabulary. Intermediate informal class reviews, desk critiques and formal presentations that include stakeholder meetings and academic critiques will be the primary evaluation mechanism of student work.

Three projects will be engaged to (1) move quickly into learning about the issues, concepts and ceremonies associated with death; (2) research and select an appropriate site for the location of the chapel as a civic element; and (3) engage the reciprocity between architectural form, program and context within the chapel and site.

Project 1 – Research, Analysis, and Program Proposals – 1.5 Weeks

Students will collectively and individually to research cultural perspectives on death and the ceremonies related to grieving and memorial and particular cultures of interest. Students will select precedent chapels to study in terms the architectural solution, relationship to site, and relationship to the cultural perspectives on death ceremony. This work will lead to a clearly developed conceptual proposal with diagrams and studies suggesting the necessary program elements for the new chapel and grounds.

Project 2 – Architectural Presence: Siting the Chapel – 2.5 Weeks

Students will survey multiple locations in and around Vicenza, Italy for a potential location for the chapel and rituals. Students will develop positions on site suitability with respect to cultural impact (presence in the urban fabric) and harmony with ceremony. Each student will select a site for further development. Diagrams and analysis of the site will include mappings, images, sketches, climate analysis, and the local context – streets and adjacencies.

Project 3 – Architectural Proposals: Funerary Chapel – 8.0 Weeks

Students will develop architectural proposals for a funerary chapel that draw from previous context diagrams, initial analysis, and case studies. The proposal will require site plans, plans, elevations, 3D models, orthographic architectural drawings, renderings and analytical diagrams that illustrate project parameters, strategies and tactics that support the architectural proposal.

Reading

Although there is no specific textbook for this course, selected tests will be required reading and made available either electronically or physically. In addition, recommended texts to support the work of the studio are also included:

Assigned Reading (download from class site):

* Built upon Love, Alberto Pérez-Gómez, The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 2008. (pp. 204-211)
* On Water and Dreams, Gaston Bachelard, translated by Edith Farrell, The Pegasus Foundation, Dallas, TX, 1983. (pp. 64-69, 71-80)
* The American Resting Place, Marilyn Yalom, Houghton Mifflin Company, NY 2008. (pp. 271-282)
* The Psychoanalysis of Fire, Gaston Bachelard, translated by Alan C. M. Ross, Beacon Press, Boston, MA, 1964 (pp. 13-20).
* The Good Funeral: Death Greif and the Community of Care, Thomas G. Long and Thomas Lynch, Westminster John Knox Press, Louisville, KY, 2013 (Chapter 3: Humanity 101).
* The American Resting Place, Marilyn Yalom, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Boston, MA, 2008 (excerpts).

Recommended Reading/Viewing:

* Carlo Scarpa: Architecture in Details, Maria Antoinetta Cripp, MIT Press, ISBN: 9780262031172
* Carlo Scarpa, Robert McCarter, Phaidon, 2021, Press, ISBN-10: 1838662928
* Funerary Chapels, Divisare, <https://divisare.com/funerary-chapels/top>
* The American Way of Death, Jessica Mitford, Simon and Schuster, New York, NY, 1963.
* <http://architizer.com/blog/crematoriums-and-mausoleums-the-architecture-of-death/>

Studio Culture

Students arriving directly from undergraduate programs or returning from practice to complete their professional degree should be familiar with studio culture. It is critical that students and faculty contribute to a positive, rigorous and focused environment that is both challenging and rewarding. At the graduate level, students must be self-motivated and contribute to studio inquiry, discourse and production. Faculty will set the agenda, provide a framework of reference materials, and will provide feedback, criticism and guidance to students. Students will proactively engage the issues set forward, advance the inquiry and work collaboratively and individually to develop a body of work derived from the studio agenda.

Evaluation Policy

Students are expected to be present and well prepared for all class sessions, group discussions, reviews, and field trips. Attendance at all studio meetings is required. Project briefs will outline the specific criteria to be used in evaluating student submissions. Students with three or more unexcused absences (see UF student code) may be dropped from the course and required to repeat it. This course will follow the University of Florida Grading Policy: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

Architectural criticism is fundamentally subjective. Students with inspiring ideas, that are well researched, developed, refined and well presented both graphically and verbally that exceed the project requirements will excel in this studio. Meeting the basic project requirements is the minimum expected for successful completion of the studio. The quality of work presented will be the basis for evaluation on an ongoing basis. Feedback will be given during regular course meetings and intermediate grades will be provided to students at important milestones in the semester.

**Evaluation weighting**

The work will be measured at the end of each project phase and the final grade will be calculated based the following weighting:

Project 1 15%

Project 2 25%

Project 3 65%

Assignment of letter grades will follow the criteria below:

A Outstanding work only

A- Excellent work - close to outstanding

B+ Very good work

B Good work thoroughly completed

B- Good work

C+ Slightly above average work

C Average work – meets minimum requirements

C- Average work – missing a few requirements

D+ Poor work with some effort – missing important requirements

D Poor Work – missing most of the requirements

E Inadequate work – missing all of the requirements

Please note that The University requires that a graduate student maintain a 3.0 (B) average to remain in good academic standing at the graduate level. Every possible effort is made to counsel students in academic difficulty to determine the cause and possible solution so that the student can continue and complete their studies in the University. Graduate design studio and support courses are organized within required course sequences that must be successfully completed to advance in the program.

Course Protocols

**Room and field use**

While at VIA facilities, since many students are working in the same room, it is essential that you work quietly and unobtrusively, and with respect for fellow student's work. Please clean up after you are finished working. Please note that Spray Painting anywhere on the VIA grounds is prohibited.

**Safety**

Please use every precaution in the studio. Please note that power tools are prohibited in the studio.

**Policy on Retaining Work**

Please note that the University of Florida, College of Design, Construction, and Planning policy states that student’s work may be retained indefinitely for academic purposes. You should be prepared for the instructor to ask that it be exhibited or photographed during or after the term. Having your work retained for photography or exhibition is evidence of its quality and value to the School. Not to worry, you will be able either to retrieve your original work or retrieve it temporarily to make copies or photograph it for your own personal purposes.

**Student Accommodations**

"Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. "

Faculty Contact

Martin Gold

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Office Hours: Open office Wednesdays and by appointment

Semester Calendar

This course will follow the VIA calendar for travel events and final reviews. Projects 1, and 2 will be due on Thursdays of their respective weeks:

Project 1: Due Thursday 9/2 during class.

Project 2: Due Thursday 9/23 during class

Project 3: Due Friday 12/03 (time to be announced).