HISTORY AND THEORY

Keller Easterling and Eeva-Liisa Pelkonen, Study Area Coordinators

This study area explores the relationship between design, history, and theory through a broad range of courses in which the analysis of buildings, cities, landscapes, and texts supports the articulation and criticism of fundamental concepts, methods, and issues. Historical and contemporary projects and writings are studied in context and as part of the theoretical discourse of architecture.

For entering M.Arch. I students who have not had significant prior architectural training, the pre-first-year visualization course (ARCH 1000) includes a broad survey of Western architectural history to the nineteenth century. For all M.Arch. I students, there is a first-year required survey course of nineteenth- and twentieth-century architectural history (ARCH 3011) followed in the second term by a required course on architectural theory (ARCH 3012).

In addition, M.Arch. I students must satisfactorily complete two elective courses from this study area that require at least a fifteen-page research paper. With the exception of courses in which a student elects to do a project in lieu of a research paper, or courses whose descriptions specifically indicate that they do not fulfill the History and Theory elective requirement, all elective courses in this study area fulfill this requirement. Provided a fifteen-page research paper is required, the elective courses ARCH 4222 and ARCH 4223 also fulfill this History and Theory elective requirement, although those listed from the Urbanism and Landscape study area cannot be used to satisfy both the History and Theory and the Urbanism and Landscape elective requirements. Courses in other study areas as well as courses offered at the University outside of the School of Architecture that include a research paper and cover an architectural history and theory topic may fulfill the History and Theory elective requirement provided a student requests and receives permission from one of the History and Theory study area coordinators qualifying that course to fulfill the requirement. One of the two required History and Theory electives should be in a non-Western subject.

For the M.Arch. II program, a sequence of three post-professional design research seminars is required (ARCH 3072, ARCH 3073, ARCH 3074) for students who will graduate in the spring term of 2022, and a sequence of two post-professional design research seminars is required (ARCH 3072, ARCH 3073) for students who will graduate in 2023. These focus on design as research and build to an individual project within a larger themed symposium in the final term of the program.

REQUARED COURSES

ARCH 3011a, Architecture and Modernity I: Sites and Spaces  Eeva-Liisa Pelkonen
(Required of first-year M.Arch. I students; available as an elective for M.Arch. II and M.E.D. students.) The course embraces the last century and a half’s history of architecture, when traditional fables began to yield to more scientifically conceived ideas of architecture’s role in the creation of civilizations. As architecture gained importance in advancing social and industrial agendas, it also built a basis for theoretical reflection and visionary aesthetics. The expanding print and media culture accelerated the migration of ideas and propelled architecture beyond its traditional confines. Discussion of major centers of urban culture and their characteristic buildings alternates with attention to individual concepts and their impact in an increasingly interconnected culture of design.  3 Course cr

ARCH 3012b, Architectural Theory  Marta Caldeira
(Required of first-year M.Arch. I and M.E.D. students; available as an elective for M.Arch. II students.) This course explores the history of Western architectural theory, from 1750 to the present, through the close reading of primary texts. Lectures place the readings in the context of architectural history; the texts are discussed in required discussion sections. Topics include theories of origin, type and character, the picturesque, questions of style and ornament, standardization and functionalism, critiques of modernism, as well as more contemporary debates on historicism, technology, and environmentalism.  3 Course cr

ARCH 3072a, Design Research I: Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives  Anthony Acciavatti
(Required of and limited to first-year M.Arch. II students.) This introductory class familiarizes students with a new skill set: how to conduct applied design research seen through the lens of each of the research perspectives taught in the program. In the process, students begin to develop their own research questions.  3 Course cr

ARCH 3073a, Design Research II: Cross-Disciplinary  
(Required of and limited to first-year M.Arch. II students.) This seminar requires students to explore an assigned theme based on urgent contemporary issues in architecture and urbanism, both through individual projects and as a group. Students also select thesis projects adjacent to the course theme to take into the subsequent post-professional seminar and post-professional design studio.  3 Course cr

ARCH 3074a, Design as Research III  Aniket Shahane
(Required of and limited to second-year M.Arch. II students.)  3 Course cr

ARCH 3091a, Methods and Research Workshop  Marta Caldeira
(Required of first-year M.E.D. students; available as an elective for M.Arch. I and M.Arch. II students with permission of instructor.) This course introduces students to methods of architectural writing and research, laying the groundwork for an advanced research project. By investigating various text genres, such as surveys, journalism, manifestos, scholarly essays, critical essays, and narratives, this course studies ways of writing about architecture, urbanism, and the environment. Recent debates concerning the relationship between architectural history and theory and the questions about disciplinary and interdisciplinary boundaries are explored. Working toward a
substantial research paper requirement, students are introduced to hands-on research through a series of library and archival workshops. Limited enrollment. 3 Course cr

ARCH 3092a or b, Independent M.E.D. Research  Staff
(Required of and limited to M.E.D. students in each term; credits vary per term, determined in consultation with the director of M.E.D. Studies.) The proposal submitted with the admissions application is the basis for each student's study plan, which is developed in consultation with faculty advisers. Independent research is undertaken for credit each term, under the direction of a principal adviser, for preparation and completion of a written thesis. The thesis, which details and summarizes the independent research, is to be completed for approval by the M.E.D. committee by the end of the fourth term. 3 Course cr

ELECTIVE COURSES

[ ARCH 3102, Topics in the History of Architecture after WWII ]
This seminar is concerned with the culture and practice of architecture in the second half of the twentieth century, from World War II to the end of the Cold War. In a period of major cultural and technological transformations, social shifts, ideological conflicts, and political upheavals, the theory and practice of architecture underwent important changes. Members of the seminar undertake a term-long individual research project on a topic of their choosing, culminating in a twenty-page term paper. Possible topics for investigation include the postwar critique of modern architecture; debates on monumentality, humanism, regionalism; architectural phenomena related to consumer society, corporate capitalism, mass media; the consequences of new urban dimensions, changing demographics, suburbanization; the impact of decolonization and the search for postcolonial identities; the pursuit of radical and experimental forms of design practice; the coalescence of postmodernism; architectural responses to issues of race and gender; the rise of environmental and planetary awareness; the inception of digital technology and culture; and much else. Class sessions alternate lectures, discussions, and presentations of research-in-progress, reflecting the collective interests of the class and focusing on topics of particular relevance today. Students are assumed to have some previous knowledge of the history of the period. Limited enrollment. 3 Course cr

ARCH 3103b, Introduction to Islamic Architecture  Kishwar Rizvi
Introduction to the architecture of the Islamic world from the seventh century to the present, encompassing regions of Asia, North Africa, and Europe. A variety of sources and media, from architecture to urbanism and from travelogues to paintings, are used in an attempt to understand the diversity and richness of Islamic architecture. Besides traditional media, the class makes use of virtual tours of architectural monuments as well as artifacts at the Yale University Art Gallery, accessed virtually. 3 Course cr

ARCH 3210a, Postmodern Reader  Peter Eisenman
3 Course cr

[ ARCH 3211, Architecture and Abstraction ]
Within an urban space increasingly governed by financial capital and its algorithms, abstraction is everywhere hypostatized into the material and immaterial spaces of our daily existence. Piet Mondrian's utopian vision of a world ruled by the aesthetics of abstraction is now finally realized. The course traces the history of abstraction in architecture from the advent of sedentary societies to today by focusing on pivotal moments: the rise of calculus; geometry and architectural drawing; the building of large-scale structures such as Egyptian pyramids and European cathedrals; the planning of monasteries and the engineering of infrastructure; the building of houses, glass houses, factories, and data centers. Limited enrollment. 3 Course cr

[ ARCH 3223, Parallels of the Modern ]
This seminar puts forward the argument that what many have accepted as the mutually exclusive discourses of tradition and innovation in the modern architecture of the first half of the twentieth century—respectively identified as the “New Tradition” and the “New Pioneers” by Henry-Russell Hitchcock in two articles in Architectural Record in 1928, and more elaborately in his Modern Architecture: Romanticism and Reintegration (1929)—in fact share common genealogy and are integral to an understanding of modern architecture as a whole. Lectures by the instructor develop this argument with reference to a diverse group of architects—some well-known and others less familiar. Limited enrollment. 3 Course cr

[ ARCH 3229, Urban History of Amazonia ]
The urban frontier in Amazonia is among the fastest growing in the world: 80 percent of it is “informal.” Under export-oriented, neo-extractivist policies, this trend is unlikely to revert. Nevertheless, scarce research has focused on the urban phenomenon in Amazonia. How can burgeoning forest cities be retrofitted/designed? Could urbanization be allied with forest resurgence in the region? Can environmental history and archaeology influence the way in which we approach Amazonian settlements? What can we learn from local communities? Could their ancestral knowledge be adapted to current needs and illuminate design? In this seminar, we critically probe current approaches to sustainability, aware that “green solutions” being advanced by the global north often demand further extraction of natural resources in the global south. We analyze the complex intertwining between global capitalism and Amazonia, as well as the critical role both are called to play in lieu of climate change. Limited enrollment. 3 Course cr

ARCH 3240a, Spatial Concepts of Japan: Their Origins and Development in Architecture and Urbanism  Yoko Kawai
The seminar explores the origins and developments of Japanese spatial concepts and surveys how they help form the contemporary architecture, ways of life, and cities of the country. Many Japanese spatial concepts, such as *ma*, are about creating time-space distances and relationship between objects, people, space, and experiences. These concepts go beyond the fabric of a built structure and encompass architecture, landscape, and city. Each class is designed around one or two Japanese words that signify particular design concepts. Each week, a lecture on the word(s) with its design features, backgrounds, historical examples, and contemporary application is followed
by student discussion. Contemporary works studied include those by Maki, Isozaki, Ando, Ito, SANAA, and Fujimoto. The urbanism and landscape of Tokyo and Kyoto are discussed. Students are required to make in-class presentations and write a final paper. Limited enrollment. 3 Course cr

ARCH 3256, Renaissance and Modern  
This course seeks to confront historical knowledge with speculation about the intentions of architectural designs and the nature of their realization. Drawing as much on the modern interest in cognitive processes as on selective reconstruction of historic moments, the course expects students to contribute to the debate between Peter Eisenman and Kurt Forster, read a limited series of texts, and focus their attention on the buildings that command center stage. The challenge resides in the effort to understand the beginnings of new ideas during the Renaissance, to grow aware of their evolution and consequences, without distorting their historical nature. The course continues in the spring term by taking a broad look at the twentieth century and then organizes itself around a few key phases in the formation of architectural consciousness, moving through the postwar debates to current dilemmas. The two terms are closely choreographed, but the courses can be taken separately. Students are expected to prepare for each session by studying the posted readings, the principal buildings and images that will be discussed, and preparing questions to be raised during the session. Students each submit a succinct account of their thinking on a building that is key to an understanding of Renaissance architecture. Limited enrollment. 3 Course cr

ARCH 3267a, Semiotics  
Francesco Casetti
Digging into semiotics tradition, the seminar provides analytical tools for "close readings" of a vast array of objects and operations, from verbal texts to all sorts of images, from cultural practices to all sorts of manipulation. Semiotics' foundational goal consisted in retracing how meaning emerges in these objects and operations, how it circulates within and between different cultural environments, and how it affects and is affected by the cultural contexts in which these objects and operations are embedded. To revamp semiotics' main tasks, after an introduction about the idea of "making meaning," the seminar engages students in a weekly discussion about situations, procedures, objects, and attributes that are "meaningful," in the double sense that they have meaning and they arrange reality in a meaningful way. Objects of analysis are intentionally disparate; the constant application of a set of analytical tools provides the coherence of the seminar. Students are expected to regularly attend the seminar, actively participate in discussions, propose new objects of analysis, present a case study (fifteen–twenty minutes), and write a final paper (max. 5,000 words). Enrollment limited to fifteen. Also FILM 833. Students from Film and Media Studies and the School of Architecture have priority: they are asked to express their choice by August 25. Students from other departments are asked to send the instructor up to ten lines with the reasons they why want to attend the seminar by August 26. The seminar is aimed at bolstering a dialogue that crosses cultures and disciplines. 3 Course cr

ARCH 3272b, Exhibitionism: Politics of Display  
Joel Sanders
Since their inception in the eighteenth century, art museums – prestigious buildings commissioned by those who wield power and influence – have behaved like cultural barometers registering changing attitudes about the role cultural institutions play in society. Looking at museum buildings from the inside out, this seminar traces the evolution of this building type through an in-depth analysis of its key architectural elements: gallery, interstitial (circulation, assembly, retail) and infrastructure (security/climate control) spaces, and site. This seminar explores how the spatial and material development of these tectonic components both mirrors and perpetuates changing cultural attitudes about aesthetics, class, power, wealth, nature, leisure, gender, body, and the senses as seen through the eyes of artists, architects, critics, collectors, and politicians. Topics include gallery spectatorship from the Renaissance picture frame to the modernist white cube; shifting sites from palace to park to repurposed industrial structures; urban renewal, gentrification, and the postwar museum; starchitecture and the trophy museum; cruising: museums as social condensers to see and be seen; multimedia artistic practices and information technologies; and new typologies, such as biennials, art fairs, private collections, and retail hybrids. Limited enrollment. 3 Course cr

ARCH 3280, Medium Design  
While usually focused on designing buildings, designers might also design the medium in which those buildings are suspended. Beyond associations with communication technologies, medium, in this context, means middle or milieu. Considering ground instead of figure, or field instead of object, medium design inverts some dominant cultural logics and offers additional aesthetic and political capacities for addressing intractable problems. Medium is assessed for latent properties that unfold over time and territory, propensities within a context, potentials in relative position, or the agency in arrangement, and like an operating system or a growth medium, it decides what will live or die. In this matrix of activity where it is easier to detect discrepancy, latency, temperament, and indeterminacy, right answers are less important than unfolding or branching sequences of response. Benefiting from an artistic curiosity about reagents and spatial mixtures or spatial wiring, medium design suggests different organs of design or different ways to register the design imagination. Beyond buildings, master plans, declarations, laws, or standards, it deploys multipliers, switches, or time-released organs of interplay like bargains and chain reactions. While not dominant, this habit of mind is ever-present in many disciplines and leads to readings that include Michel Foucault, Giorgio Agamben, Gilbert Ryle, Gilles Deleuze, Bruno Latour, J.J. Gibson, Marshall McLuhan, Harold Innis, Jacques Rancière, Walter Benjamin, Gregory Bateson, Vilem Flusser, Dunne and Raby, and John Durham Peters. An in-class presentation and final paper complete the requirements of the course. Limited enrollment. 3 Course cr

ARCH 3283b, After the Modern Movement: An Atlas of Postmodern  
Robert Stern
This course aims to answer the questions: What was and what is postmodernism in architecture? Postmodernism should not be seen as a style, but rather as a condition that arose out of the ahistorical, acontextual, self-referential, materialistic modernism that prevailed in the post-WWII era. By pushing aside history, context, and social concerns, modernism of that period exhausted itself of its potential, and restive architects incorporated figuration and representation as they sought to make the discipline more responsive to the wide expanse
of popular culture. However, postmodernism was not intended as a repudiation of modernism, but as an evolution and corrective action. The course is primarily concerned with architecture (as chronicled by Charles Jencks in his 1977 book, The Language of Post-Modern Architecture) and key texts by architects, such as Robert Venturi, Aldo Rossi, and James Stirling. Students explore a number of architects who have been overlooked and deserve renewed consideration. This seminar is motivated by conditions in contemporary practice, including the renewed interest in the postmodernism of the previous generation and in the return of precedent to the design process. Limited enrollment. 3 Course cr

ARCH 3290, Body Politics
COVID-19 underscores how public health and environmental justice are intimately related. This seminar explores the urgent need for transdisciplinary teams representing design, science, and the humanities to create safe, hygienic, accessible, and inclusive spaces that accommodate all bodies, including people of different races, genders, religions, and abilities that fall out of the cultural mainstream. Through in-depth analysis of everyday spaces—homes, workplaces, hospitals, museums—we look at how the conventions of architecture, transmitted through building typologies, standards, and codes, have marginalized or excluded persons who fall outside white, masculine, heterosexual, able-bodied norms. After analyzing each of these sites in their cultural and historical context, students generate innovative design proposals that allow a spectrum of differently embodied and culturally identified people to productively mix in a post-pandemic world. Limited enrollment. 3 Course cr

ARCH 3297b, From Shigeru Ban to Ikea: Designing Refugee Camps Esther da Costa Meyer
Ever since the UN declared shelter a “human right” in 1951, the number of refugee camps has escalated. Across the globe, NGOs, humanitarian organizations, and architects have been involved in designing provisional housing for refugees—a term that covers peoples displaced by ethnic, political, economic, and environmental reasons, both within and beyond their countries. Initially designed as temporary solutions, many are now the size of cities, in some cases with populations that have soared to half a million people. The number of refugees worldwide, currently set at about sixty-five million, is expected to grow rapidly, given the accelerating climate crisis. The camps themselves fall into different typologies. News organizations frequently report on the more recent ones—in Kenya, Syria, Jordan, Turkey, Bangladesh, Vietnam, and Pakistan. Older camps such as the Palestinian ones or Dadaab (Kenya), have become a permanent home to several generations of residents who, though born in the host country, are nevertheless stateless and thus extremely vulnerable. Less visible, but equally ubiquitous, are detention and internment facilities established by liberal democracies in Europe and Australia and at the U.S./Mexico border. This seminar analyzes refugee camps and detention centers from a transnational perspective, probing the limits and problems evident in different cases, as well as the state of exception and extraterritoriality that applies to all of them. It also studies disaster relief housing around the globe, sometimes built with the help of refugees. What metrics should we use to judge successful design? 3 Course cr

ARCH 3298b, Topics in the History of Architecture Education Joan Ockman
This seminar takes up a series of topics in the evolution of modern architecture education, addressing historical, institutional, and ideological formations and transformations that have taken place over the past two centuries. How have the changing norms and values of the profession, of higher education, and of modern society shaped attitudes and approaches to the architect’s training? Reciprocally, what kind of impact have architecture schools had on architects’ subsequent careers and on architectural practice and culture at large? By inserting the history of architecture education into the larger histories of architecture and of modernity, we aim to study the ways that schools function as communities of discourse and vehicles for the transmission of knowledge. As case studies drawn from North America and elsewhere reveal, the architecture school is more than a training ground for aspiring professionals; it is a site of negotiation — and often contestation — over the production and reproduction of future architecture. While our focus is not exclusively on alternative or “radical” educational programs, we will not fail to consider some of these, situating them in their wider context. Architecture schools have only recently begun to look at themselves in the mirror. Previously, when they were the subject of scholarly attention at all, it was often more in the spirit of hagiography than historiography. This seminar endeavors to bring a sharp, critical-historical lens to questions concerning architecture education past, present, and future. 3 Course cr

ARCH 3299a, Independent Course Work Joan Ockman
Program to be determined with a faculty adviser of the student’s choice and submitted, with the endorsement of the study area coordinator, to the Rules Committee for confirmation of the student’s eligibility under the rules. (See the School’s Academic Rules and Regulations.) 3 Course cr

ARCH 3300a, History, Historiography, Avant-Garde: Reading Manfredo Tafuri’s The Sphere and the Labyrinth Joan Ockman
Is the concept of an avant-garde still viable in architecture today? Or should it be consigned to the dustbin of modernist ideas? When did the avant-garde originate and how should its history be written? Manfredo Tafuri’s The Sphere and the Labyrinth: Avant-Gardes and Architecture from Piranesi to the 1970s was initially published in 1980. It remains the only sustained effort to define and historicize avant-garde theory and practice specifically in relation to architecture. The seminar undertakes a close reading of Tafuri’s rich, rewarding, and difficult book, beginning with the challenging methodological introduction, “The Historical ‘Project,’” and traversing a series of critical episodes from the eighteenth century to the late twentieth. Open to Ph.D. students and others with a strong background in architectural history. 3 Course cr

ARCH 3301b, New York as Incubator of Twentieth-Century Urbanism: Four Urban Thinkers & the City They Envisioned Joan Ockman
The seminar is constructed as a debate among the ideas of four urban thinkers whose influential contributions to the discourse of the modern city were shaped by their divergent responses to New York City’s urban and architectural development: Lewis Mumford (1895–
the rise of the sedentary family household marks an act of enclosure that fundamentally disturbed the pooling of resources that was traditionally available through communal living arrangements. This change in living arrangements has had profound implications for human behavior, economics, and social structures. The practice of environmental disturbance has been fundamental to human existence, yet within practices of ecological intensification, the human settlement has become more resilient against external shocks and more adaptable to changing conditions.

The premise of this joint seminar is to interrogate the human settlement through a critical genealogy of domestication and its relationship between textile arts and modernism, beginning with Henry van de Velde's and Adolf Loos's ideas about gendered wear and global, and our attitudes toward cultural appropriation. The readings in this segment range from Sven Beckert's prize-winning book "Empire of Cotton: A Global History" (2014) and Mahatma Gandhi's "Wheel of Fortune" (1922). The final segment is dedicated to the relationship between textile arts and modernism, beginning with Henry van de Velde's and Adolf Loos's ideas about gendered wear and spaces, followed by Constructivist micro-environments and the Bauhaus weaving workshops. The role of gender continues to be highlighted through a survey of significant collaborations between architects and designers, including Mies van der Rohe and Lilly Reich, Eliel and Loja Saarinen, Eero Saarinen and Alexander Girard, Sheila Hicks and Kevin Roche, and Rem Koolhaas and Petra Blaise.

ARCH 3302a, Tall Tales  Staff
Architecture is a body of fantastic lies. Speculative and projective, architectural production corrals, traffics in, and concocts imaginaries; its histories and theories are steeped in myth and regimes of mythmaking. This course provides space to interrogate the particular, ongoing, and mutating narratives, fictions, and myths perpetuated around the design, development, and material realization/construction of high-rise residential towers from the turn of the century to the start of what has been referred to as the Reagan era, alongside the various political, financial, and social agendas that motivated their development. The course aims to nurture modes of recognition of “housing” as critical loci where architectural form, federal and state power, municipal interactions of zone (zoning envelope, building volume, and air rights), finance, body, law, rhetoric, aesthetics, real estate development, and conceptions of racial difference come into view. The course reckons with typology and the seeming difficulty with imagining subjects racialized as black holding a position up in the sky.

ARCH 3303a, Theorizing Global Urbanism  Staff
From the beginning of the twentieth century to the present, urbanization has gradually come to dominate political, economic, social, and cultural landscapes of the contemporary world. To be urban was to be modern, and the development of modern social theory relied on using the city as its research laboratory. Two decades into the twenty-first century, features of urbanization such as density, resource extraction, environmental degradation, and intense social inequalities appear to be ubiquitous across different geopolitical conditions. This course presents students with a range of theories that attempt to make sense of the variegated and intersecting conditions that define contemporary urban localities. Building on the understanding offered by these theories, we conclude with an exploration of emerging positions, concepts, and propositions that enable new ways of understanding the centrality of urbanism within a world dominated by uncertainty, speculation, and dystopia.

ARCH 3304a, Japanese Gardens  Mimi Yiengpruksawan
Arts and theory of the Japanese garden with emphasis on the role of the anthropogenic landscape from aesthetics to environmental precarity, including the concept of refugium. Case studies of influential Kyoto gardens from the eleventh through fifteenth century, and their significance as cultural productions with ecological implications.

ARCH 3305a, Religion and Museums  Sally Promeay
This interdisciplinary seminar focuses on the tangled relations of religion and museums, historically and in the present. What does it mean to “exhibit religion” in the institutional context of the museum? What practices of display might one encounter for this subject? What kinds of museums most frequently invite religious display? How is religion suited (or not) for museum exhibition and museum education? Permission of the instructor required; qualified undergraduates are welcome.

ARCH 3312b, Textile Architectures: A Transhistorical and Global Perspective into Architectural Historiography  Eeva-Liisa Pelkonen
The seminar explores the intersection between textile arts and architectural historiography, with a goal of finding ways to conceive a more global and inclusive approach to architectural historiography. To be sure, textiles have been conceived around the globe for eons, and they are a ubiquitous part of dwellings, past and present. The seminar is organized around three parts: Prehistories, Textile Industry and Its Discontents, and Textiles and Modern Architecture. We begin by experimenting with various textile techniques identified by Semper in "Style in the Technical and Tectonic Arts" (1860/67) and explore his idea of how textiles evolved into the primary space-defining element. We consider his idea of the material “origins” of architecture and explore the prevalent tent typology and the portable architecture of early societies and of various nomadic tribes. The second segment discusses the role textile industry played in spreading capitalism and colonialism around the globe and creating conditions for slavery and economic disparity in its wake. On the brighter side we also see how the advent of textile industry has forged conversations about dignified labor, cultural identity, self-realization, and decolonialization and consider how global textile trade has sponsored knowledge transfer in a manner that makes us rethink boundaries between local and global, and our attitudes toward cultural appropriation. The readings in this segment range from Sven Beckert’s prize-winning book "Empire of Cotton: A Global History" (2014) and Mahatma Gandhi’s "Wheel of Fortune" (1922). The final segment is dedicated to the relationship between textile arts and modernism, beginning with Henry van de Velde’s and Adolf Loos’s ideas about gendered wear and spaces, followed by Constructivist micro-environments and the Bauhaus weaving workshops. The role of gender continues to be highlighted through a survey of significant collaborations between architects and designers, including Mies van der Rohe and Lilly Reich, Eliel and Loja Saarinen, Eero Saarinen and Alexander Girard, Sheila Hicks and Kevin Roche, and Rem Koolhaas and Petra Blaise.

ARCH 3313b, A Critical History of Domestication: The House  Pier Vittorio Aureli
The premise of this joint seminar is to interrogate the human settlement through a critical genealogy of domestication and its corresponding architectures and ecologies. Our main hypothesis is that domestication, the process by which our industrial, capitalist civilization has been produced, works on two registers: the house and the environment. From prehistory to contemporary times, the practice of environmental disturbance has been fundamental to human existence, yet within practices of ecological intensification, the rise of the sedentary family household marks an act of enclosure that fundamentally disturbed the pooling of resources that was
characteristic of premodern settlements. In other words, the logic of the house as primary enclosure initiated a transformation of the whole environment, with the domestication of crops and animals becoming an irreversible ecological turning point and an origin point for the patriarchal premises of both capitalism and colonialism. By studying the evolution of the household alongside changing practices of subsistence, this seminar locates the house and the environment as two fundamental sites of transformation.  3 Course cr

ARCH 3314b, Lightness and Modernity  Craig Buckley
The course probes the significance of lightness as a condition of architectural modernity. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the ancient requirement that architecture embody solidity was fundamentally transformed by new materials in which strength and stability could be achieved with relatively light and slender materials. Such material transformations were culturally ambivalent. Lightness was linked to ideas of dematerialization, taking to the air, and a new culture of transparency. Yet it was also associated with the loss of gravity, derealization, and rootlessness. While the elimination of extraneous weight has been associated with efficiency, nimbleness, and a judicious use of resources, it has also been mobilized in designs for warfare and colonization over the past two centuries. Students consider some of the major positions around the conception of “light modernity,” learn about key buildings and projects since the nineteenth century that have been defined by the problem of lightness, and critically examine differing historical claims about lightness. Key questions include: How was lightness conceptualized, imagined, valued at different historical moments? What material and economic relationships were necessary to the production of lightness? In which political and disciplinary frameworks did lightness emerge and unfold? How do arguments about lightness continue to inform contemporary debates about ecology, sustainability, and energy in the built environment today? There are no prerequisites. The course is intended for students in architecture, the history of art, and the environmental humanities.  3 Course cr

ARCH 3315a, Challenging the Classical  Kyle Dugdale
This course examines the problem of “the classical” in its contemporary context— not only as an exercise in the study of architectural history, but also as an attempt to come to terms with the claims of history upon the present, and of the present upon history. Recognizing that the unusually vivid architectural images that have impressed themselves upon the public imagination of America over the past few months are only the most recent evidence in a longer list of charges, the course examines accusations of Eurocentrism and elitism, of obsolescence, irrelevance, and historical naivete, and associations with totalitarianism and whiteness, along with questions of language, tectonics, and sustainability— aiming to introduce a range of new voices into a conversation that is, today, more critical than ever.  3 Course cr

Electives outside of School of Architecture

Courses offered elsewhere in the University may be taken for credit with permission of the instructor. Unless otherwise indicated, at the School of Architecture full-term courses are typically assigned 3 credits; half-term courses are assigned 1.5 credits. Students must have the permission of the History and Theory Study Area coordinators in order for a course to count as a history/theory elective.