ARCH 6340: Graduate Topics in Architecture SP 2017

CRN: 31495
Mark Baranski
Real Estate Finance & Development

Architecture and design are often challenged by certain limitations – the challenge for the architect is to derive solutions while working within, or around, these bounds. This course presents an introduction to the financial, zoning and other thresholds and limitations that every project faces. By providing a broad introduction to the non-architectural elements of Real Estate Development, particularly the fundamental principles of real estate finance, students will understand that these limitations are no different than others they have learned to manage. By understanding and anticipating these challenges, architects should be able to manage the process more efficiently and create better solutions.

Real Estate Finance & Development is a survey course and is intended to touch on all the multi-disciplinary elements common to real estate development, from site identification and feasibility through stabilization, sales and reversion. Students will learn the basic concepts of finance and will then transition into applying those concepts to a range of real estate scenarios. With that foundation in place, students will then explore the legal, municipal planning, construction and other inputs in the development process – and how these inputs impact the financial feasibility of projects.

CRN: 36000
Michelle Laboy
Architectural Ecologies: Interactions between Building and Landscape

This course introduces students to concepts from ecology that are prevalent in the contemporary discourse of architecture and landscape architecture, to provide critical context to the emergence of hybrid practices. Tracing the origins and meanings of ecology in these disciplines will elucidate emerging concepts, theories and modes of practice; and enable a critical examination into how architecture engages with landscape as a conceptual and physical space through performance, tectonics, and space. Students will examine writings and modes of representation by critical practices that engage productively with specific ecologies or landscapes to generate an architectural project, including work by Aalto (Finland), Siza (Portugal), Le Corbusier (France), Wright (Chicago), Weiss Manfredi (New York), Ishigami and SANAA (Japan); and extraordinary collaborations between architects and landscape architects: Eero Saarinen & Dan Kiley (Indiana), Mies van der Rohe & Alfred Caldwell (Detroit), Oscar Neimeyer & Roberto Burle Marx (Brasilia), Carlos Ferrater & Bet Figueras (Barcelona), Maryann Thompson & Michael Van Valkenburgh (New York + Massachusetts), Diller Scofidio + Renfro & Field Operations (New York). The course involves class discussions about readings and other media, visits to recently built works, and a research booklet of analytical writings and drawings.

CRN: 31054
Ivan Rupnik
The Project: Design Agendas in Contemporary Architectural Practice
This course will introduce students to the design agendas of contemporary architectural practice through the notion of the ‘project’. The concept of ‘project’ refers to a broader preoccupation of an architectural practice with a set of issues that at once inform specific works and are also informed by them. Instead of applying a theory onto these works, or taking the architects own claims as a given, the students will instead grapple with interviews, articles as well as specific works, built and unbuilt, in order to extract specific forms of disciplinary knowledge. Practices examined will include OMA, Herzog and de Meuron, SANAA, Atelier Bow-Wow, DS+R, NAADA, MOS and Landing Studio among others. In addition to weekly reading outlines and a final analytical paper, the course will also include visits to recent work by these practices.

CRN: 37714
Gavin Shatkin
Urban and Regional Policy on Developing Countries

This course explores the issues facing rapidly growing cities in the developing world, where by 2040 more than half of the world’s population will live. We start by analyzing the forces driving a country’s economic development and social change. We focus on urbanization in poorer countries: What causes rapid urbanization? Why are informal economies so pervasive, and how do governments approach this issue? What implications do increasing popular demands for involvement in decisions have for urban planning and policy? How do governments respond to globalization, with what distributional impacts? Finally, we address specific sectoral issues and approaches to urban planning and policy in such areas as housing, climate change and hazard preparedness, economic development, transportation, and urban design and public space.
Building Practice Exchanges: Modernism in the Middle East

Karim Jamal,1 architect to the Kuwait municipality, reviewed the foreign influence of architects and planners in the post-colonial Middle East and north Africa as an “imposition of Western technology onto an established Arab society,”2 which became the ground for “dumping Western type schemes (…) with no questions asked.”3

The development of the modern architect in the Middle East has been primarily influenced by the European models of the Ecole Polytechnique, and later the Bauhaus, the Swiss Technische Hochschule, and the Civic Design and Tropical Studies centers in Liverpool and London respectively. At the 8th Congress of the International Union of Architects (UIA), dedicated to “the training of architects” in 1965, scholar Abdel Baki Mohamed Ibrahim criticized these models and resultant principles of functionalism, purism, rationalism and expressionism in his presentation of the Egyptian case, describing them as being related to visual and superficial aspects of architecture. Ibrahim highlighted an individualism and self esteem among the “pioneers,” specifically CIAM group members in their roles as practitioners and professors, emphasizing the lack of integration between their practice and their “different philosophies and theories,” which he saw as the main reason for dropping the discipline into chaos. This “chaos of principles and theories” has, he suggested, left a young generation of Arab architects “not knowing their way through.”

These apparently correlated motivations that exist throughout Latin America to the Far East, remain at the threshold of architectural theory, postcolonial critique, and visual cultures studies. Reflecting on the post-WWII architectural production of “the Rest,”4 one cannot deny the formative role of these, which Edward Said refers to as Europe’s “cultural contestant, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other,”5 in developing the modern world. Taking the Middle East as case in point, this course seeks to shed a light on the often overlooked contribution of non-western architects in the architecture production from the 1950s to these days. Though it might be but a minor chapter in the production of this large part of the world, it serves nevertheless, as a counterpoint to the predominant narrative of a singular first-world influence on 20th Century architectural and urban development. This course links these different geographies and the Middle East via key figures of modernist architecture and urbanism from all over that practiced in this region, the Latin Affonso Reidy, the Africans Jean-François Zevaco and Sayed Karim, or the widely recognized Oscar Niemeyer, Hassan Fathy, Felix Candela, Geoffrey Bawa and Balkrishna Vithaldas Doshi. The course will concentrate the analysis on the projects and buildings of these and other architects, contextualizing the design practices and architectural intentions behind them.

1 BA at Colorado Univ. (1944), Tropical Studies at AA, PhD Planning Univ. College London.