ARCH 6330: SEMINAR IN MODERN ARCHITECTURE: ISSUES IN ARCHITECTURAL AND URBAN THEORY

Class meets at, M W, 11:45 am – 1:25 pm, at Forsyth Building 238
Professor Roy Kozlovsky         r.kozlovsky@neu.edu
Office hours: Tuesday 12:00 pm -- 4:00pm or by appointment     Office: 387 Ryder Hall
Course website on Blackboard at http://blackboard.neu.edu

OBJECTIVES:
The seminar intends to provide a panoramic view of major issues in contemporary architectural and urban theory during the three decades leading up to the present. Since contemporary architectural discourse is distinguished by its dialogue with other disciplines and their respective projects, this seminar provides the historical and theoretical background necessary for its contextualization and discussion, by juxtaposing architectural projects and text with paradigmatic texts that have defined the cultural field at large, and have often chosen architecture and urbanism as their privileged objects of analysis.

The course intends to provide the practice-oriented architect with a stage for critical discussion of the contemporary challenges and forces facing the profession, such as the proliferation of digital technologies, the social and political impact of globalization and rapid urbanization, and an arena for exploring the various strategies and positions to address these processes.

The course is structured into four sections, Discourse, Technology, and Urbanism

The first section, Discourse, explores the ways in which architecture, as a discipline, has repeatedly questioned its limits, modes of reasoning, its relation to other disciplines and to the social world. This process of self-introspection is examined through its interdisciplinary points of reference to philosophy and critical theory, and through the compulsive rewriting of its modernist past. It pivots around a debate between two dominant outlooks that demarcate the field, the “critical” and the “pragmatic”.

The Technology section explores the relationship between architecture and technology. The aim of the section is to raise questions such as how technology alters the ways in which we come to know and act upon the world, how it impacts social relations, patterns of urbanization conceptions of the self, and what possibilities and challenges it poses to architecture.

Urbanism examines the attempt to reconstruct the discipline after the collapse of modernist planning ideology, following the resurgence of the city as the locus of cultural and economic innovation. It explores the themes of public space, the debates over globalization, and the theme of the “global city”.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Required texts
Most readings are available online at the Snell Library website through digital databases such as JSTOR, or through specific E-journal websites. Readings which are not available online are available on Blackboard in PDF format. For your convenience, all the course readings are posted on Blackboard. Please bring a printed copy of the readings to class. It is recommended to assemble the readings in a folder.
Grades and course credit will be based on the following requirements:

40%  Term paper
25%  Class presentation
25%  Weekly responses
10%  Class Participation

Term paper
The topic of the essay must be relevant to the themes explored in the course, and the discussion must rely upon the theories encountered in the readings. The scope of the essay is 3000-3,500 words. The essay should follow the Chicago Manual of Style guidelines. Students are encouraged to design the graphic layout of the essay, including embedded images, to match the prevailing models of architectural publications. As one of the aims of the class is to develop academic research and writing skills, students are encouraged to sign up for a meeting during office hours to discuss their paper and receive timely feedback on their drafts.

Class Presentation
Students are required to prepare a single, 20 minutes presentation of an architectural project suggested by the syllabus, to be discussed through the conceptual terms developed by the readings of that week. Students are advised to schedule a meeting during office hours to discuss their presentations and familiarize themselves with the relevant literature.

Weekly responses:
A one-page printed response is due at start of the first class of each week (usually on Monday). Ten (10) responses are required throughout the semester. No late or emailed submissions accepted without prior permission. Responses should reflect upon the main theme of the week, by engaging the required readings for both sessions. A response paper is not a summary, nor an expression of one’s personal liking or disliking of the readings—rather it should make an argument concerning the theme of the week.

Class Participation
Regular on-time attendance, with no more than 3 late attendances or absences, is required to fulfill credit requirement. For a seminar to function for the mutual benefit and pleasure of all, students must come prepared to discuss the specific texts, and be willing to voice their thoughts and to respond to the discourse of their fellows.

Academic Integrity
All members of the Northeastern community are expected to maintain complete honesty in all academic work, presenting only that which is their own work in tests and assignments. Copying or paraphrasing the words and ideas of others without proper acknowledgment is considered as plagiarism, defined as "intentionally representing the words, ideas, or data of another as one's own in any academic exercise without providing proper citation." On how to properly attribute the work of others, contact your professor, or visit http://www.lib.neu.edu/online_research/help/avoiding_plagiarism/

NAAB STUDENT PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
The work that students produce toward their degree granted by the School of Architecture is the property of the School of Architecture. The complete course work from selected students shall be collected by the School for each course taught for the National Architecture Accreditation Board [NAAB] documentation. Students are encouraged to document their work for their personal portfolio if it is requested by the School for the NAAB, but the work must be submitted to the professor no later than one week after final exams week. This course meets the following NAAB Student Performance Criteria to the extent designated:

12.1 Speaking and Writing Skills   Ability
12.2 Critical Thinking Skills   Ability
12.4 Research Skills   Ability
12.8 Western Traditions   Understanding
12.11 Use of Precedents   Ability
12.12 Human Behavior   Understanding
12.13 Human diversity   Understanding
12.15 Sustainable design   Understanding
12.34 Ethics and Professional Judgment   Understanding
8 Sept  INTRODUCTION  

W 2+3  CRITICAL DISCOURSE  

Sept. 13  FORMAL AND IDEOLOGICAL CRITIQUE [TWO SECTIONS, 10:00AM AND 11:45AM]

Sept. 15  CRITICAL ARCHITECTURE [TWO SECTIONS, 10:00AM AND 11:45AM]

Sept. 20  ARCHITECTURE AND POWER [TWO SECTIONS, 10:00AM AND 11:45AM]
Michel Foucault, “Space, Knowledge and Power,” Essential Works vol. 3 (Penguin, 2002) [CR]
Michel Foucault, Discipline and Punish; the Birth of the Prison, pp. 135-149,200-206, 218-223. [CR]

Sept. 22  LECTURE: ADVENTURE PLAYGROUNDS: POWER AT PLAY [ONE SECTION, 11:45AM]

WEEK 4  POST-CRITICITY  

Sept. 27  DELEUZE [TWO SECTIONS, 10:00AM AND 11:45AM]

Sept. 29  PROJECTIVE PRACTICE: FIELDS, FOLDS, EVENTS [ONE SECTION, 11:45AM]
James Corner, Not Unlike Life Itself: Landscape Strategy Now, Harvard Design Magazine 21 (Fall 2004)
Class presentations:
Peter Eisenman: Westside project (1999)

W 5+6  ARCHITECTURE AND CONSUMER CULTURE  

Oct. 4  URBAN AND ARCHITECTURAL FORM OF EVERYDAY MASS CULTURE [TWO SECTIONS, 10:00AM AND 11:45AM]
Robert Venturi, Denis Scott Brown and Steven Izenour, Learning from Las Vegas (MIT Press, 1977), excerpts.

Oct. 6  CLASS PRESENTATIONS [ONE SECTION, 11:45AM]
The Hotel architecture of Morris Lapidus. Consult his autobiography Too Much is Never Enough (Rizzoli, 1996)
Environments of shopping
Prada American Apparel Starbucks Sephora

Oct. 11  Columbus Day, no classes.

Oct. 13  BRANDING ARCHITECTURE [ONE SECTION, 11:45AM]
Class Presentations:

W 7+8  TECHNOLOGY & DESIGN: THE STRUCTURE SURFACE DIALECTICS  

Oct. 18  INTEGRATING SYSTEMS [TWO SECTIONS, 10:00AM AND 11:45AM]
David Medd, “People in Schools: an Attitude to Design,” RIBA Journal 75 (June 1968)
Kenneth Frampton, Studies in Tectonic Culture (MIT Press, 1995), pp. 1-21
Oct. 20 **CLASS PRESENTATIONS [ONE SECTION, 11:45AM]:**
The Hertfordshire County School, see Andrew Saint, *Towards a Social Architecture* (Yale University Press, 1987)
Lars Spuybroek: textile tectonics
Toyo Ito: Sendai Mediatheque, Serpentine pavilion (with Cecil Balmond)

Oct. 25 **SURFACE, TRANSPARENCY AND ORNAMENT [TWO SECTIONS, 10:00AM AND 11:45AM]**

Oct. 27 **CLASS PRESENTATIONS [ONE SECTION, 11:45AM]**
Novel: Fondation Cartier, 1991
Apple Retail Stores

**WEEK 9 ARCHITECTURE AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

Nov. 1 **ARCHITECTURE, URBANISM AND DIGITAL MEDIA [TWO SECTIONS, 10:00AM AND 11:45AM]**
Michael Sorkin, *Variations of a Theme Park; The New American City and the End of Public Space* (Noonday, 1992), pp. xi-xv

Nov. 3 **CLASS PRESENTATIONS [ONE SECTION, 11:45AM]**

*Preliminary abstract and annotated bibliography for term paper due.

**WEEK 10 CRITIQUE OF MODERN URBANISM**

Nov. 8 **FUNCTIONAL AND FORMAL CRITIQUE OF URBAN RENEWAL [TWO SECTIONS, 10:00AM AND 11:45AM]**
Colin Rowe and Fred Koettler, “Crisis of the Object: Predicament of Texture”, *Collage City* (MIT, 1984) [CR]

Nov. 10 **CLASS PRESENTATIONS [ONE SECTION, 11:45AM]:**
The remaking of Downtown LA. Consult Mike Davis, “Fortress LA,” in *The City of Quartz*

**WEEK 11 NEO RENEWAL**

Nov. 15 **GENTRIFICATION AND PRIVATIZATION [TWO SECTIONS, 10:00AM AND 11:45AM]**
Stefan Metaal, “Gentrification, an Overview,” *OASE* 73 (Summer 2007)

Nov. 17 **CLASS PRESENTATIONS [ONE SECTION, 11:45AM]:**
Gentrification of a residential neighborhood or suburb of your choice
Public/private partnerships in construction of sports stadiums: NFL or MLB
Seaport District redevelopment, Boston

**WEEK 12 CITY AND DEMOCRACY**

Nov. 22 **THE END OF PUBLIC SPACE? [ONE SECTION, 11:45AM]**
René Boomkens, “The Temporalities of the Public Sphere,” *OASE* 77 (Winter 2008)

Class presentations

Nov. 24  
Thanksgiving—no class

WEEK 13 CITY AND GLOBALIZATION

Nov. 29  
GLOBALIZATION AND THE GLOBAL CITY [TWO SECTIONS, 10:00AM AND 11:45AM]
Marx and Engels Manifesto of the Communist Party, excerpts [handout].
“Dueling Globalizations; a debate between Thomas Friedman and Ignacio Ramonet,” Foreign Policy 116 (Fall 1999), pp. 110-127
Mike Davis, “Planet of Slums”, New Left Review 26 (3/4: 2004), pp. 5-6, 12-20, 30-34. [Ejournal]

Dec. 1  
CLASS PRESENTATIONS [ONE SECTION, 11:45AM]
Bangalore. See Rahul Mehrotra, “Bangalore: Dysfunctional Boom Town.” Harvard Design Magazine (Spring 2007)
Shenzhen or Guangzhou, China

WEEK 14 ARCHITECTURE AND MEMORY

Dec. 6  
MEMORY AND HISTORY [ONE SECTION, 11:45AM]
Adrian Forty, “Memory,” in Words and Buildings; a Vocabulary of Modern Architecture (Thames & Hudson, 2000) [CR]

Class Presentations:

Dec. 8  
CONCLUSION [ONE SECTION, 11:45AM]
Screening TBA

*Term papers due. Please submit both a hard copy and a digital file of your essay via e-mail.