History of World Architecture (ART161) -- Fall 2020

A Digital Syllabus for ART 161, Fall 2020

This introductory course explores the history of architecture from an inclusive, cross-cultural perspective. Proceeding topically through diverse examples from across the globe, students will examine the various ways that individuals and groups responded to religious, political, social, and cultural needs through the creation of built environments. From practical solutions to monumental expressions of power, students will study the role of culture in undergirding regional construction, style, and form. This course examines both local approaches to architectural challenges and shared values that give rise to hybrid structures.

Logistics
Class meets on MWF, 9:05-9:55am
9:05-9:35 pm CST: content/prep
9:35-9:55 pm CST: discussion
Google Classroom Code: 3mkgsfp

Professor
Dr. Christina M. Spiker
(she/her/hers)
spiker1@stolaf.edu
www.cmspiker.com
267.229.2195 (during COVID-19)
Office: Virtual (Book Here!)
Course Objectives

- **Cultivate** an awareness of the role and power of the built environment (and those who make it) in a global context.

- **Develop** a critical vocabulary for the analysis of architecture across cultures, and demonstrate this knowledge in writing and in-class conversations.

- **Compare** various architectural solutions to basic human needs across cultures, and discuss these trends in terms of globalization/localization and the development of transnational styles.

- **Apply** methodologies from various disciplines (architecture, art history, anthropology) to the visual and cultural analysis of human-built environments and practice this skill in-class discussion and writing assignments.

- **Engage** in a discussion about issues raised by different architectural sites related to the expression of cultural identity, power, nationalism, and gender in both monumental and vernacular structures.

- **Benefit** from a Liberal Arts education through rigorous intellectual inquiry.

- **Consider** the ways in which art and architecture can shape and inspire your life!

Student Assessment

- Assessment in this course is done according to a labor-based grading contract that you will find as an appendix to this syllabus. We will review this together on the first day of the course.

Daily Labor of Our Course

Here is what you can expect on a daily basis in our course.

- **Readings**. Complete your assigned readings/screenings/prep work in advance of class.
● Lectures & Daily Activities. On most class days, you will have a brief pre-recorded introductory lecture (around 5-20 minutes) alongside daily labor that I would like you to complete that engages your readings alongside other resources. This labor might range in format (it could be a written response, a creative Google Draw exercise, some preliminary research, a mind-map, a virtual handout, checking out a 3d rendering of a structure). These tasks will take you anywhere from 10-25 minutes to complete. Some will be completed individually and some collaboratively.

These lectures/activities will be posted by the start of class and will be due by 9:35am CST, during class. Activities will be posted on and submitted through our Google Classroom site. Exceptions to this will be addressed via announcements on our course feed.

● Virtual Classroom Discussion. At 9:35am CST, you will log on to our virtual classroom on Google Meet to discuss what you learned for twenty minutes. You can see this as a time for an informal conversation with the professor -- bring your ideas, questions, and comments and we will work through them as a group. Class will end at 9:55am CST.

The exception is on the first day of class when we will meet together at the start of class (9:05am CST) to review the syllabus and expectations together!

● Peer Feedback. Outside of class time, you are responsible for responding to your peers' contributions in this class. This could be adding comments to a daily activity or adding comments to any of the special projects your peers are completing that week. We should approach this feedback as a learning community, where comments are meant to push the conversation forward, not denigrate! You should complete at least two comments for each day that we meet (3 days a week) on either the daily labor or peer items posted in our course feed. You will be asked to keep track of your own comments in a monthly log.

● Core Assignments. Finally, you will complete several core assignments on which you will receive written feedback. There will be both an individual and a team assignment for each half of the course.

---

**Course Technology**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technology</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Use for...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introductory/Final Letter to the Professor

Write an Introductory Letter to the professor at the beginning of the course and a Final Letter at the end of the course. These are non-negotiable in the grading contract for a B. Failure to submit these two items means that you have not met the basic expectation required for a “B” in this course!

Your Introductory Letter will focus more on who you are as a person and what skills you bring to this course, as well as providing space to reflect on your hopes/fears. Your Final Letter will reflect on your overall progress in this class and identify areas of particular challenge where you showed growth.

| Intro Letter | Due on August 24th (Monday). |
| Final Letter | Due during our Final Exam Period. |
Core Assignments

Assignment 1: Where Forms Meets Function (Team-Based)

You will work with your team to investigate how form meets function. Your team will think through one of the following human needs. You will then do research on how this has been answered through architectural solutions around the world. Each team will need to come up with 3 cultures and you cannot repeat cultures that we have focused on in class: food cultivation, food storage, irrigation/transport of water, airflow, shelter from elements (arid environment), shelter from elements (tropical environment), shelter from elements (cold environment).

Team Assignment #1 is due on September 11th (Friday).

Assignment 2: Building Profile Paper & Handout (Individual)

You will sketch and write an analysis of a building on campus (or near your current location) taking into consideration the relationship between design and purpose/function. We will then be using these essays to create a guided tour (in-person and virtual options). (1st half, 3 pages)

Individual Assignment #2 is due on September 21 (Monday).

Assignment 3: Response to the Edifice Complex (Individual)

This paper assignment asks you to assume the role of an architectural critic. The title of Deyan Sudjic's work The Edifice Complex—a play on the phrase “Oedipus complex”—discusses the psychology of power, the urge to make a mark on the landscape, the desire to control, and the ambition to build structures that are both big and high. You will choose your own example of a structure outside the United States and discuss how power and politics are communicated in the built landscape. How can architecture serve as a medium of propaganda? (2nd half, 4-6 pages)

Individual Assignment #3 is due on November 2nd (Monday).

Assignment 4: Campus Building Proposal (Team-Based)
You will collaborate with a team to think through the design of a new building on campus. Your building will need to incorporate both aesthetic and functional aspects of architecture from around the world. You will share this with the class in the form of a recorded presentation.

**Team Assignment #4 is due on November 12th (Thursday).**

**Monthly Comment Log: Responding to Your Peers**

This class sees reading/commenting on peer contributions as a *key component* to success and engagement, especially in a virtual course. You will be asked to keep track of peer comments that you make and submit a basic comment log each month to make sure you are fulfilling the daily labor of our course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>Due on September 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>Due on October 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>Due on November 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>Due during our Final Exam Period</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Attendance Policy**

Adapted from Matthew Cheney (Plymouth State University)

**How many classes can I miss?**

*We should all strive for perfect attendance*, but you can miss as many classes as you need and as few classes as you possibly can.

**What does this mean?**

- I hope that you do not miss any classes, because missing even a single class may have an effect on your learning. I have tried to make each class useful to you, and I have tried to make our class activities mostly things that you could not replicate on your own. We have a limited amount of time together, so we should use that time well. If you miss class, you
History of World Architecture (ART161) -- Fall 2020

will, indeed, miss stuff. More than that, we will miss you. Absences detract from the whole class experience for everyone.

- However, life happens and it doesn't stop simply because you are taking my course. You will probably get sick at least once this term. Worse things could happen, too. So there needs to be some flexibility.

- Yes, there is a point at which you have missed too many classes for me to be able to say that you should get credit for the course. This is not about whether you are a good person or not. It is not a value judgment. It is a judgment about what having this course on your transcript means.

What should I do if I miss class?

Get in touch with me as soon as possible to let me know what is going on (Me = Christina Spiker, spiker1@stolaf.edu, CAD 220). I’m not going to yell at you, or criticize you for missing class. I don't need to see your doctor’s notes. We just need to chat to make sure you have a plan for passing. If you find yourself in a situation where you are dealing with numerous absences, please don't hesitate to get in touch with your Academic Dean, who can provide further support.

Accommodations

Even remotely, I am still committed to supporting the learning of all students in my class. If you have already registered with Disability and Access (DAC) and have your letter of accommodations, please meet with me as soon as possible to discuss, plan, and implement your accommodations in the course. If you have concerns about how distance learning will impact your course progress, please be in touch with me. If you have or think you have a disability (learning, sensory, physical, chronic health, mental health or attentional), please contact Disability and Access staff at 507-786-3288 or by visiting wp.stolaf.edu/academic-support/dac.

Statement of Inclusivity

In keeping with St. Olaf College's mission statement, this class will be an inclusive learning community, respecting those of differing backgrounds and beliefs. “Inclusion” isn't a given. We all have to work together to ensure that we keep it at the heart of our practice.
Gender Pronouns

This course affirms people of all gender expressions and gender identities. If you go by a different name than what is on the class roster, please let me know. Using correct gender pronouns is important to me, so you are encouraged to share your pronouns with me and correct me if a mistake is made. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

Plagiarism, the unacknowledged appropriation of another person's words or ideas, is a serious academic offense. It is imperative that you hand in work that is your own, and that cites or gives credit to others whenever you draw from their work. Please see St. Olaf's statements on academic integrity and plagiarism at https://wp.stolaf.edu/thebook/academic/integrity/. See also the description of St. Olaf’s honor system at https://wp.stolaf.edu/honorcouncil/.

Course Schedule

Because of COVID-19, our course needs to embrace flexibility in its schedule. You can find a tentative schedule on our Google Classroom, but items may shift as needed. Under each “day,” you will find a list of readings. As we progress in the class, “Daily Labor” will be posted for each day that you will complete during class-time in preparation for our twenty-minute discussion.