Introduction to Architecture, 1400 to Now

Art and Art History (FAH) 8 • Fall 2015 • Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:30-11:45 a.m.
Professor Daniel Abramson
Office Hours: Thursdays 12:00-1:30 p.m. or by appointment
11 Talbot Ave., rm. 207 • 617-627-2015 • daniel.abramson@tufts.edu
Teaching Assistant: Taylor VanDoorne • Taylor.VanDoorne@tufts.edu • office hours, Tues. & Thurs., 1-2 p.m. or by appointment, Aidekman 3

The real content of a work is the vision of the world expressed in its way of forming.
Umberto Eco. The Open Work, 1962

Summary
The primary goal of this course is for you to gain a familiarity with the history of architecture from 1400 to the present, emphasizing the chronological evolution of European and American architecture in a global context. Lectures and class discussion focus on major buildings, architects, and urban developments of the period, emphasizing issues of history, technology, nature, and society. Architecture is here understood as a form of social mediation, between individuals and groups, and a form of philosophical meditation, how we conceive the world. The course looks at the history of architecture; and history through architecture.

This course is also designed to teach basic architectural terminology, concepts, and procedures of analysis and historical interpretation. Most broadly, the course helps you understand architecture as a “vision of the world” expressed in built form, following the definition of art above.

No prerequisite in art or architectural history is necessary.

Written work for the class includes: a) five short reading response papers addressing theoretical primary texts to be found on the FAH 8 Trunk site; b) a three-page paper analyzing a local Boston building, and; c) a nine-to-eleven page research term paper on an architectural topic of your choosing from the period 1400 to the present. Additionally, two quizzes and a final test evaluate your conceptual understanding and factual knowledge of the course’s major themes and exemplars. Review sessions will be scheduled before each quiz and test.

The following art history department learning objectives apply to this course: the ability to analyze, interpret, and write on visual works of art; ability to contextualize cultural and historical significance of artworks; knowledge of the history of art from pre-history to 1700; knowledge of the history of art from 1700 to present; ability to conduct art historical research.
Requirements
Reading Responses (30%): Due Sept. 15; Oct. 15, 27; Nov. 17; Dec. 3
(late penalties apply)
Short paper (15%): Due Sept. 29
Quizzes (20%): Oct. 8; Nov. 12
Final test (15%): Dec. 10
Term paper (20%): Optional draft due Dec. 8
Final version due Dec. 17

Reading responses are to be submitted printed out in class. Consistent class participation can weigh positively in the final grade. The Turnitin electronic anti-plagiarism program may be used for written assignments (instructions to follow). Pick up all returned work from the class box in the 11 Talbot Ave. lounge. Class communication will be through Tufts email accounts.

Note: A failing grade in any requirement may result in a failing grade for the course.

Readings and Images
• Required readings in block letters, which will be the basis for the five reading response papers, can be found on the course Trunk site (trunk.tufts.edu), along with other class material, including lecture image lists, lecture powerpoints, assignments, and the syllabus.
• Images from lectures, which will be part of the quizzes and final test, can be accessed and reviewed on-line at trove.tufts.edu. In Trove, under "Course Collections," click on "FAH008" for lecture-by-lecture folders of images.
• Recommended readings in italics are from Kathleen James-Chakraborty, *Architecture Since 1400* (University of Minnesota Press, 2014). These recommended readings provide useful information, illustrations, and context related to the class lectures and required readings. This optional textbook is on reserve at Tisch Library and for sale at the school bookstore (rent used, $22.50; rent new, $39.95; buy used, $37.45; buy new, $49.95).

Schedule

Week 1
Sept. 8 Introduction

Sept. 10 15th-Century Florence’s Rational Renaissance Spatial Ideal
Architectural Since 1400, pp. 30-43

Week 2
Sept. 15 Alberti’s Representative Social Facade
READING RESPONSE #1 DUE: Leon Battista Alberti, On the Art of Building in Ten Books, 1485 (excerpts)
Architectural Since 1400, pp. 49-54

Sept. 17 16th-Century Rome and the Mythic Central Plan/Looking at a Tufts Building
Architectural Since 1400, pp. 61-64
Week 3
Sept. 22  Mannerism Against Authority
          *Architecture Since 1400, pp. 55-56, 64-67*

Sept. 24  Italian Villas and Gardens: Cultivated Autonomy
          *Architecture Since 1400, pp. 67-70*

Week 4
Sept. 29  The Academic Reaction: Regulation and Visuality
          *Architecture Since 1400, pp. 70-74*
          *SHORT PAPER DUE IN CLASS*

Oct. 1    Faith, Power, and the 17th-Century Catholic Baroque
          *Architecture Since 1400, pp. 125-128, 132-156*

Week 5
Oct. 6    National Classicism in 17th-Century French Architecture
          *Architecture Since 1400, pp. 75-79, 157-164*

Oct. 8    *QUIZ I*

Week 6
Oct. 13   English Classicism and the 18th-Century Picturesque Garden
          *Architecture Since 1400, pp. 79-81, 173-190*

Oct. 15   From Reaction to Revolution Before 1800
          *READING RESPONSE #2 DUE: Marc-Antoine Laugier, An Essay on*
          *Architecture, 1753 (excerpt)*
          *Architecture Since 1400, pp. 237-246, 250-51*

Week 7
Oct. 20   19th-Century International Styles: Neoclassicism and Beaux-Arts
          *Architecture Since 1400, pp. 246-249, 273-74*

          *Architecture Since 1400, pp. 273, 279-289, 329-332*

Week 8
Oct. 27   Realism and Romanticism
          *READING RESPONSE #3 DUE: Victor Hugo, "This Will Kill That," (1831)*
          *Architecture Since 1400, pp. 251-258, 276-278*

Oct. 29   Medievalism, Naturalism, and Functionalism
          *Architecture Since 1400, pp. 261-72, 293-296, 303-305, 323-329, 342-47*
Week 9
Nov. 3  Architecture for the Twentieth Century: Material, Structure, and Space
        *Architecture Since 1400*, pp. 335-337, 359-364

Nov. 5  *no class*

Week 10
Nov. 12  *Quiz II*

Week 11
Nov. 17  *Strains of the Modern*
        **Reading Response #4 Due:** Le Corbusier, *Towards a New Architecture*,
                1923 (excerpts)
        *Architecture Since 1400*, pp. 350-358, 370-393, 399-400

Nov. 19  *Postwar Modernism Around the World/Research Orientation*
        *Architecture Since 1400*, pp. 393-399, 404, 429-431, 439-442

Week 12
Nov. 24  *The Postmodern Return of History: Myth, Play, and Context*
        *Architecture Since 1400*, pp. 432-434, 456-463, 464-465

Week 13
Dec. 1  *Postwar Urbanism: Technology and Tradition*
        *Architecture Since 1400*, pp. 406-409, 443-445

Dec. 3  *Deconstruction: The End of Humanism?*
        **Reading Response #5 Due:** Peter Eisenman, "Strong Form, Weak
                Form," 1991
        *Architecture Since 1400*, pp. 463-464, 465-468

Week 14
Dec. 8  *Architecture Now: Spectacle, Supermodernism, and Sustainability*
        *Architecture Since 1400*, pp. 453-454, 468-488
        **Term Paper Draft Due (Optional)**

Dec. 10  *Final Test*

Exam Period
Dec. 17  **Term Paper Due, 4 PM** (submitted digitally to course Trunk site, under
                'Assignments')