

AAH 2005-X17 and HUM 2900-X17

MODERN ARCHITECTURE

Fall 2008
Villanova University

Mondays and Wednesdays, 1:30-2:45 pm, Bartley 028

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 2:00-3:00 pm, Thursdays 9:30-11:30 am, and by appointment

COURSE INTRODUCTION

The struggle to come to grips with modernity—those forces, technological and otherwise, that have profoundly shaped the world from the eighteenth century to today—is an crucial theme in history, literature, philosophy, and theology. But nowhere else is this struggle more visible or tangible than in architecture. While the “battle of the styles” dominated the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries with architects recycling classical and Gothic forms, underfoot were new ways of thinking about aesthetics and architecture that responded to vast social, economic, and technological changes. These foundations gave way to a stunning architectural vocabulary in the twentieth century that imagined and visualized a world transformed.

In this course, we will examine modern architecture primarily in Europe and the United States with the understanding that architecture is another way to examine larger questions and approaches to human life. We will look at buildings and projects that both responded to modern conditions and shaped them from the late nineteenth century to today.

COURSE PHILOSOPHY

While this course is at heart a survey of modern architecture, consisting of many images of buildings and projects presented in a lecture format, the spirit of this class is one of discussion. You are welcomed and encouraged to ask questions or make comments in our meetings together, and I will often ask for your thoughts and observations. Your engagement with readings on modern architecture, both from primary and analytical sources, will grant you entry into the underlying philosophies and thinking of these new forms. This course seeks to introduce you to the variety of modern architecture, but we will also look in depth at selected buildings and projects.

WHY THIS COURSE?

Architecture is all around you; you are in it at this very moment. To be able to “read” the built landscape is to be able to understand the world in new ways. Architecture also offers an outstanding means for interdisciplinary thinking because it unfolds a story of culture, politics, values and society in an immediate and tangible way. My goals for you this semester are to:

1. Understand modern architecture in terms of the debates, desires, and struggles that were part and parcel of dealing with modern life and a new way of living.
2. Become familiar with the major movements and architects of modern architecture.
3. Leave this course with a lifelong awareness of how the built environment embodies history and culture and how it affects the way we live.

COURSE PREREQUISITES

Although coming into this course with a general knowledge of architecture would be helpful, this course does not presume that you have such a background. I ask you to come to class with enthusiasm to engage in material that might be brand new to you and a willingness to share your observations and experiences.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Participation	20%
Midterm Exam	25%
Final Exam	25%
Final Paper	30%
Total	100%

PARTICIPATION

Successful participation in this class means success in three areas. First is consistent attendance in class (see note below). Second is actively participating in class. By this I mean that you will offer your own observations and thoughts on projects we look at in class, engage in class discussions, and complete small assignments related to our topics and field trips.

The third component of successful participation is writing 4 one-page opinion papers throughout the semester. Included on the Class & Reading Schedule are 7 opinion paper questions, due that day in class. You are to choose 4 of these 7 questions to respond to. Thoughtful opinion papers will also reflect on the readings and themes related to the question. These papers will be graded on a scale of $\sqrt{+}$, $\sqrt{}$, and $\sqrt{-}$.

EXAMS

There are two exams for this course, a midterm and a final, both of a similar format. These exams will ask you to identify and analyze buildings and projects we have discussed in class. Additionally, the exams will include “unknown” buildings that you must contextualize given your knowledge of other buildings, movements, and themes. Essay questions will concentrate on readings and broader themes. Each lecture will be accompanied by a list of buildings, designers, and key words as a study guide. PowerPoints of images *not* included in your texts will be posted on WebCT/Blackboard Vista for your review before exams.

FINAL PAPER

As a way to reflect on the many issues we will cover in this course, you are to write a 7-8 page final paper. You have two options for this paper. For those of you who wish to research a particular issue in architectural history, you may write a research paper on a topic related to modern architecture. If you choose this route, I will work with you on research methods and the construction of your argument. Your second option is an analytical essay on issues concerning modern architecture. For this option, you will choose from a list of questions that I will present later in the semester. Either option requires you to examine buildings, designers, and themes and related primary or secondary sources in your analysis of them.

ATTENDANCE

Your regular attendance in class is crucial to your success in this course, not only because of the images I will show but because of the discussions we will have. For excused absences I will only accept a doctor’s note or other official documentation. **You will be allowed three unexcused absences from this class.** This includes undocumented absences for such reasons as headaches, sleeping through your alarm, etc. After a third unexcused absence, any additional absences will lower your participation grade. It is your responsibility to keep track of unexcused absences; I will not warn you when you near or exceed three unexcused absences. **More than six unexcused absences will result in failure of this course.** I will note your presence or absence in each class for my own accounting.

CLASS ETIQUETTE

Our discussions will be conducted in an atmosphere of respect for each other and each other’s ideas. Cell phones, texting, instant messenger, and other forms of modern technology, while greatly related to the issues we will explore in this course, should be turned off and refrained from during our time together.

A NOTE ON DEADLINES AND MAKE-UP WORK...

You are expected to meet the deadlines outlined in this syllabus. Papers will be penalized **one full grade** for each day that they are late and will not be accepted at all three days past the due date. The final exam will not be offered early. No extra credit will be offered.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

You are expected to uphold academic integrity as outlined by the university. In the spirit of St. Augustine, students at Villanova are expected to engage in and contribute to a culture of cooperation and trust. This means avoiding cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, multiple submissions of work, and assisting in or contributing to dishonesty. For the first offense, students who plagiarize or cheat on any assignment will receive either an F for the assignment or an F for the course (depending on the severity of the offense), and a letter will be filed with the student's dean and with the Vice President for Academic Affairs. A second offense either in this course or any other course at Villanova will result in dismissal from the university with a permanent indication of the reason for dismissal on the student's transcript.

LEARNING NEEDS

It is the policy of Villanova to make reasonable academic accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities. If you are a person with a disability please contact me after class or during office hours and make arrangements to register with the Learning Support Office by contacting 610-519-5636 or at nancy.mott@villanova.edu as soon as possible. Registration is needed in order to receive accommodations.

EXHIBITIONS ON MODERN DESIGN

Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania:

“Designing Modern: 1920 to the Present” through mid-September 2008

“Frank O. Gehry: Design Process and the Lewis House,” November 8, 2008 to April 5, 2009

Museum of Modern Art, New York, New York:

“Home Delivery: Fabricating the Modern Dwelling,” July 20 to October 20, 2008
www.momahomedelivery.org

REQUIRED TEXTS

These texts are available for purchase in the University Bookshop and are also on reserve in Falvey Library:

Bergdoll, Barry. *European Architecture 1750-1890*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. ISBN 9780192842220 [you may elect **not** to purchase this text]

Colquhoun, Alan. *Modern Architecture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002. ISBN 9780192842268

Conrads, Ulrich, ed. *Programs and Manifestoes on 20th-century Architecture*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1971. ISBN 9780262530309

Curtis, William J.R. *Modern Architecture Since 1900*. 3rd ed. London: Phaidon Press, 1996. ISBN 9780714833569

Other readings are available on WebCT/Blackboard Vista as PDFs.

OTHER RECOMMENDED TEXTS

The following are books that are useful references for modern architecture and provide further detail. Some of these are available at Falvey Library, and others are available through Interlibrary Loan:

Benevolo, Leonardo. *History of Modern Architecture*. 2 vols. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1960, 1971.

Collins, Peter. *Changing Ideals in Modern Architecture, 1750-1950*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1967, 1998.

Frampton, Kenneth. *Modern Architecture: A Critical History*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1980, 2007.

Ghirardo, Diane. *Architecture After Modernism*. World of Art series. London: Thames and Hudson, 1996.

Hays, K. Michael, ed. *Architecture Theory Since 1968*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1998.

Jencks, Charles and Karl Kropf. *Theories and Manifestoes of Contemporary Architecture*. New York: Wiley, 1997.

Nesbitt, Kate. *Theorizing a New Agenda for Architecture: An Anthology of Architectural Theory 1965-1995*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996.

Oakman, Joan, ed. *Architecture Culture 1943-1968: A Documentary Anthology*. New York: Rizzoli, 1993.

CLASS & READING SCHEDULE

NB: This schedule is subject to change.

Readings listed with a (B) are located on our course WebCT/Blackboard Vista website.

- 8.25 M Introduction to Modern Architecture
- 8.27 W Nineteenth-Century Debates and Currents
Reading: Curtis, pp. 21-31
Opinion paper #1: If you had to choose the two most important issues confronting design in the nineteenth century, what would they be? Why?
- 9.1 M NO CLASS—Happy Labor Day!
- 9.3 W The Struggle For and Against New Forms: Beaux-Arts Classicism & Iron
Reading: Bergdoll, pp. 207-238
- 9.8 M Reforming Culture and Industry: The Arts and Crafts Movement
Reading: Curtis, pp. 87-97
Opinion paper #2: Is the Arts and Crafts movement progressive or regressive?
- 9.10 W Art Nouveau in Europe
Reading: Colquhoun, pp. 13-33; Curtis, pp. 53-71
- 9.15 M The Successionists and National Romanticism
- 9.17 W Turn-of-the-Century Chicago
Reading: Colquhoun, pp. 35-55; (B) Louis Sullivan, “The Tall Office Building Artistically Considered” (1896)
Opinion paper #3: Does Louis Sullivan’s famous “form follows function” axiom apply to turn-of-the-century Chicago architecture?
- 9.22 M The German Werkbund
Reading: Colquhoun, pp. 57-71; Muthesius and Van de Velde in Conrads, pp. 26-31
- 9.24 W Adolf Loos and the Problem of Ornament
Reading: Colquhoun, pp. 73-85; Loos in Conrads, pp. 19-24
Opinion paper #4: Can the position of Adolf Loos be reconciled with that of the Deutcher Werkbund?
- 9.29 M Avant-gardes: Expressionism and Futurism
Reading: Colquhoun, pp. 87-107; Sheerbar and Sant’Elia in Conrads, pp. 32-38

- 10.1 W Avant-gardes: Cubism and De Stijl
Reading: Colquhoun, pp. 109-120; Curtis, pp. 149-159; van Doesburg in Conrads, pp. 78-80
- 10.6 M **Midterm Exam**
- 10.8 W Frank Lloyd Wright
Reading: Curtis, pp. 113-129, 311-319
- 10.13 M NO CLASS—Happy Fall Break!
- 10.15 W NO CLASS—Happy Fall Break!
- 10.20 M The Bauhaus
Reading: Colquhoun, pp. 159-169; Curtis, pp. 183-199; Gropius and Schlemmer in Conrads, pp. 49-53, 69-70, 95-97
Opinion paper #5: What did the Bauhaus add to the conversation about art and industry? In what ways was it connected to previous movements?
- 10.22 W Le Corbusier and the Rise of the International Style
Reading: Colquhoun, pp. 137-57; Le Corbusier in Conrads, pp. 59-62, 99-101
Final paper proposal due
- 10.27 M Modernism in the United States
Reading: Curtis, pp. 395-415; (B) Henry Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson, *The International Style* (1932)
- 10.29 W The Modern City
Reading: (B) Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961)
- 11.3 M Modern Living
Reading: Colquhoun, pp. 231-37; (B) Alice T. Friedman, “People Who Live in Glass Houses: Edith Farnsworth, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Philip Johnson,” *Women and the Making of the Modern House* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2006)
Opinion paper #6: What, in your mind, does it mean to live “modern”? How is that translated in architecture and design?
- 11.5 W Modern Architecture at Villanova
Opinion Paper #7: To what degree has Villanova been successful in embracing modern architecture? Should it embrace modern architecture?
- 11.10 M Organic Modernism
Reading: Colquhoun, pp. 200-207

- 11.12 W Brutalism and Megastructures
Reading: Colquhoun, pp. 209-229
- 11.17 M Modern Architecture in Philadelphia
Guest lecture by William Whitaker, Curator of the Architectural Archives of the University of Pennsylvania
- 11.19 W Philadelphia's Golden Son: Louis I. Kahn
Reading: Curtis, pp. 513-527; (B) William Jordy, selection from "*Symbolic Essence*" and *Other Writings on Modern Architecture and American Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005)
- 11.24 M The Death of Modernism and the Rise of Post-Modernism, 1960s-1980s
Reading: Curtis, pp. 560-565, 602-609; (B) Robert Venturi, *Complexity and Contradiction* (1966)
- 11.26 W NO CLASS—Happy Thanksgiving!
- 12.1 M Deconstructivism (DECON) and High-Tech Architecture
Reading: Curtis, pp. 657-671
- 12.3 W Starchitects and Architecture in the 21st Century
Final paper due
- 12.8 M Conclusions
- 12.10 W NO CLASS—Happy Reading Period!

FINAL EXAM: Tuesday, December 16, 8:00-10:30 a.m., Bartley 028