

ARCH 2120 Architectural History and Theory I (3 Credit Hours)



Unknown architect. (dedicated 1607). Church of Nuestra Senora de Montserrat [Imperial Inca stones, Inca ashlar stones, adobe].

**University of Detroit Mercy |
School of Architecture and
Community Development
Fall 2024**

Mon & Wed 11:20am – 12:35 pm
Briggs 013

Dr. Irene E. Brisson
brissoie@udmercy.edu

Office Hours:
Mon/Wed 12:45pm – 2:15pm
Tue 11:30am – 12:30pm

Office hours sign up @
https://bit.ly/IB_officehours

Teaching Assistant:
Noah Field, fieldnj@udmercy.edu

Course Intentions:

This course is intended to provide a broad orientation toward the vast range of constructed environments humans have created from the earliest historical and archaeological records through the 15th century which is marked by the beginning of widespread global European colonization. Lectures, readings, and assignments are intended to balance both breadth and depth. It is not possible to present an exhaustive global history, rather this course is designed to set a foundation of awareness of chronologically and geographically diverse cases and to develop skills in historical thinking and research so that you will be prepared to continue broadening and deepening your historical knowledge of constructed environments you encounter in your studies, your life, and your eventual practices.

Catalog Description:

This course is the first in a two-semester sequence that provides an overview of history and theory of architecture, landscape architecture, and urban design from antiquity to contemporary times. This course covers the period from antiquity to the Industrial Revolution. It examines a wide variety of architectural traditions, including Eastern and Western architecture, and the monumental architectural tradition as well as indigenous and vernacular building. The class traces the development of architectural form as an expression of climatic, geographic, social, religious, technological, and cultural conditions. This course is normally offered every fall semester.

Learning Outcomes and Objectives:

Course Objectives:¹

Students will develop historical methods and learn to recognize the provisional, complex, and ambiguous nature of historical knowledge.

¹ Adapted from American Historical Association, “History Discipline Core.”
www.historians.org/resource/history-discipline-core/

1. Recognize history as an interpretive account of the human past—one that historians create in the present from surviving evidence.
2. Collect, sift, organize, question, synthesize, and interpret complex material.
3. Welcome contradictory perspectives and data, which enable us to provide more accurate accounts and construct stronger arguments.
4. Describe past events from multiple perspectives.

SACD Objectives:

Objective 1: Knowledge of the significant architectural works from this period.

1. Students should be able to identify by name and period significant architectural works from this span in history.
2. Students should acquire a vocabulary and a shared body of images to assist in the visualization and communication of architectural ideas and concepts.

Objective 2: Student understanding of the history of architecture and urbanism framed by diverse social, cultural, economic, and political forces, nationally and globally.

1. Students should understand how history of architecture and urbanism raises questions and issues related to social justice.
2. Students should understand how political factors shape architecture and urbanism.
3. Students should understand how economic factors shape architecture and urbanism.

NAAB Criteria:

This class is designed to meet National Architectural Accrediting Board Student Performance Criteria (PC.4):

PC.4 History and Theory—How the program ensures that students understand the histories and theories of architecture and urbanism, framed by diverse social, cultural, economic, and political forces, nationally and globally.

4. Students should understand how social factors, such as religion, shape architecture and urbanism.
5. Students should understand should be able to identify how related arts, such as painting, sculpture, and landscape architecture influenced architecture and urbanism.
6. Students should understand how climate and ecology influence architecture and urbanism.
7. Students should understand how technology influences architecture and urbanism.

Objective 3: Understanding of the role of precedent in architectural design.

1. Students should be able to identify the precedent for major works of architecture from this period.
2. Students should understand how those precedents were modified to meet new circumstances and user needs.

Course Requirements:

This course is comprised of lectures, in-class activities, reading and sketching assignments, two open-book review exams, and a student project.

Course Texts & Materials:

- Required texts and materials.
 - Ching, Francis D. K., Mark M. Jarzombek, and Vikramaditya Prakash. *A Global History of Architecture*. 3rd ed. John Wiley & Sons, 2017. [[unlimited online access through UDM Library](#)]
 - Additional readings will be posted as PDF or links to public websites on Blackboard

- Word processor (Microsoft Word, LibreOffice, GoogleDocs, etc)
- Notebook or dedicated notes app or document
- Sketchbook (need not be dedicated to this class)
- Suggested texts and materials:
 - Graeber, David, and D. Wengrow. *The Dawn of Everything: A New History of Humanity*. First American edition. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2021. [Hardcopy on reserve at library, PDFs of assigned selections will be available on Blackboard]
 - Zotero or other citation manager

Summary of Assessments & Grading:

Reading [24%]:

You are expected to read all assigned readings and take notes to help you retain information. To assist with engaging and synthesizing readings you will be assessed on:

- **Collaborative Annotations [12 points/week]:**
Using Hypothes.is interface you will highlight any text of note to you. For full points you must add the following 4 types of comments (in each reading):
 - A question about a term or concept that needs clarification or more information
 - A comment about why a particular passage is interesting to you
 - A question to the author of the text about their perspective or interpretation of the historical evidence.
 - Respond to two questions or comments from other classmates. If you have more information they were seeking share it including a link or reference to where you learned it. If you are responding to a comment, add your perspective or pose a question about their interpretation in a spirit of generosity, curiosity, and respect.
- **Pre-Class Reading Questions [12 points/week]:**
Submit two questions on Blackboard by Sunday 11:59pm before our first class meeting. On weeks with no Monday session, submit by Tuesday 11:59pm.
 1. A question about something which sparked your interest in the readings that you would like to learn more about and explain why you are curious about it.
 2. A test-style question about something you would like to remember from the combined readings. Include the answer in a separate sentence.

Reflection [6%]:

- Introductory survey & intentions [10 points]
- Study group participation & collaborative study guide [25 points]
- Midterm evaluation [10 points]
- Final self-evaluation & course evaluation [15 points]

Historical Representation [15%]:

These assessments will ask you to use your creativity to express historical information.

- Homeland Architectural History [30 points]
- Annotated Sketches [30 points each/4 submissions; 120 points total]
 - These can be submitted at any point during the semester. It is recommended to do one approximately every 4 weeks to be sure to not have to do several at the end of term.

Exams [26%]:

An exam from Latin *examinare* "to test or try; consider, ponder," literally "to weigh," from *examen* "a means of weighing or testing," is intended to review the material we have learned from and test how you have understood or retained it. Preparing for an exam is a valuable practice of review and reflection. You will be asked to prepare a study guide with your study group and will be free to use it and select other sources during both exams.

- Midterm Exam [120 points]
- Final Exam [140 points]

Teach Your Friends & Family Project [33%]:

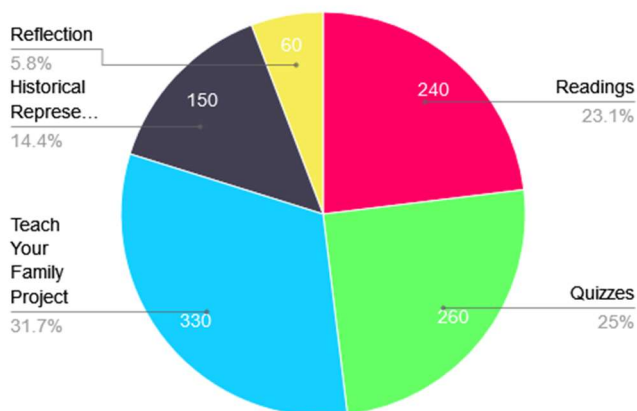
In this project, you will show your instructor—and your family or friends—what you've learned in our class by going deeper on any one or two topics we studied together or taking a contemporary issue—perhaps starting with a recent newspaper article—and teaching one or more members of your family how to better understand it using the historical tools you have learned in this class.

- Step 1 (Proposal) [50 points]
- Step 2 (Develop & Teach) [120 points]
- Step 3 (Final Reflection) [160 points]

Notes:

- *In-class participation is expected and therefore not graded. Attendance is the basic requirement of participation, absences in excess of the course policy will have a negative effect on your overall grade. I expect all students to engage in class by posing questions verbally or in writing, actively participating in small group discussions, and responding to requests to share out individual or group reflections with the whole class.*

Assessments



Pie graph of relative points & percentages of assessment categories

- *There are 1040 points available if all assessments receive perfect scores. I do not expect this of anyone and final grades will be calculated out of 1000 points. In effect, there are 40 points of extra credit available. I encourage you to reflect on which assessments align with your strengths. For example, if you know that you excel at writing but are not as confident on exams, try to complete writing assignments at the highest level minimizing the impact of a lower exam score. This also means there will be no additional extra credit opportunities. If you encounter a difficulty during the semester you could choose to not complete a small assignment (e.g. an annotated sketch or a week's reading response) and still be able to accumulate points towards your desired grade.*

Final Grading Scale:

A	100-93	A-	92-90	B+	89-87	B	86-83
B-	82-80	C+	79-77	C	76-73	C-	72-70
D+	69-67	D	66-60	F	Below 60		

* Grades will be rounded up from 0.5% so 89.4 will be a B+, 89.5 will be an A-

Course Structure:

Week	Dates	Theme	Deadlines
1	26-Aug	Orientation	
	28-Aug	Cosmologies & Architecture	Intro Survey; Syllabus annotation
2	2-Sep	<i>Labor Day Holiday – No Class</i>	
	4-Sep	Early Peoples	Homeland History
3	9-Sep	3500 BCE	
	11-Sep		
4	16-Sep	2500 BCE	
	18-Sep		
5	23-Sep	1500 BCE	
	25-Sep		
6	30-Sep	800 BCE	
	2-Oct		
7	7-Oct	<i>Fall Break – No Class</i>	
	9-Oct	Midterm Take-Home Exam – <i>No Class (Professor at Haitian Studies Association Annual Conference)</i>	Collab. Study Guide
8	14-Oct	400 BCE	Midterm Evaluation
	16-Oct		
9	21-Oct	0 CE	
	23-Oct		
10	28-Oct	200 CE	
	30-Oct		Teach Your Fam #1
11	4-Nov	400 CE	
	6-Nov		
12	11-Nov	600 CE	
	13-Nov		
13	18-Nov	800 CE	
	20-Nov		
14	25-Nov	1000 CE	
	27-Nov	<i>Thanksgiving Holiday – No Class</i>	
15	2-Dec	1200 CE	
	4-Dec		Teach Your Fam #3
16	9-Dec	1400 CE	Final Self-Evaluation
	11-Dec	Final Exam (11:00am – 12:50pm)	Collab. Study Guide

Attendance:

Attendance is mandatory. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of every class. You must be in the classroom to be considered present. More than (3) unexcused absences will result in the lowering of one grade point on your final grade (e.g. From A- down to B+). Three late arrivals such that you miss attendance will be considered one unexcused absence.

Study Groups:

History is written and transmitted in conversation between people. You are asked to self-organize into 3-4 person groups for the duration of this course. It is up to your group to decide how to study

together. You might meet at a café or online to read at the same time or after reading to discuss the texts. You might form a group text where you can informally share thoughts, notes, images, or questions about the course material. Before the midterm and final exams you will submit a collaboratively prepared study guide which you should equitably contribute to and will be able to use during the exam. Once your group has formed (by Sept. 4th) email the instructor and teaching assistant with all group member names and emails (recommended to cc: the whole group on the email).

Fieldtrips:

There may be fieldtrips organized within the metro Detroit region. If so information and coordination will be announced in class and via Blackboard. They will be within class time or in coordination with your studio instructors.

University-Authorized Absences:

The university recognizes that attending class is essential for student learning and engagement. In cases of [university-authorized absences](#) for university-sponsored activities, religious observances, or exigent circumstances, instructors shall provide students the opportunity to make up missed work without penalty up to 10% of the course meeting time. Instructors shall determine how students may access, substitute, and/or submit missed work. Students are responsible for all course content and activities missed due to university-authorized absences.

Instructional Continuity and Class Cancellation:

Instructional continuity refers to the continuation of instruction during unforeseen campus closure or instructor absence. Should the need to cancel a class session occur, students will be contacted through Blackboard and/or their Detroit Mercy email address. The following procedures will be in place to ensure continuity of instruction in this course: Students will be contacted through Blackboard with any necessary course content, guidance, assignments and due dates. Students are responsible for all course material provided through this instructional continuity plan.

Drop-in (Office) Hours:

I am available for consultation and conversation immediately after class. My office is located on the second floor of the SCAD building in the faculty office room on the east side. Students desiring appointments or advising may also schedule meetings with me either after class or by signing up here: https://bit.ly/IB_officehours

Blackboard:

In this course, we will be using [Blackboard](#) for assignments, activities, and/or discussion. Students should have regular access to Blackboard and their Detroit Mercy email. The use of student data in Blackboard conforms to the Family and Educational Rights and Policy Act (FERPA) and [information policies](#) of University of Detroit Mercy. Downloading the Blackboard mobile app will also allow you to view content and participate in courses on an iOS or Android mobile device.

Schedule Changes:

While every effort has been made by the instructor to present a complete and fixed schedule of coursework and assignments, this schedule is subject to change. As the course develops, the schedule may need to be altered to accommodate natural but unexpected fluctuations. The instructors reserve the right to change the course schedule and work, and students will be given appropriate notification.

Resources:

- University of Detroit Mercy
 - The Writing Center: <https://www.udmercy.edu/current-students/writing-center/> [Intro video to assign: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ft5-s0bd-3E>]
 - UDM Library, Architecture Research Guide: <https://udmercy.libguides.com/architecture>
 - [University of Detroit Mercy Digital Folklore Archive, James T. Callow Computerized Folklore Archive](#)
 - [University of Detroit Archive Research Center, Special Collections](#) (including Black Abolitionist Archive, Callow Folklore, Carney Latin American Solidarity, Dichotomy: School of Architecture Student Journal, institutional and assorted collections)
- Detroit Metro Area Libraries & Historical Research Resources
 - [Detroit Historical Society](#)
 - [Detroit Public Library, Burton Historical Collection](#)
 - [University of Windsor Leddy Collections](#)
 - [University of Michigan, Bentley Historical Library](#)
 - [Wayne State University, Walter Reuther Library](#)
- National or International
 - [Library of Congress](#)
 - [SAHARA: Society of Architectural Historians Architecture Resources Archive](#)
 - [Google Map Study Guide for MIT/EdX Global History of Architecture](#)
 - [TimeMaps](#) (interactive overview of social history by region and chronology, includes civilizations and empires)

UNIVERSITY POLICY STATEMENTS:

Student Support Resources:

University of Detroit Mercy has a wide array of support services available for free to all students. We encourage all members of the community to be aware of this list of [student support resources](#) — including contact information for reporting incidents or concerns. Students can also refer to the [webpage for Current Students](#) for further information.

Technology Recommendations:

University of Detroit Mercy Information Technology Services (ITS) posts current recommendations for student technology needs — including hardware, software, and internet connectivity — on their [website](#).

Important Announcements:

Important messages will be communicated through Blackboard and/or emailed to your Detroit Mercy email address.

Disability and Accessibility Support:

We are committed to providing equal access to learning opportunities for all students. [Student Accessibility Services](#) works collaboratively with students who have disabilities to arrange effective accommodations. If you encounter any barrier to participation in your education because of a disability and would like to seek accommodations, you can begin the process on our website or contact us at sas@udmercy.edu or 313-993-1938.

Universal Design for Learning:

I am committed to the principle of universal learning. This means that our classroom, virtual spaces, practices, and interactions have been designed to be as inclusive as possible. If you have a particular need, please email me or arrange a meeting with me so I can help you learn in this course. I will treat any information that you share as private and confidential. Contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) to seek official accommodations due to a disability or emergency medical condition.

Learning Environment:

Universities provide a safe haven for multiple perspectives and for disagreement and

dissent. However, all of our conversations should be pursued in the spirit of mutual respect and civility. Together we will work to create an environment in which every voice and perspective is heard and respected. The use of harmful or exclusionary language, including language that is racist, sexist, homophobic, or transphobic, would erode what we are trying to accomplish in our course and is not acceptable in the university classroom.

Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination:

The University does not tolerate discrimination, harassment, or retaliation. If you experience discrimination or harassment based on sex, race, religion, disability, or other protected characteristics, you can make a report or complaint online to the [Office of Equal Opportunity](#) or contact the Executive Director and Title IX Coordinator, Megan Novell, directly at [\(313\) 993-1802](tel:3139931802) or novellme@udmercy.edu to learn about your options for support and resolution. Please be aware that most University employees, including all faculty members, are mandated to report allegations of sex discrimination on your behalf if they learn of them. Information about confidential resources, reporting options, the specific rights of pregnant and parenting students, and our Nondiscrimination Policy are available on the [QEO website](#).

Reporting Bias-Motivated Incidents:

University of Detroit Mercy is committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive environment for students, faculty, and staff. Acts of intolerance, discrimination, or harassment due to age, ancestry, color, disability, gender, gender identity, national origin, race, religious belief, sexual orientation, or veteran status are not tolerated (see [Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy](#)) and should be reported by [contacting the Dean of Students](#).

Compliance with Student Policies:

University of Detroit Mercy students are expected to be familiar with and comply with student-related policies and practices, including those found in the [Detroit Mercy](#)

[Student Handbook](#). The Student Handbook also contains contact information for the Dean of Students and the Dean of each College/School.

Academic Integrity:

As members of an academic community engaged in the pursuit of truth and with a special concern for values, University of Detroit Mercy students must conform to the highest standard of honesty and integrity in their academic work. The fundamental assumption under which the University operates is that work submitted by a student is a product of their own efforts. Among the most serious academic offenses is plagiarism, submitting the ideas or work of another source without acknowledgment or documentation. The consequences of plagiarism or any act of academic dishonesty may range from failure in a course to dismissal from the university.

Course copyright:

All course materials students receive or have online access to are protected by copyright laws. Students may use course materials and make copies for their own use as needed, but unauthorized distribution and/or uploading of materials without the instructor's express permission is strictly prohibited. Students who engage in the unauthorized distribution of copyrighted materials may be held in violation of the Student Code of Conduct, and/or liable under Federal and State laws. In addition, distributing completed essays, labs, homework, exams, quizzes, or other assignments constitutes a violation of the Student Conduct policy.

Recording of Class Sessions:

Video/audio recordings of class sessions (face-to-face or online) may be recorded for the benefit of students in the class. Recordings will be shared via platforms with access limited to other members of the class. I will attain consent from students if recordings of student comments or images will be shared with a broader audience. Students are prohibited from recording class sessions unless instructor permission has been granted. In the case of

ADA accommodations, recordings of class sessions may not be shared or distributed.

Religious Observances:

It is the policy of University of Detroit Mercy to respect the faith and religious obligations of each student. Students with exams and classes that conflict with their religious observances should notify their instructor at the beginning of the semester in order to work out a mutually agreeable alternative. Please note that, regardless of whether an absence is "excused" or "unexcused," the student is responsible for all missed course content and activities.

Classroom Conduct:

As members of the Detroit Mercy campus community, your safety, health, and well-being are important, and we want to be able to support you in any way that we can. Students are required to follow current university safety protocol and any additional protocol included in the course syllabus. Refer to the [Health Advisories website](#) for up-to-date information and policies. Members of the university community should regularly monitor their health and seek appropriate medical attention if needed and do not attend class while ill. Contact your instructor ASAP about missed course content. Students may contact the [Wellness Center](#) at 313-993-1185 or wellnesscenter@udmercy.edu for support or guidance. In addition, students and instructors should wash their hands frequently and avoid eating in classrooms. Students who do not follow these policies are violating standards of student conduct and will be subject to disciplinary action through the Dean of Students' Office.