American Architecture from a Preservation Perspective I

This survey of American building history spans the pre-Columbian era to around the Civil War. An ambitious timeframe is matched by an equally ambitious range of subjects—monumental and everyday, urban and rural, from Native American mat houses to Independence Hall to plantation slave quarters to skyscrapers. Our analysis will consider occupants as well as designers and builders. While the course is arranged in a general chronological order, we will situate American architecture in a broader cultural context using the themes such as Nature, Power, Nation, Home, and Technology. We will also return regularly to the present to connect new issues with old and to address practices of myth making, appropriation, stewardship, and the evolving meanings of various building forms.

The course is designed to introduce students to the range of architectural expression dating up to 1900 in what is now the United States. It will prepare students to be critical observers and shapers (as preservationists, designers, or citizens) of the built environment through an understanding of its social and cultural meanings. We will be reflective of our role as architectural historians, as rigorous researchers and thoughtful interpreters, mindful of our prejudices and assumptions.

The course will include class presentations by the instructor and guests, discussions and workshops based on assigned readings, student presentations, and a term-long research project. Evaluation is based on class participation, quizzes and exams, assignments, presentations, and the final project.

AAAP 421/521   Fall 2020   4 Credits
CRN 10446 / 10453
Wednesdays  8:15am – 9:45am and 10:15 – 11:45am HP Seminar Room (WSB 442)
Chad Randl - crandl@uoregon.edu - 607-319-9004
Requirements:
Students will complete weekly readings, attend all meetings, actively contribute to all class discussions, and complete all assignments and exams. Readings will be provided as pdfs or web links on the course Canvas site. At the beginning of each class I (Chad) will introduce the week’s topic and provide a framework for our conversation. Each week one student will serve as an instructor’s assistant. They will give a brief (8-10 minute) case study presentation on particular issue or site related to that week’s theme, provide any necessary planning support, and help lead our discussion.

All students will write a research paper (15 pages for grad students 10 pages for undergrads), properly formatted, with images, citations, and a bibliography, due December 10. The paper project, titled “Then and Now,” will ask you to identify an architectural moment and compare its historical manifestation with its current condition. The subject is up to you; it can be a particular structure or site, a building type, practice or material, an industry, an architectural manifestation of a social or economic or political issue, a building-related profession. Your primary charge will be to trace the evolution of your subject from past to present, accounting for and explaining change over time. Additional details will be provided in a project description to be distributed in class. A written midterm reflection (on November 5) will ask students to synthesize readings, discussions, and other course content.

Consistent participation in the class is a primary requirement. If you are unable to attend a session please notify me (Chad) beforehand. Students are to come to all sessions having carefully read the materials assigned for that week. Occasionally you will be asked to bring materials (located online, photographed around town, researched at the library, etc.) for use in class. All assignments are to be submitted by their due date in the format specified. Late submissions will receive a lower grade.

Required Text:

Grading:
Attendance and participation in class discussions - 40%
Class presentation and discussion guidance - 15%
Final Paper Project (Then and Now) - 30%
Midterm Reflection and any Reading Quizzes - 15%

Academic Integrity:
Each student in this course is expected to abide by the University of Oregon Student Conduct Code. Any work submitted for academic credit will be the student’s own work.

Accommodations for students with disabilities:
I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that may be required for student with disabilities. Requests for academic accommodations are to be made during the first week of the quarter, except for unusual circumstances, so arrangements can be made. Please arrange for the Counselor for Students with Disabilities to send a letter verifying your disability.

Life:
Being a student can be hard. Life doesn’t always align with or respect the ambitious schedules of a graduate course or program. If you encounter circumstances that stand in the way of your work in this course, please let me know so we can find a solution.
### Class Schedule (weekly topics and readings are subject to change)

| WEEK 1 | 10/01 | **Introduction - Course Scope and Goals**  
In this introductory meeting we will discuss the boundaries of our topic, the themes we will encounter, our collective expectations and goals, the course schedule and structure, assignments, and assessments. We will also examine how history works and ask why it is worthwhile to study architectural history.  
| ____________ |
| WEEK 2 | 10/08 | **Indigenous, Architecture, Contact, and Colonization- Ab Initio**  
Handlin, Chapter 1, 9-38. |
| ____________ |
| WEEK 3 | 10/15 | **Places of Worship, Expressions of Faith**  
**Due:** Thesis Question (bring to class on 10/15, then post on Canvas by 10pm) |
| ____________ |
| WEEK 4 | 10/22 | **Forging a Nation - An Appropriate Style and Seats of Governance**  
WEEK 5  
10/29  
**Landscapes of Enslavement – Power and Subversion**

Readings:  


and select ONE of the two following readings:


Other Prep: Watch one of the following films and be prepared to discuss how power and the subversion of that power is represented architecturally in the film’s set design and art direction:

- *Gone With the Wind*, 1939
- *Django Unchained*, 2012
- *12 Years a Slave*, 2013
- *Roots* (1977 or 2016)

Due:  
**Thesis Statement** (bring to class on 10/29, then post on Canvas by 10pm)

WEEK 6  
11/05  
**Urban America - Row Houses and Separation in the City**

Readings:  
Handlin, Chapter 3, 70-99.


Midterm Reflection in second half of class

Due:  
**Bibliography** (bring to class on 11/05, then post on Canvas by 10pm)


**Due:** 5 page draft (bring to class on 11/19, then post on Canvas by 10pm)


11/26 Mon Factories, Prisons, Asylums, Hotels, Department Stores
11/28 Weds Review

**Due:** Final Paper due on 12/10, posted to Canvas by 10pm)