ARCHITECTURE

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The Architecture major establishes an intellectual context for students to interpret the relation of form, space, program, materials and media to human life and thought. Through the Architecture curriculum, students participate in the ongoing shaping of knowledge about the built environment and learn to see architecture as one among many forms of cultural production. At the same time, the major stresses the necessity of learning disciplinary-specific tools, methods, terms and critiques. Thus, work in the studio, lecture or seminar asks that students treat architecture as a form of research and speculation which complement the liberal arts mission of expansive thinking.

Undergraduate Study in Architecture

Studying Architecture at Barnard College, Columbia College, and General Studies leads to a liberal arts degree – a Bachelor of Arts with a major in Architecture, and Barnard College is the administrative location for all undergraduate architecture studies at Columbia University and its partner institutions. A liberal arts education in architecture holds a unique position in academia and in relation to the discipline. If the goal of a professional education in architecture is to enable students to participate directly in the world as an architect – a liberal arts education asks that students consider the broader and myriad conditions in which architecture is conceived and practiced and, in turn, to understand how architecture inevitably alters those conditions. Students are asked to confront and interpret the complex social, cultural, political, and environmental processes that weave through architectural design and urbanism. The purpose of an undergraduate liberal arts degree in architecture is to educate students to think about the world through architecture.

The Architecture curriculum introduces design at a variety of scales, acknowledging that integrated design thinking is effective for problem solving at any scale and in any discipline. Students will experiment with full-scale installations and devices and make small-scale models of urban conditions from which they extract, interpret and invent new possibilities of inhabitation and use. The curriculum intentionally balances the traditions of handcrafted representation with evolving digital technologies of architectural design and communication.

The Architecture major complements, and makes great use of its University setting. With access to superb libraries, research centers, graduate programs, and abundant intellectual resources, our students have the opportunity to follow their creative instincts to great depth and breadth – and they do. The major depends on New York City as more than a convenient site for many design and research projects and frames the City as one of the key social and architectural, and thus didactic, markers of Modernity. Architecture students study with peers from countries around the world in one of the most diverse cities in the world. A large majority of the Architecture students expand their education by interning in Architecture or a related field during their undergraduate studies. Alumni of the Department are leaders in architecture and design fields around the world. The faculty teaching in the undergraduate program are dedicated teachers who are also at the forefront of practice and research and are similarly drawn to New York City as a nexus of global design thinking.

Students interested in obtaining a professional degree in Architecture continue on to graduate programs after their undergraduate degree, and students from the Barnard-Columbia program have enjoyed enormous success in their admissions to the most competitive graduate programs in the country. Students who study Architecture as undergraduates have also pursued graduate degrees in a variety of disciplines including Urban Planning, Law, and Media and Communications.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students in the Architecture Majors who fully engage with the curriculum should be able to complete the following outcomes:

- Apply integrated design thinking to specific problems in and beyond the discipline;
- Visually communicate architectural concepts and research using discipline-specific techniques in multiple media;
- Verbally present independent, group or assigned research, in multiple media formats;
- Organize and concisely write in a variety of formats including reports, case studies, synthetic overviews, etc.;
- Understand and critically interpret major buildings and themes of Architectural history and theory;
- Be intellectually prepared for graduate studies in architecture and related disciplines.

Departmental Honors

Senior requirements (a portfolio and research paper from a previous architecture course) are used to award departmental honors. Students must have a grade point average of at least 3.6 in classes for the major. Normally no more than 10% of the graduating majors in the department each year receive departmental honors.

Professors of Professional Practice:
Karen Fairbanks (Chair)
Kadambari Baxi

Assistant Professors:
Anooradha Iyer Siddiqi
Ralph Ghoche

Term Assistant Professor of Professional Practice:
Ignacio G. Galán

Adjunct Professors:
Joe Moore
Madeline Schwartzman
Suzanne Stephens

Adjunct Assistant Professors:
Major in Architecture

The major in architecture requires a total of 14 courses, distributed as follows:

**Studio Courses**

Four studio courses, to be taken one per semester (studio courses have limited enrollment and priority is given to Architecture majors):

- **ARCH UN3101** Architectural Representation: Abstraction
- **ARCH UN3103** Architectural Representation: Perception
- **ARCH UN3201** Architectural Design, I
- **ARCH UN3202** Architectural Design, II

**Required History/Theory Courses**

Five elective courses following the distribution requirement below:

- **ARCH UN3117** Modern Architecture in the World
- One course with a topic that is pre-1750
- One course with a topic that is post-1750
- Two electives (it is suggested that one of these be on a non-western topic)

**Senior Courses**

Either a second Senior Seminar (from our program), a seminar from a related department (and related to student’s disciplinary specialization/cluster), Architectural Design III, or Independent Research

**Cluster of Related Courses**

Three courses that relate to a single topic or theme that is relevant to architecture. Courses for the cluster may be taken in any department and may not overlap with any other courses for the major (e.g. history/theory courses or senior courses). All cluster courses should be selected in consultation with a major adviser.

**Senior Requirements**

Portfolio

Research Paper from Senior Seminar or Senior Course

* These are courses offered by the architecture department or other applicable departments offered within the University. Students should consult the program office for a list of applicable courses each semester.
ARCH UN2505 Architectural Histories of Colonialism and Humanitarianism. 3 points.
This course examines the connected histories of colonialism and humanitarianism through architecture. In doing so, it takes seriously the concerns and problematics of decolonizing the study of architectural history. The central premise of the course is to reverse the terms by which humanitarianism and colonialism are usually understood and to excavate new meanings of each through histories of architectures and constructed environments. We will attempt this by studying iconic forms: refugee camps and detainment centers, colonial expositions and museums, governmental headquarters and emergency field sites, and territories of consequence to colonial and national powers. Humanitarianism, an ideological manifestation of modernity and liberal thought, is governed by terms of urgency and rarely considered in a historical framing or seen as directly related to colonial structures. Meanwhile, colonialism is usually examined within particular places and narratives as a historical category, rather than a condition or process enacted by architectural forms, spaces, and practices. The paradoxes and problems of humanitarianism thus enable a rethinking of the extension of colonial practice into postcolonial environments, with architectures and their histories offering concrete iterations and theoretical models for understanding buried links between the two. This course has no prerequisites, and will introduce students to themes and cases (in Africa, Asia, and the Americas) through lectures, discussions of shared readings, and presentations of independent work by participants.

ARCH UN3101 Architectural Representation: Abstraction. 4 points.
Prerequisites: Enrollment limited to 16 students per section. Recommended for the sophomore year. Students work in a studio environment. Introduction to design through analysis of abstract architectural space and form. Emphasis on the design process and principles of representations through architectural drawing and model making.

ARCH UN3103 Architectural Representation: Perception. 4 points.
Prerequisites: Students work in a studio environment. Recommended for the sophomore year. Enrollment limited to 16 students per section. Introduction to design through studies in the perception of architectural space and form. Emphasis on exploratory, inventive processes for the generation, development, and representation of ideas in a variety of media. Must apply for placement in course. Class capped at 16.
ARCH 3117 Modern Architecture in the World. 3 points.
Prerequisites: Designed for but not limited to sophomores; enrollment beyond 60 at the discretion of the instructor.
How has architecture been “modern”? This course will introduce students to things, practices, figures, and ideas behind this contentious and contradictory concept, emerging in multiple locations around the world. Students in this course will learn about architecture as it was practiced, taught, thought, and experienced across landscapes of social and cultural difference during the past two centuries. Learning about the past through historical consciousness around architecture and investigating the history of architecture as a discursive field are fundamental to liberal arts thinking generally, and important for students in architecture, the history and theory of architecture, art history, and urban studies. Students in this course will be introduced to:

Architecture as enmeshed with other forms of cultural production

Culturally-specific intellectual and public debates around the architectural and urban

Makers, thinkers, and organizers of the designed or built environment

Geographies, territories, and mobilities associated with architecture as an end or means for material extraction, refinement, trade, labor, and construction

Sites, institutions, media, events, and practices which have come to hold meaning

Modernity, modernism, and modernization in relation to each other, as well as cultural drivers holding stakes for past events as well their histories.

In this course, we will ask questions about ideas and practices within disparate socially-and culturally-constructed worlds, and across other asymmetries. For example, can we draw a coherent historical thread through Lisbon in 1755, Bombay in 1854, Moscow in 1917, the moon in 1969, and al-Za'atari refugee camp in 2016? Are such narratives of coherence themselves the trace of the modernist impulse in architectural history? In this course, we will study modern architecture's references to art of building as well the metaphors it gives rise to. Embedded in this examination are social and cultural questions of who made and thought modern architecture, and aesthetic and historical questions around the figure of the architect.