



*Great Mosque of Samarra*, present day Iraq, 848-851 | *Guggenheim Museum*, New York City, 1956-59  
| *Piazza D'Italia*, New Orleans, 1978 | *The Vessel* (concept drawing), New York City, 2019.

# History of Architecture

Fall 2025 - AD 261 (3 credits)

Instructor:

Gretchen Von Koenig  
University Lecturer of Design History &  
Theory  
Hillier College of Architecture and Design  
New Jersey Institute of Technology

Times & Rooms

Tuesdays 11:30-12:50, CKB 303  
Wednesdays 11:30-12:50, KUPF 118

Office Hours:

Wednesdays 1:00-3:00pm  
Email to schedule:  
[gretchen.a.vonkoenig@njit.edu](mailto:gretchen.a.vonkoenig@njit.edu)

## Course Description

*Prerequisites: ARCH 381 or AD 162. Restrictions: For Digital Design and Interior Design majors only; other majors require department approval to register.* This course examines the global evolution of the built environment, focusing on major periods and movements in the history of architecture and urbanism. While the social, cultural, political, and economic dimensions of the built environment are introduced, emphasis is on understanding built form at key moments of transformation from pre-history to the present. Formal archetypes are studied relative to their persistence and influence across millennia. Students analyze historical examples through the lens of contemporary design applications. This class will emphasize global approaches to understanding architecture history, tying modern practices to ideas and built form from a variety of architectural traditions. This class will take a critical approach to architecture history where we will study the built environment's relationship to social, cultural, economical and technological shifts in human civilization.

## Specific Learning Outcomes

NASAD:

1. **Demonstrate knowledge** of the evolution of architectural design and its relationship to culture and society.
2. **Acquire the ability** to place works of art/design in historical, cultural, and stylistic contexts. (NASAD 2024-2025, VIII.B.– VIII.C.c., page 105)
  - a. Acquire functional knowledge of the history of art, architecture, decorative arts, and interior design including, but not limited to the influences of work and ideas on the evolution of interior design practice. (NASAD 2024-2025, IX.C.i., page 134)
3. **Learn to analyze** works of art/design from both Western and non-Western cultures perceptively and to evaluate them critically. (NASAD 2024-2025, VIII.B.– VIII.C.a., page 105)
4. **Develop an understanding** of the common elements and vocabulary of art/design and of the interaction of these elements, and be able to employ this knowledge in analysis. (NASAD 2024-2025, VIII.B.– VIII.C.b., page 105) (NASAD 2024-2025, IX.C.g, page 111)
5. **Ability to analyze** relevant aspects of human interaction in architectural contexts (e.g., physical, cognitive, cultural, social, political, economic, etc.) with respect to the technologically-mediated built environment. (NASAD 2024-2025, IX.C.e., page 111)
  - a. Understanding of the technical issues of human factors and basic elements of human behavior, including areas such as programming, environmental control systems, anthropometrics, ergonomics, proxemics, wayfinding, sustainability, universal design, and design for the physically/mentally challenged. (NASAD 2024-2025, IX.C.d., page

6. Develop critical thinking and analytical skills to evaluate programmatic and formal design precedents for relevance in the development of studio projects, apply to architectural forms and ideas,

### **Books**

1. Ching, Frances, Mark Jarzombek, and Vikramaditya Prakash. *A Global History of Architecture*. 3rd Edition. New York: Wiley, 2017. (ISBN: 9781118981337) [Free Online NJIT Library](#) (CJP, *A Global History of Architecture*)
2. KJ: James-Chakraborty, Kathleen. *Architecture Since 1400*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014. (ISBN: 0816673977) [Free Online NJIT Library](#) (KJ, *Architecture Since 1400*)
3. Colquhoun, Alan, *Modern Architecture*. Oxford University Press, 2002. [Free Online NJIT Library](#)

### **Assignments and Grading**

The grading breakdown is as follows:

In Class Participation (Academic engagement, Kepler, In class discussions and presentations)	10%
Weekly Sketches and Writings	30%
Research Project Prep Assignments	20%
Research Project Presentations (Proposal + Final)	40%

Letter grades will be assigned as follows:

A (90-100) B+ (86-89) B (80-85) C+ (76-79) C (70-75) D (60-69) F (0-59)

### **Weekly Schedule**

Weekly Topics	Date	Assignments / Required Reading
<p>Week 1</p> <p><i>Prehistory - Built Environments of Early Civilizations</i></p>	<p>Tue. 9/2</p> <p>Wed. 9/3</p>	<p>Syllabus Review, Assignment 1 + Intro Lecture</p> <p>Architectural Echoes Assignment Presentations</p>
<p>Week 2</p> <p>Architectures of Sunlight &amp; Study <i>0-1800 CE</i></p>	<p>Tue. 9/9</p> <p>Wed. 9/10</p>	<p>Architectural Echoes Assignment Presentations KJ, "Chapter 15: Edo Japan," in <i>Architecture Since 1400</i>, 221-235; Reading Selection TBD on Yingzao Fashi Manual</p> <p>Visit: The Many Lives of the Nakagin Capsule Tower, MoMA; "The Industrial Revolution," in <i>Architecture Since 1400</i>, 255-272.</p>
<p>Week 3</p> <p>Ornament and Machine Debates <i>1800-1910</i></p>	<p>Tue. 9/16</p> <p>Wed. 9/17</p>	<p>John Ruskin, "The Nature of Gothic," 60-65; Frank Lloyd Wright, "The Art &amp; Craft of the Machine," Suggested: KJ, "The Domestic Ideal," in <i>Architecture Since 1400</i>, 290-306.</p> <p>Suggested: Debora L. Silverman, "Art Nouveau, Art of Darkness: African Lineages of Belgian Modernism," in <i>West 86th: A Journal of Decorative Arts, Design History, and Material Culture</i></p>
<p>Week 4</p> <p>Public Sector Architecture: Museums &amp; Department Stores <i>Early 1900s</i></p>	<p>Tue. 9/23</p> <p>Wed. 9/24</p>	<p>In Class Work - Museum Exhibition Proposal ; KJ, "Chicago from the Great Fire to the Great War" in <i>Architecture Since 1400</i>, 323-340.</p> <p>Deyan Sudjic, "M is for Museum," in <i>Designing the Modern World from A-Z</i>, 305-319.; Suggested: BBC's <i>50 Things That Made The Modern Economy</i>, The Department Store. <a href="#">Listen here</a>; View online article: <a href="#">A History of the Department Store</a>; CJP "1900 CE," in <i>A Global History of Architecture</i>, " 657-674.</p>

Weekly Topics	Date	Assignments / Required Reading
<p>Week 5</p> <p>Machine Styles and the Avant Guard <i>1900s -1950s</i></p>	<p>Tue. 9/30</p> <p>Wed. 10/1</p>	<p>Research Workshop &amp; Discussion</p> <p>Sant'Elia/Marinetti, "Futurist Architecture," 34-39. 'De Stijl': Manifesto I, 39-41; Manifesto V 66-67; van Doesburg "Towards a Plastic Architecture", 78-80.</p>
<p>Week 6</p> <p>Research Proposal Presentations</p>	<p>Tue. 10/7</p> <p>Wed. 10/8</p>	<p>Exhibition Proposal Presentations</p> <p>Exhibition Proposal Presentations</p>
<p>Week 7</p> <p>Global Modernisms <i>Mid 1900s</i></p>	<p>10/14</p> <p>10/15</p>	<p>Exhibition Proposal Presentations</p> <p>Walter Gropius, "Programme of the Staatliches Bauhaus in Weimar," 49-54; Le Corbusier, "Towards a New Architecture: Guiding Principles," 59-62</p>
<p>Week 8</p> <p>Global Modernisms cont. <i>Mid 1900s</i></p>	<p>Tue. 10/21</p> <p>Wed. 10/22</p>	<p>James C Scott, "The High-Modernist City: An Experiment and a Critique" in <i>Seeing Like a State</i> (Yale University Press)</p> <p>Exhibition Design Render + Floorplan of Exhibition Space Due</p>
<p>Week 9</p> <p>The Cold War and Speculative Architectures <i>1950-1980s</i></p>	<p>Tue. 10/28</p> <p>Wed. 10/29</p>	<p>Jane Pavitt, "The Bomb in the Brain," in <i>Cold War Modern</i>, 73-94; Kenzo Tange, "A Plan for Tokyo 1960" (1961)</p> <p>Selection from Lydia Kallipoliti, <i>The Architecture of Closed Worlds Or, What Is the Power of Shit?</i> (Storefront for Art &amp; Architecture, 2018)</p>
<p>Week 10</p> <p>Spaceship Earth &amp; Sustainability <i>1960-1990</i></p>	<p>Tue. 11/4</p>	<p>Buckminster Fuller, "Operation Manual for Spaceship Earth," 223-226.</p>

Weekly Topics	Date	Assignments / Required Reading
	Wed. 11/5	Selection from Larry Busbea, <i>The Responsive Environment: Design, Aesthetics, and the Human in the 1970s</i> (University of Minnesota Press, 2020)
<p>Week 11</p> <p>Design &amp; Power in the late 20th century</p>	<p>Tue. 11/11</p> <p>Wed. 11/12</p>	<p>Eden Medina, “Constructing the Liberty Machine,” in <i>Cybernetic Revolutionaries: Technology &amp; Politics in Allende’s Chile</i> (MIT Press, 2011)</p> <p>Selection from Jennifer Kaufman Buhler, <i>Open Plan: A Design History of the American Office</i> (Bloomsbury Press, 2020)</p>
<p>Week 12</p> <p>Postmodernism <i>Late 20th century</i></p> <p>Deconstructivism <i>Early 21st Century</i></p>	<p>Tue. 11/18</p> <p>Wed. 11/19</p>	<p>Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown, “On Ducks and Decoration” (1968); Bruton, D. , &amp; Radford, A. (2012). <a href="#">Analysis: architecture, film and games</a>. In <i>Digital design: A critical introduction</i> (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2012) pp. 95–107.</p> <p>KJ “From Postmodern to Neomodern,” in <i>Architecture Since 1400</i>, 456-471; Mark Wigley, “Deconstructivist Architecture” (1988)</p>
Week 13	No Classes	11/25 - 11/26 Thursday and Friday Classes meet
<p>Week 14</p> <p>Post ADA Architecture <i>1990 - Present</i></p>	<p>Tue. 12/2</p> <p>Wed. 12/3</p>	<p>Aimi Hamraie, “Barrier Work: Before and After the Americans with Disabilities Act,” in <i>Building Access: Universal Design and the Politics of Disability</i>” p.1-19 (University of Minnesota Press, 2017); David Gissen, “Introduction: From Accessible Design to an Architecture of Disability,” in <i>The Architecture of Disability Buildings, Cities, and Landscapes Beyond Access</i> (University of Minnesota Press, 2022)</p> <p>FINAL PRESENTATION</p>

Weekly Topics	Date	Assignments / Required Reading
Week 15	Tue. 12/9 - Wed. 12/10	FINAL RESEARCH PRESENTATION

## **Policies**

**Late Assignments:** Late assignments may be turned in up to two weeks late for 10% reduced credit (one letter grade). After one week, the work may be turned in for 50% deduction until the last day of classes, Dec 11, 2025.

**Generative AI:** As a whole, NJIT’s perspective on AI is to foster intellectual development, critical thinking, and to uphold academic integrity standards while taking ethics, data, and privacy concerns seriously. Responsible Use of generative AI means that these tools are not shortcuts to bypass the learning process, *but tools to advance it.*

This course *aims to develop your ability to communicate complex ideas about design.* In studio and design practice, you will be expected to speak intelligently (and on command) to design decisions you make, and verbalize the validity and applicability of any design precedents you research and use as inspiration. Using AI shortcuts to do your design writing and research bypasses this crucial skill - *and my class is a space to cultivate your designer voice.* You can use AI as a beginning point in the research process—such as getting background information on a designer or a design style (the same way one might use wikipedia or an encyclopedia to gain a general understanding of a topic they are currently unfamiliar with). You can also use AI to generate inspiration or research other artists/designers who tackle similar subjects you would like to become familiar with. But analyzing design work, its language and its meaning in culture and society today is something YOU should be exercising and getting better at, not asking a machine to do it for you. However, I would caution you against what AI might state about a given design style/design history, as there are many biases in the data it rests on:

**Training Data Bias:** If the data used to train an AI model is biased or unrepresentative of the real-world population, the model may learn and perpetuate those biases.

**Algorithm Bias:** The algorithms and machine learning techniques used to develop AI systems can also introduce bias.

**Interaction Bias:** AI systems can also exhibit bias when interacting with different user groups.

Societal Bias: AI systems can inadvertently amplify or reflect existing societal biases and stereotypes in the real world if they are not carefully designed and monitored.

This course expects students to work without artificial intelligence (AI) assistance in their design or writing work, in order to better develop their complex analysis of design. As such, AI usage is not permitted throughout this course to write submissions for the assignments or generate designs/visuals for submitted work. Submissions with AI will be treated as plagiarism: using content (ideas, words, processes, and results) not written by oneself and sharing it as one's work is considered plagiarism (DOS Plagiarism page & the Writing Center).

Disabilities: If you are in need of accommodations due to a disability please contact the Office of Accessibility Resources & Services (OARS) at OARS@NJIT.EDU, or visit us in Kupfrian Hall 201, to discuss your specific needs. A Letter of Accommodation Eligibility from the OARS authorizing your accommodations will be required. See more information at <https://www.njit.edu/accessibility/>

Syllabus: This syllabus serves as a general outline. I reserve the right to deviate from any part of the plan as necessary. Students will be notified of any such modifications.

Grade Disputes for Assignments: If a student has a grade dispute, they should submit a one- page memo to the instructor presenting evidence for their case. The instructor will review and re- grade the original assignment. This review can create a grade increase, but may also create a grade decrease based on the new overall evaluation.

Course Grade Appeals: Grading is done at the sole discretion of each faculty member. A student who wishes to appeal a grade must write a formal letter to the Dean of the College of Architecture and Design specifying the course number, term, year and faculty member, AND reasons for the appeal. The Dean then refers the matter to the Associate Dean for Academics who in turn appoints an ad hoc committee to review the student's work and the manner of grading. Full details of the appeals procedure and required documentation can be obtained from the academic advisor Sasha Corchado.

Violations of Academic Integrity : Academic Integrity is the cornerstone of higher education and is central to the ideals of this course and the university. Cheating is strictly prohibited and devalues the degree that you are working on. As a member of the NJIT community, it is your responsibility to protect your educational investment by knowing and following the academic code of integrity policy that is found at: NJIT Academic Integrity Code.

Please note that it is my professional obligation and responsibility to report any academic misconduct to the Dean of Students Office. Any student found in violation of the code by cheating, plagiarizing or using any online software inappropriately will result in disciplinary action. This includes work generated from Chat GPT. This may include a failing grade of F, and/or suspension or dismissal from

the university. If you have any questions about the code of Academic Integrity, please contact the Dean of Students Office at dos@njit.edu”

Incomplete Grades: The grade of "Incomplete" may be given under rare, documented circumstances. Instructors must provide written details of the remaining work and deadlines to the student and the Department Chair. The "Incomplete" grade must be resolved in the next regular semester to avoid automatic conversion to a failing grade. Instructors should not accept work by a student after the end of the semester following the one in which the Incomplete was issued, unless the Dean of Students certifies extenuating circumstances, the instructor is willing to process a late change of grade and the Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs pre-authorizes such a change.

Kepler: As per the policies of the School of Architecture and Design, all assignments must be uploaded to Kepler by the deadline. Any work not uploaded to Kepler will receive a failing grade. Any work that is not uploaded to Kepler will not be counted toward the final grade for the semester (meaning: it will be included as a zero in the final grade calculation).

Participation and Attendance: I do not take attendance. Participation in the course is 10% of your grade as it is a seminar class. If you are frequently absent, you cannot contribute to class discussions which will impact your participation grade. Further, your major project for the semester has bi-weekly inclass presentations and if you are absent for those, you do not get the credit unless you contact me in advance and your group confirms your active participation in what was presented to the class.