

**ARC 308**  
**Architecture and Society**

**Instructor:** Larry Speck  
**Time:** TTh 12:30-2:00pm

**Prerequisites**

None. Required course for architecture majors. This course may be used to fulfill the visual and performing arts component of the university core curriculum and addresses the following four core objectives established by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board: communication skills, critical thinking skills, teamwork and social responsibility. This course carries the Global Cultures flag. Global Cultures courses are designed to increase your familiarity with cultural groups outside the United States. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of non-U.S. cultural groups, past and present.

**Educational Objectives**

1. To establish a perspective of the role and influence of architecture in society and vis-a-vis other disciplines in the arts and science.
2. To develop an understanding of how architecture is shaped by and reflects cultural values and social organization.
3. To present a broad picture of issues and factors which influence architectural design.
4. To understand how global cultures create environments that both reflect and shape their values.

**Educational Approach**

The lecture portion of the course will be covered partly by a series of “talks” that are pre-recorded and can be accessed asynchronously. During the scheduled lecture time there will be a short “check-in” online where a question will be given to assess comprehension of and reaction to material in the “talks”. Some discussion sections will be held in person, and some will be held via Zoom. Accommodations will be made for any student in any section who needs to take the discussion portion of the class remotely. This is a reading/looking/listening/thinking course. The lecture material will be supplemented by related outside reading and required participation in discussion sections that hone skills in critical thinking, communication and teamwork. Students will also give oral presentations in discussion sections. Students with disabilities may request accommodations. <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/> or call 512-471-6259.

**Evaluation**

There will be three tests in the course. Each test will count 10% of your final grade. Tests will include multiple choice questions as well as short answer questions analyzing

buildings to demonstrate understanding of material covered in lectures and reading over a five- to seven-week period. Participation in class (in the form of question responses due in the “check-ins” in most class periods) will count 30%, and participation in sections will count 15%. The remaining 25% of your grade will be based on a series of five short analytical exercises that you will do through the semester. Analytical exercises will be dealt with primarily in sections.

### Required Texts

Rasmussen, Steen Eiler. *Experiencing Architecture*.

Heschong, Lisa. *Thermal Delight in Architecture*.

Moore, Charles, et al. *The Place of Houses*.

Website: [www.larryspeck.com](http://www.larryspeck.com) Handout #2

### Course Outline

#### I. Introduction

Jan 19 - Course Description

Jan 21 - Architecture and Society–Overview

Jan 26 - Architectural Values/Philosophy/Principles/Prejudices/Theory

#### II. Form in Architecture

Jan 28 - Architecture as Sensual/Visual Experience

Feb 2 - Architecture as an Intellectual/Artistic Experience

Feb 4 - Systems and Order

Feb 9 - Numbers/Mathematics/Geometry as Inspiration of Form

Feb 11 - Nature/Biology/Organisms as Inspiration of Form

[Reading in *Experiencing Architecture* to be completed by Feb 11]

Feb 16 - Synthesis – Form

Feb 18 - *Sketches of Frank Gehry* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o49mPHHEiZ4>

**Feb 23** - Test #1

#### III. Physical Considerations in Architecture

Feb 25 - Buildings and Land

Mar 2 - Geography/Topography/Ecology

Mar 4 - Structure and Materials

Mar 9 - Construction/Tectonics

Mar 11 - Architecture in Response to Climate

[Readings in *Thermal Delight in Architecture* to be completed by Mar 11]

Mar 23 - Synthesis – Physical Considerations

Mar 25 - *Louis Kahn: My Architect* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hpj01k8OS6U>

**Mar 30** - Test #2

#### IV. **Human Factors in Architecture**

- Apr 1 - Designation and Organization of Use
- Apr 6 - Architectural Determinism
- Apr 8 - Humanism at the Personal Scale
- Apr 13 - Humanism at the Scale of

Organizations/Communities/Bureaucracies

- Apr 15 - Meaning in Public Buildings  
[Readings in *The Place of Houses* to be completed by Apr 15)
- Apr 20 - Synthesis – Human Factors
- Apr 22 - *Citizen Architect* <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/citizenarchitect>
- Apr 27 - Test #3

#### V. **Combinations and Synthesis**

- Apr 29 - Technology as a Source of Beauty
- May 4 - Perfection and Compromise
- May 6 - A Few Good Buildings

**Safety and Class Participation/Masks:** We will all need to make some adjustments in order to benefit from in-person classroom interactions in a safe and healthy manner. Our best protections against spreading COVID-19 on campus are masks (defined as cloth face coverings) and staying home if you are showing symptoms. Therefore, for the benefit of everyone, this means that all students are required to follow these important rules.

- **Every student must wear a cloth face-covering properly in class and in all campus buildings at all times.**
- **Students are encouraged to participate in documented daily symptom screening.** This means that each class day in which on-campus activities occur, students must upload certification from the symptom tracking app and confirm that they completed their symptom screening for that day to Canvas. Students should not upload the results of that screening, just the certificate that they completed it. If the symptom tracking app recommends that the student isolate rather than coming to class, then students must not return to class until cleared by a medical professional.
- Information regarding [safety protocols with and without symptoms](#) can be [found here](#).

If a student is not wearing a cloth face-covering properly in the classroom (or any UT building), that student must leave the classroom (and building). If the student refuses to wear a cloth face covering, class will be dismissed for the remainder of the period, and the student will be subject to disciplinary action as set forth in the university's

Institutional Rules/General Conduct 11-404(a)(3). Students who have a condition that precludes the wearing of a cloth face covering must follow the procedures for [obtaining an accommodation](#) working with [Services for Students with Disabilities](#).

## Sharing of Course Materials is Prohibited

**Sharing of Course Materials is Prohibited:** No materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, lecture hand-outs, videos, assessments (quizzes, exams, papers, projects, homework assignments), in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets, may be shared online or with anyone outside of the class unless you have my explicit, written permission. Unauthorized sharing of materials promotes cheating. It is a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty. I am well aware of the sites used for sharing materials, and any materials found online that are associated with you, or any suspected unauthorized sharing of materials, will be reported to Student Conduct and Academic Integrity in the Office of the Dean of Students. These reports can result in sanctions, including failure in the course.

## FERPA and Class Recordings

**Class Recordings:** Class recordings are reserved only for students in this class for educational purposes and are protected under FERPA. The recordings should not be shared outside the class in any form. Violation of this restriction by a student could lead to Student Misconduct proceedings.

## COVID Guidance

**COVID Caveats:** To help keep everyone at UT and in our community safe, it is critical that students report COVID-19 symptoms and testing, regardless of test results, to [University Health Services](#), and faculty and staff report to the [HealthPoint Occupational Health Program](#) (OHP) as soon as possible. Please see this [link](#) to understand what needs to be reported. In addition, to help understand what to do if a fellow student in the class (or the instructor or TA) tests positive for COVID, see this [University Health Services link](#).