Do we really pave over Paradise and put up parking lots in Los Angeles? Well… yes, the city is in perpetual flux – but what healthy city isn’t? While we do tear things down and start from scratch with regularity, we also have a vibrant history that is told through places that have been saved from the wrecking ball because they’re meaningful and people fight to save them. Conversely, there is also something to be learned from places we’ve lost – but definitely haven’t forgotten.

Through lectures, readings, and site visits, students will gain an appreciation of the city’s social, cultural, and architectural histories by looking closely at places that matter. Our visits will range from sites that tell us about the city’s early history (El Pueblo) to places that point toward the future (Conjunctive Points). Our explorations will give us insight into the city’s power elite and the city they created, but also focus on the outliers who break the status quo and help us think – and live – differently.

Look at the schedule carefully. Each week we will be alternating between on campus lectures and off campus site visits.

Course Requirements

Reading Material

Texts
Reyner Banham, *Los Angeles: Architecture of Four Ecologies*

Blackboard
All other required readings will either be placed on Blackboard or taken from the internet

Recommended

Tests and Assignments

Historic Site Experience!
(assigned August 29/ due September 12)
You will choose a place you’ve never been or seen! (It will be a Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument.) You will go there and…experience it! Then - and only then - will you do some very basic research to see if and/or how the new knowledge affects your initial experience. Your 1 – 2 page paper will briefly describe the site, it’s history, and how learning more about it changed – or didn’t change - your initial view. An outline will be distributed in class on August 29.
Site Visit Journal
(ongoing throughout semester / due Monday, December 15, 8-10 a.m.)
You will record your impressions of the various sites we visit during the semester. This is a very open-ended assignment and it’s up to you to choose the method(s) you want to use to document your experiences, through writing, sketches, photography, and/or whatever you choose. The best journals will be those that creatively integrates information from the lectures and site visits to show how one’s experience of the built environment can be affected – for better or worse – by preserving old places and building new ones.

Midterm
(October 24)
Exam including multiple-choice and short essay questions covering all lectures, readings, and site visits through October 17.

Research Paper and Class Report
(due Monday, December 15, 8-10 a.m.)
You will prepare a research paper that focuses on a historic site somewhere in the Los Angeles area that has been demolished. A list of possible sites will be distributed in class, but you’re welcome to suggest your own! Following an outline provided in class at the beginning of the semester, you will conduct research about the historic structure and the new building on its site and any preservation efforts to save the older building. You will also provide your assessment of how the old and new buildings serve(d) their community, as well as weigh in on what you think was lost and/or gained in the transition. The paper will be a minimum of 7 double-spaced pages of text, with standardized footnotes, along with a full bibliography.

Grading
Participation: 10%
Historic Site Experience!: 15%
Site Visit Journal: 20%
Midterm: 25%
Research Paper: 30%

Grade reductions for unexcused late assignments: one-half grade deducted for each day late

Attendance
More than one unexcused absence will result in a failing grade for the class.
Schedule
August 29, September 5
The Birth and Growth of Los Angeles
Site Visits: El Pueblo / Union Station / Little Tokyo
Optional Lunch: Phillippe’s

Assignment: Historic Site Experience

Readings:
Merry Ovnick, Chapter 1 and Chapter 4
Reyner Banham, Chapter 1

September 12, 19
Hidden in Plain Sight: Rediscovering the Lost City
Site Visits: Heritage Square / Lummis House
Optional Lunch: La Abeja

Assignment 1 Due

Readings:
Harris Newmark, “Sixty Years in Southern California,” excerpt
Louis Adamic, “Laughing in the Jungle,” excerpt
Merry Ovnick, Chapter 5 and Chapter 6

September 26, October 3
Power and Preservation
Site Visits: Spring and Main Streets / St. Vibiana’s
Optional Lunch: Nickel Diner

Readings:
Los Angeles Adaptive Reuse Ordinance
Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation
Carey McWilliams, excerpt from *Southern California Country: An Island on the Land*
John Fante, excerpt from *Ask the Dust*
Reyner Banham, Chapter 10

October 10, 17
The Linear Downtown
Site Visits: Wilshire Boulevard: Wiltern Theater / Ambassador Hotel site / “Brown Derby” and more
Optional Lunch: TBD

Readings:
Chester Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 3-27
Reyner Banham, Chapter 4
The Los Angeles Conservancy at 25

October 24
Midterm!
October 31, November 7
In With the New: Modernists and Modernism Finds a Home in LA
Site Visits: Schindler House / Habitat 825 / Dodge House site
Optional Lunch: Irv’s Burgers

Readings:
Esther McCoy, “Rudolf Schindler,” in Five California Architects, 149-193
Reyner Banham, Chapter 9
Merry Ovnick, Chapter 12

November 14, 21
The Outside In
Site Visits: Watts Towers / Watts Towers Arts Center / Watts Depot
Optional Lunch: Hawkins House of Burgers

Readings:
Bud Goldstone and Arloa Paquin Goldstone, excerpt from The Los Angeles Watts Towers
John Beardsley, Gardens of Revelation, excerpt

December 5
What Wall?: Deconstruction as Rehabilitation
Site Visit: Conjunctive Points - Hayden Tract / Helms Building
Optional Lunch: Let’s Be Frank

Readings:
TBD

Final Exam: Monday, December 15, 8-10 a.m.
• Final Paper due
• Site Visit Journal due
University Policies

Academic Integrity

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one’s own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another’s work as one’s own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. Scampus, the Student Guidebook, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00, while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A: http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/SCAMPUS/gov/

Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/

Students With Disabilities

Any Student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as early as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

Religious Holidays

The university recognizes the diversity of our community and the potential for conflicts involving academic activities and personal religious observation. The university provides a guide to such observances for reference and suggests that any concerns about lack of attendance or inability to participate fully in the course activity be fully aired at the start of the term. As a general principle students should be excused from class for these events if properly documented and if provisions can be made to accommodate the absence and make up the lost work. Constraints on participation that conflict with adequate participation in the course and cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the faculty and the student need to be identified prior to the drop add date for registration. After the drop/add date the University and the School of Architecture shall be the sole arbiter of what constitutes appropriate attendance and participation in a given course.


Weeks, Kay D., and Anne E. Grimmer. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties: With Guidelines for Preserving,

