



Hans Hollein, Proposal for an extension to the University of Vienna, 1966

Gary Fox
garyfox@usc.edu

The term “theory” is ambiguous. A form of mediation between idea and reality, theory has been deployed as justification, as explanation, as tool for critique, and as architecture itself. Discourse is predicated on theory.

This lecture course takes up an expanded notion of architectural theory, considering the role theoretical production has played vis-à-vis both practice and broader social, political, and technological currents. Through such a lens, the course surveys a global history of architectural discourse from roughly 1960 to the present. The course opens briefly with the re-theorizing of modernism that took place more or less after the fact in the early 1960s. It turns to the various theoretical challenges to modernism articulated well into the 1970s, including important critiques of architecture's relation to race, gender, and identity, and to capitalism. The course considers the emergence of a self-identified postmodernism during this same period, and then takes up the rise of critical theory in the 1980s and the challenges posed to it in the 1990s. The course concludes by focusing on selected topics from the contemporary debate in the 2000s, including the purported “end of theory.” With a focus on key texts, projects, debates, and the media apparatuses deployed in their promotion, the course highlights the ideas and theories that have enacted or destabilized contemporary architectural thought. Students are encouraged to develop their own positions with regard to these debates, both theoretical and practical.

Learning Objectives

This course aims to encourage students to:

1. Be able to situate and analyze cultural objects, concepts, and debates within their broader political, economic, and social contexts
2. Establish associations and comparisons between diverse historical objects, both synchronically and diachronically
3. Hone analytic and critical skills through a variety of strategies including close analysis of images and texts, written responses, and in-class discussions
4. Actively participate in and lead discussions
5. Develop original arguments and theses, with a focus on making connections across periods and disciplines

Course Requirements

1. Attendance and Participation: 10%

Students are required to attend each lecture and to complete the assigned required reading before each class session. Readings will be posted on Blackboard.

2. Reading Responses: 20%

Students will be expected to submit a brief, 1-page commentary that responds to the required readings for the week. This should take the form of an analytical summary that briefly states and comments on the main points of each reading. Responses are to be submitted electronically on Blackboard, and are due no later than 11:59 p.m. the Sunday evening following the week's lecture. No late reading responses will be accepted.

3. Midterm Examination: 35%

4. Final Examination: 35%

Course Policies

No late work will be accepted—i.e. no partial credit will be given for work that is turned in late. Being absent on a day that a quiz, exam, presentation, paper, or final is held or due can lead to a student receiving an “F” for that assignment.

The School of Architecture's attendance policy allows a student to miss the equivalent of one week of class sessions (in our case, that means one class session) without penalty. If additional absences are required for medical reasons or a family emergency, a pre-approved academic reason, or religious observance, the situation should be discussed, in advance if possible, with me. For each absence above this number, the final grade may be lowered by 1/3 point (i.e. from A to A- for one unexcused absence, from A- to B+ for two; from B+ to B for three, etc.).

Grading Scale

A	95-100
A-	90-94
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	59 and below

Course Schedule

January 9	<p>Introduction: What do we mean by “architectural theory”? and Prelude: Theorizing Modernity</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u> Clement Greenberg, “Modernist Painting” (1960, rev. 1965), in <i>The New Art</i> (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1966): pp. 100-110</p> <p>Reyner Banham, <i>Theory and Design in the First Machine Age</i> (London: The Architectural Press, 1960): pp. 9-12; 320-330</p>
January 16	<p>Postcolonialism</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u> Frantz Fanon, <i>The Wretched of the Earth</i> (1961) (New York: Grove Press, 2003): pp. 1-21</p> <p><u>Optional Reading:</u> Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak?” (1983), in <i>Colonial Discourse and Postcolonial Theory: A Reader</i> (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993): pp. 66-104</p>
January 23	<p>Authorship</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u> Robert Venturi, <i>Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture</i> (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1966): pp. 22-23; 30-38</p> <p>Roland Barthes, “The Death of the Author” (1967), in <i>Image, Music, Text</i> (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977): pp. 142-148</p> <p>Michel Foucault, “What is an Author?” (1969), in <i>The Foucault Reader</i> (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984): pp. 101-120</p>
January 30	<p>Pop, Psychology, and Hyperreality</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u> Hans Hollein, “Alles ist Architektur,” <i>Bau</i> 1/2, 1968: pp. 460-462 (plus images)</p> <p>Denise Scott Brown, “Learning from Pop,” <i>Casabella</i> 359/360, 1971: pp. 15-23</p> <p>Jean Baudrillard, “The Precession of Simulacra,” <i>Art & Text</i> No. 11, September 1983: pp. 109-137</p>
February 6	<p>Autonomy vs. Multivalence</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u></p>

	<p>Peter Eisenman, "Notes on Conceptual Architecture: Towards a Definition," <i>Casabella</i> 359/360, November-December 1971: pp. 48-58</p> <p>Colin Rowe, Introduction to <i>Five Architects</i> (New York: Wittenborn, 1972): pp. 3-7</p> <p>Robert A. M. Stern, "Gray Architecture as Post-Modernism, or, Up and Down from Orthodoxy," <i>L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui</i> 186, August-September 1976: pp. 242-245</p> <p>Charles Jencks, "Post-Modern Architecture," in <i>The Language of Post-Modern Architecture</i> (New York: Rizzoli, 1977): pp. 308-316</p>
February 13	<p>Events</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u> Bernard Tschumi, <i>The Manhattan Transcripts</i> (London: Academy Editions, 1981): entire book (mostly images)</p>
February 20	<p>Site, Place, Region</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u> Edward Said, <i>Orientalism</i> (New York: Vintage Books, 1979; 2003): pp. 1-28</p> <p>Kenneth Frampton, "Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance," in Hal Foster, <i>The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture</i> (New York: The New Press, 1983): pp. 16-30</p>
February 27	Midterm Review
March 6	MIDTERM EXAMINATION
March 13	Spring Break: No Class
March 20	<p>Consumption and Late Capitalism</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u> Frederic Jameson, "Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism," <i>New Left Review</i> No. 146, 1984: pp. 53-92</p>
March 27	<p>Deconstruction and Geometry</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u> Philip Johnson and Mark Wigley, <i>Deconstructivist Architecture</i> (New York: Museum of Modern Art and Boston: Little, Brown, 1988): pp. 10-20</p> <p>Catherine Ingraham, "Milking Deconstruction, or Cow Was the Show?" <i>Inland Architect</i>, September/October 1988: pp. 61-65</p> <p>Greg Lynn, "Multiplicitous and Inorganic Bodies," <i>Assemblage</i> 19, December 1992: pp. 32-49</p>

April 3	<p>Control</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u> Michel Foucault, selections from “The Body of the Condemned” and “Panopticism,” in <i>Discipline and Punish</i> (New York: Vintage Books, 1975; 1995): pp. 3-7 and 195-209</p> <p>Beatriz Colomina, “Intimacy and Spectacle,” <i>AAFiles</i> 20, Fall 1990: pp. 5-14</p> <p>Gilles Deleuze, “Postscript on the Societies of Control,” <i>October</i> Vol. 59, Winter 1992: pp. 3-7</p>
April 10	<p>Generics and Platforms</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u> Rem Koolhaas, “Junkspace,” <i>October</i> 100, Spring 2002: pp. 175-190</p> <p>David Joselit, “Formats,” in <i>After Art</i> (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012): pp. 55-84</p> <p>Sylvia Lavin, “Too Much Information,” <i>Artforum</i> Vol. 53 No. 1, September 2014: pp. 347-353, 398</p>
April 17	<p>Conclusion and Final Review</p>
<p>May 8 9:00-10:50 am</p>	<p>FINAL EXAM</p> <p>To confirm the date and time of the final for this class, consult the <i>USC Schedule of Classes</i> at www.usc.edu/soc</p>

Academic Conduct

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. Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Part B, Section 11, "Behavior Violating University Standards" <https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>. This is important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. *The Center for Women and Men* <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage sarc@usc.edu describes reporting options and other resources.

Support Systems

A number of USC's schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. *The Office of Disability Services and Programs* http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* <http://emergency.usc.edu/> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

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. Any student concerned about missing class for a recognized religious holiday should bring this matter up with your instructor at the start of the semester. A list of recognized religious holidays may be found at: http://www.usc.edu/programs/religious_life/calendar/

Student Counseling Services (SCS) - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling/>

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1-800-273-8255

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

Relationship & Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 - 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp/>

Sexual Assault Resource Center

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: <http://sarc.usc.edu/>

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX compliance – (213) 740-5086

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. <https://equity.usc.edu/>

Bias Assessment Response and Support

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support/>

Student Support & Advocacy – (213) 821-4710

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa/>

Diversity at USC

Tab for Events, Programs and Training, Task Force (including representatives for each school), Chronology, Participate, Resources for Students. <https://diversity.usc.edu/>

USC Emergency Information

Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, <http://emergency.usc.edu>

USC Department of Public Safety – 213-740-4321 (UPC) and 323-442-1000 (HSC) for 24-hour emergency assistance or to report a crime.

Provides overall safety to USC community. <http://dps.usc.edu>