

Arch 528 Urban Housing Types and Typologies

USC School of Architecture

Fall 2023

Instructor: Frances Anderton (design journalist, author, [Common Ground: Multifamily Housing in Los Angeles](#))

Office Hours: By appointment

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Credits: 2 Units

Meeting Time: Thursdays 10-11:50 AM, in Watt Hall 212.

Course Description

Despite the cultural dominance of the single family home in Los Angeles, this region has also been a laboratory for innovative multifamily housing. This course introduces precedents from circa 1900 to now, demonstrating the evolving planning and design of multi-unit complexes as they synthesized the regional climate, lifestyle, and building technologies with diverse regional and international influences, along with changing codes, zoning and struggles over access to housing.

Precedents include: bungalow courts, apartment-hotels, courtyard housing, and public and privately-funded garden apartments, dingbats, affordable and market rate midrise and highrise, Transit Oriented Communities (TOC), loft-living following the Adaptive Reuse Ordinance (ARO), coliving, cohousing, and the return of low-rise compounds following the legalization of ADUs, JADUs and the passage of SB9 and 10.

Professor will emphasize the tradition of socially centered housing, evidenced in the region's courtyard tradition (and topic of her book, *Common Ground: Multifamily Housing in Los Angeles*.) Students will learn about the politics of multifamily housing in Los Angeles, and how apartment living has been shaped by racial and economic segregation and the persistent struggle around rental affordability and stability.

The course calls upon students to consider multifamily dwellings in terms of the lived experience for their occupants. Students will explore how inspired architects and builders brought to connected dwellings the access to sunlight, outdoor space and greenery that is the hallmark of the Los Angeles single family house lifestyle, along with a social connection sought by newcomers in a sprawling and fragmented region. They will examine the urban impact of the mid-rise housing being built today on the region's thoroughfares. Finally, they will evaluate LA's legacy of multifamily housing

typologies and consider what is viable and buildable today.

Format

This class will combine lectures by the professor and guest lectures, research, reading, drawing, class presentations, walking tours and site visits. Over the course of the semester, each student will prepare at least two presentations -- for interim class discussion and for a final presentation. The topic will come from a list of selected case studies. These can be created in one of a variety of formats (drawings, models, PowerPoint, written or audio essay).

Examinations, Policies, Grading, Office Hours

There will be weekly readings of selected articles from the course reader, 1 midterm evaluation and a semester project. Submission will be via Blackboard. The final grade will be determined as follows:

- 25% for the first assignment
- 50% for the final semester evaluation
- 25% for class attendance and class discussion

Learning Objectives

Critical Thinking and expanded understanding of housing in Los Angeles. Students will learn the impact of ideas based on the study and analysis of housing in the context of theoretical, social, political, economic, cultural, and environmental conditions. Students will be encouraged to participate in lively class discussions about the design and politics of multifamily housing in Los Angeles. They will use a diverse range of skills to convey architectural ideas, including writing, investigating, speaking, modeling and drawing.

Studies of History and Local Culture

The course offers an understanding of the cultural, political, economic and land-use forces that have shaped multifamily housing in Los Angeles, long considered the epicenter for the single family home. It will convey how local and national factors -- climate, Hollywood, tourism, car culture, real estate industry, Federal Housing policy and more -- influenced the siting and form of multifamily housing in Los Angeles.

Additional Policies

Attendance is very important and is measured through your participation in site visits and class discussions. This amounts to 25% of your grade. Students will be noticed at mid semester and/or toward the end of the semester if they have missed more than 2 classes, if you are more than 30 minutes late for class you have missed the class. Reading assignments are essential and conversations with the instructor and student

colleagues are useful before class begins. Note that this topic -- housing -- deals with questions of life itself and personal and collective values. How we live is central to how we view ourselves and how we will design for others. Students are encouraged to observe multifamily housing as they go about their daily lives, and to bring their reflections to class.

Course Schedule

In addition to in-class contact hours, all courses must also meet a minimum standard for out-of-class time, which accounts for time students spend on homework, readings, writing, and other academic activities. For each unit of in-class contact time, the university expects two hours of out of class student work per week over a semester. Following is a schedule that serves as a framework for the class; professor *reserves the right to adjust* -- with advance notice -- the suggested readings, and to add or edit site visits and guest lecturers.

Field Trips

Class will take a minimum of four field trips to see examples of multifamily housing typologies and to meet with experts in the field. Professor to review potential dates and transportation plans with students in the first class.

Week 1 (8/24)

Lecture: Introduction to multifamily housing class -- with talk about the emergence of multifamily housing typologies specific to the region and their evolution over the 20th and 21st centuries. Presentation to touch on the influence of zoning, building codes, Federal Housing policy, climate, car culture, tourism, overseas housing typologies, Hollywood and struggles over affordability on the planning and construction of multifamily housing in LA. Class discussion to follow. Professor will also review the syllabus, upcoming field trips and guest lectures.

Week 2 (8/31)

Site Visit 1

Tour of multifamily housing typologies in Santa Monica, taking in bungalow courts, Irving Gill's Horatio West Court, examples of contemporary affordable housing by KEA, Brooks/Scarpa, Patrick Tighe.

Assignment: Student to prepare short personal written or visual essay about a multifamily complex meaningful to the student.

Week 3 (9/7)

Review of writing/drawing assignment. Each student presents for ten minutes. Class discussion.

Assignment: Reading

Anderton, Frances – [Common Ground: Multifamily Housing in Los Angeles](#)

Chase, Laura -- *Gardens and Slums: House Courts and Bungalow Courts in Los Angeles, 1900-1930*

Tice, James; Polyzoides, Stefanos; Sherwood, Roger and Shulman, Julius -- *Courtyard Housing in Los Angeles: A Typological Analysis*

Gish, Todd Douglas – [Building Los Angeles: Urban Housing In The Suburban Metropolis. 1900-1936](#), by Todd Gish

OR

Gish, Todd Douglas – [Bungalow Court Housing in Los Angeles, 1900 - 1930: Top-Down Innovation or Bottom-Up Reform](#) (Prof to share access)

Deadline: Next week's class

Week 4 (9/14)

Introduction to bungalow courts and courtyard housing, co-presented with USC Professor Yo- Ichiro Hakomori. Examination of precedents – from slum house courts as well as overseas court typologies that influence or are analogous to LA courtyard living. Discussion about why they were so popular, why they ceased to be built and efforts now to save those that still exist. Consideration of proposals to reintroduce variants on bungalow courts – and legal and zoning changes that might make them easier to realize (ADUs, SB 9/10, Vertical Access reform).

Assignment: Reading: McCoy, Esther -- *Five California Architects, p59 to 103 (Irving Gill); p149 - 192 (R.M. Schindler)*

Deadline: Next week's class

Week 5 (9/21)

Introduction to the early and mid century modernist architects – Irving Gill, RM Schindler, Richard Neutra, Gregory Ain, Quincy Jones and John Lautner – and their interpretations of courtyard housing and apartment buildings. Emphasis on their formal as well as social experimentation – and influence from Europe (Loos/Red Vienna/Bauhaus).

Assignment: Reading:

Los Angeles Conservancy -- [Garden Apartments of Los Angeles](#)

OR

Parson, Don -- *Making a Better World: Public Housing, the Red Scare, and the Direction of Modern Los Angeles*

Deadline: Next week's class

Week 6 (9/28)

Site visit 3

Tour of Village Green and/or Park La Brea. Discussion about the New Deal and the construction of garden apartments with the support of the Federal Government, by private developers (Village Green, Park La Brea, Wyvernwood, Chase Knolls, Lincoln Place, et.) and the public housing authority (Jordan Downs, Nickerson Gardens, etc.) Professor to discuss: fusion of landscape and housing and ratio of buildings to garden; commitment to communitarian ideals while government reinforced racial division. Different outcomes for private v public sector housing and why some failed; whether they offer a viable model for multifamily living today.

Assignment: Reading: Grant, Thurman; Stein, Joshua G. -- *Dingbat 2.0: The Iconic Los Angeles Apartment as Projection of a Metropolis* (Professor to provide copies of pages)

Week 7 (10/5)

Meet off site near USC and check out dingbats (with experts Thurman Grant or Joshua Stein or Mimi Zeiger). Return to the classroom for discussion about dingbats and their ubiquity in Southern California, expedient building techniques, basic planning and place in popular culture. Consider analogous typologies today, such as Type 5 midrise.

Assignment: Watch short film [Community Corporation at 40](#), about the affordable housing developer Community Corporation of Santa Monica.

AND/OR

Read Phillips, Shane – [Affordable Housing primer](#)

Deadline: Next week's class

10/13 RECESS

Week 8 (10/19)

Professor to cover housing affordability in Los Angeles and different approaches to achieving it. Class will cover levels of “affordability” (from extremely low income to missing middle) and affordable housing categories (subsidized and income-restricted, rent-controlled, naturally-occurring affordable housing (NOAH), and low-cost new construction including prefab modular).

Assignment: Reading or Audio:

Reports on explosion of loft living in downtown Los Angeles following passage of the Adaptive Reuse Ordinance in 1999 and the proposed expansion to ARO (materials to be supplied by professor).

Deadline: Next week’s class

Week 9 (10/26)

Site Visit 4

Introduction to Adaptive Reuse Ordinance (ARO). Class will take a walking tour of DTLA, with a principal of Omgivning, to view retrofitted and ground-up loft buildings for market rate, affordable and coliving tenancies in the historic district and South Park. Consideration will be given to the challenges involved in retrofitting deep plan buildings and the emphasis the adaptive remodels place on shared social space and amenities, from the lobbies to the roof terraces, drawn from courtyard precedents and hotel-apartment tradition.

Assignment: Read up on ADUs and SB9 and 10 (Professor to supply)

Deadline: Next week’s class

Week 10 (11/2)

Discussion about ADUs, JADUs, SB 9/10 and the revival of backyard dwellings. Presentation from expert (architect or planner or developer) about challenges and opportunities in backyard homebuilding. Topics include: architectural design, site planning, parking, relationship to existing house, economic feasibility, potential for intergenerational living and aging in place, and impact on single family zoning.

Read up on TOD (Professor to supply)

Week 11 (11/9)

Living on the Thoroughfares. With guest David Kersh, formerly with the Carpenter's Union. Class to consider the explosion of housing development on LA's commercial and arterial routes, both affordable and market rate, in tandem with growth of mass transit and density increases allowable in transit oriented developments. Topics include: Type 5 construction and architectural limitations/opportunities, relationship to sidewalk, implications for cars and parking, growth of more urban living, considerations of livability on trafficked streets.

Assignment: Review materials from semester.

Deadline: Next week's class

Week 12 (11/16)

Discussion of final assignment, which is to reflect on the building typologies covered over semester and select one – or an amalgamation of typologies – that in the student's view would create the ideal student housing, in terms of liveability, affordability and suitability to context. In a combination of words and visuals, explain the choice and demonstrate whether it's buildable based on current zoning, code restrictions, parking requirements and cost of land.

Assignment: Final Project

Deadline: Next week's class

11/24 THANKSGIVING BREAK

Week 13 (11/30)

FINAL project due. Students each give a ten minute presentation (which serves as part of their grade).

FINAL (TBD, during week of 12/6-13)

WINTER RECESS – 12/15

Suggested Readings and References

Anderton, Frances (author) – [*Common Ground: Multifamily Housing in Los Angeles*](#)

Anderton, Frances (reporter) – [*Audio tour with KCRW host Steve Chiotakis of three multifamily housing typologies.*](#)

Anderton, Frances (producer/host) – [40 Years of Building Community](#), a short film about the nonprofit affordable developer Community Corp of Santa Monica.

Chase, Laura -- *Gardens and Slums: House Courts and Bungalow Courts in Los Angeles, 1900-1930*

Tice, James; Polyzoides, Stefanos; Sherwood, Roger and Shulman, Julius -- *Courtyard Housing in Los Angeles: A Typological Analysis*

Sherwood, Roger -- *Modern Housing Prototypes*

Los Angeles Conservancy -- [Garden Apartments of Los Angeles](#)

Gish, Todd Douglas -- [Building Los Angeles: Urban Housing In The Suburban Metropolis, 1900-1936](#) (in row 6 of this link; be sure to download the document)

Gish, Todd Douglas – [Bungalow Court Housing in Los Angeles, 1900 - 1930: Top-Down Innovation or Bottom-Up Reform](#)

McCoy, Esther -- *Five California Architects*

Frampton, Kenneth -- *The Usonian Legacy*, *The Architectural Review*, December 1987

Slater, Gene -- *Freedom to Discriminate: How Realtors Conspired to Segregate Housing and Divide America*

Parson, Don -- *Making a Better World: Public Housing, the Red Scare, and the Direction of Modern Los Angeles*

Grant, Thurman; Stein, Joshua G. -- *Dingbat 2.0: The Iconic Los Angeles Apartment as Projection of a Metropolis*

Fogelson, Robert M -- *The Fragmented Metropolis: Los Angeles, 1850 - 1930*

Vallianatos, Mark -- [Forbidden City: How Los Angeles Banned Some of its Most Popular Buildings](#)

Los Angeles Department of City Planning -- [LA Multi Family Existing Conditions Analysis](#)

City of Los Angeles, Department of City Planning, Office of Historic Resources – [Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement](#)

Kries, Mateo; Muller, Mathias; Niggli, Daniel; Ruby, Ilka and Andreas — *Together! The New Architecture of the Collective*

Lind, Diana -- *Brave New Home: Our Future in Smarter, Simpler, Happier Housing*

Matthew, Zoie -- [How Community Land Trusts Could Make LA More Affordable](#)

Phillips, Shane – [Affordable Housing primer](#)

Phillips, Shane – [The Affordable City: Strategies for Putting Housing Within Reach \(and Keeping it There\)](#)

Webb, Michael — *Building Community: New Apartment Architecture*

Wallach, Ruth -- *Los Angeles Residential Architecture: Modernism Meets Eclecticism*

Dana Goldstein and Robert Gebeloff – [As Gen X and Boomers Age, They Confront](#)

Living Alone

END

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct:

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” policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>

Support Systems:

USC Student Health is available through the single phone number **213-740-9355 (WELL)**—including all services 24/7.
<https://studenthealth.usc.edu/>

Counseling and Mental Health Services, a division of the *Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Keck School of Medicine of USC*

Medical Services, with providers on clinical faculty of the *Departments of Family Medicine, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Dermatology, Orthopaedic Surgery, Keck School of Medicine of USC; and professional affiliations with the USC Chan Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy, the USC School of Pharmacy, and the Division of Physical Therapy and Biokinesiology.*

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services, with counselors who are clinical faculty of the *Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Keck School of Medicine of USC*

A nurse (for medical concerns) or licensed counselor (for mental health concerns) is available 24 hours a day, even when the student health centers are closed and during university closures.

Students in crisis may walk-in for urgent mental health services at the health centers (Engemann Student Health Center on UPC or Eric Cohen Student Health Center at HSC) during operational hours without an appointment; this may include urgent matters involving a death in the family, suicide concern, crime/sexual assault survivor counseling, or other high-risk matters.

Urgent “sick” appointments for medical care are available “same-day” for students needing care during operational hours.

The evening operators of the 24/7 phone service line can connect to

USC Student Health services when an urgent matter presents itself.

Sexual assault survivors requiring transportation to a SART center can ask RSVP to call a Lyft ride (an “on-call” staff advocates program to accompany survivors is currently staffing operations and will be activated this fall).

MySHR (the student health record portal) shows all available regular appointment times; many appointments can be made within 24-48 hours.

Campus incident post-ventions are regularly provided by Counseling and Mental Health Services on campus for students; departments are encouraged to contact us to learn more or to make arrangements.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – 1 (800) 273-8255

www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) | Title IX - (213) 740-5086

equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu

Information about how to get help or help a survivor of harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following protected characteristics: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations.

Bias Assessment Response and Support - (213) 821-8298

<https://campussupport.usc.edu/trojans-care-4-trojans/>

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions for appropriate investigation and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776

dsp.usc.edu

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Campus Support & Intervention - (213) 821-4710

<https://campussupport.usc.edu/>

Assists students, faculty, and staff in navigating complex issues.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101

diversity.usc.edu

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321– 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000 - 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information.

Office of the Ombuds - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)

ombuds.usc.edu

A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.