

## Course Syllabus

1.	<b>Course title</b>	Architectural Criticism and Analysis
2.	<b>Course number</b>	ARCH 0902735
3.	<b>Credit hours (theory, practical)</b>	3 credits/theory
	<b>Contact hours (theory, practical)</b>	3 hours
4.	<b>Prerequisites/co-requisites</b>	
5.	<b>Program title</b>	Architectural engineering
6.	<b>Program code</b>	2
7.	<b>Awarding institution</b>	University of Jordan
8.	<b>School</b>	Engineering
9.	<b>Department</b>	Architectural Engineering
10.	<b>Level of course</b>	Masters
11.	<b>Year of study and semester (s)</b>	First and second semesters
12.	<b>Final Qualification</b>	
13.	<b>Other department (s) involved in teaching the course</b>	
14.	<b>Language of Instruction</b>	English
15.	<b>Delivery Method</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Face to face learning <input type="checkbox"/> Blended <input type="checkbox"/> Fully online
16.	<b>Online platforms(s)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Moodle <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Microsoft Teams <input type="checkbox"/> Skype <input type="checkbox"/> Zoom <input type="checkbox"/> Others.....
17.	<b>Date of production/revision</b>	2023/2024

### 16. Course Coordinator:

Prof. Saleem M. Dahabreh, Phd  
 Location: Office 33, faculty of Art and Design  
 Email: saleem.dahabreh@ju.edu.jo

### 17. Other instructors:

Office numbers, office hours, phone numbers, and email addresses should be listed.

### 18. Course Description:

This course investigates the theoretical foundations and practical applications of architectural criticism. It addresses the discipline from three distinct but interconnected perspectives. Initially, the course explores the philosophical underpinnings of architectural theory criticism—addressing basic terminologies such as theory, philosophy, form, function, and aesthetics and then questioning what criticism is, its purpose, and its utility not only within architecture but across various fields. Finally, the discussion extends to the nuances of judgment, discernment, and discrimination through the analysis of various case studies.

Architectural criticism is broadly defined as the analysis and discussion of architectural projects, whether built or proposed, particularly those of historical significance or innovative design. This field encompasses a vast array of topics including aesthetics, theory, functionality, style, construction materials, and contextual relevance, along with environmental considerations. Two closely related concepts, architectural analysis and architectural morphology, will be examined. Architectural analysis involves dissecting a project to understand its elements and influences, while architectural morphology focuses on the study of the structure and form of architectural elements, investigating the principles that inform their design, cultural significance, and practical functions.

Utilizing seminal texts from architectural criticism alongside influential works from philosophy, literature, and various critical theories—including media, art, and economics—the course constructs a comprehensive framework for analyzing architecture. This framework is designed to address both the internal dynamics of the discipline and the external, cultural forces that shape architectural practice. Students will engage with a variety of case studies to hone their skills in critically interpreting architectural works through established analytical methods. They will learn to articulate their critiques effectively, employing both written and graphic forms of communication.

By the conclusion of this course, students will have mastered the methodologies used to interpret and critique architectural designs and will be adept at communicating their analyses through various mediums. They will employ research, analytical, and critical thinking skills to assess existing architectural works and explore new creative possibilities in both their academic and professional practices.

## **19. Course aims and outcomes:**

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### **A- Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)**

- **Critical Analysis Skills:**  
Analyze and interpret architectural works through various lenses including historical, cultural, social, and aesthetic contexts.  
Critically assess the impact of architecture on urban and rural environments, considering factors like sustainability, functionality, and cultural significance.
- **Theoretical Knowledge:**  
Demonstrate a deep understanding of key theories and methodologies in architectural criticism, including but not limited to structuralism, deconstruction, phenomenology, and postmodernism.  
Compare and contrast different critical approaches and their applicability to analyzing architectural designs and concepts.
- **Research Proficiency:**  
Conduct rigorous academic research, employing appropriate methodologies to critique architectural works.  
Synthesize research findings effectively to support arguments or hypotheses in written critiques or oral presentations.
- **Communication Skills:**  
Articulate well-founded critiques and interpretations of architectural works in both written and verbal forms.  
Engage effectively in academic discussions, debates, and critiques, demonstrating openness to diverse perspectives while defending one's analytical standpoint.
- **Ethical and Cultural Awareness:**  
Evaluate architectural works within their ethical, environmental, and sociopolitical contexts, recognizing the responsibilities of architects and critics in shaping public spaces and societal norms.  
Appreciate and critically assess the role of cultural influences in architectural design, promoting an understanding of how global and local contexts shape architectural practices.
- **Innovative Thinking:**  
Propose innovative critiques that contribute new perspectives or theoretical approaches to the field of architectural criticism.  
Challenge traditional or mainstream architectural narratives and propose alternative interpretations that encourage critical thought and dialogue.

## B- Aims:

Develop a critical understanding and awareness of some of the basic terms and ideas relating to architectural morphology and criticism in terms of definitions, history, theory, and methods. This course will also supplement the theoretical knowledge with case studies that illustrate the process of architectural morphology.

- Develop an ability to critically read and interpret architectural works using explicit methodologies and to communicate this using written and graphic means. Upon the completion of this course, students will be able to:
- Analyze the content of critical arguments into their elements
- Effectively describe a building or environment
- Exercise critical judgment about building or environment descriptions
- Develop a critical and reflective argument building on arguments through diagrams and publishable criticism
- Prepare arguments in the format of an academic essay
- Demonstrate and develop formal skills in both writing and reasoning.
- Understand fundamental philosophical and architectural terminologies such as world views, theory, history, form, design, style, etc.
- Differentiate between the different modes of architectural criticism and apply them in appropriate cases and contexts
- Provide a rational morphological analysis of architectural projects
- Write an elementary critical essay of architectural works.

## C- NAAB Student Performance Criteria

- A1. Communication Skills: Ability to read, write, speak and listen effectively
- A5. Investigative Skills: Ability to gather, assess, record, apply, and comparatively evaluate relevant information within architectural coursework and design processes.
- A7. Use of Precedents: Ability to examine and comprehend the fundamental principles present in relevant precedents and to make choices regarding the incorporation of such principles into architecture and urban design projects.
- C1. Collaboration: Ability to work in collaboration with others and in multidisciplinary teams to successfully complete design projects.

## 20. Topic Outline and Schedule:

Weeks	topics	subtopics	instructor	References
1	<b>General introduction</b>			
2	<b>Definitions of theory, world views</b>	Worldview, frameworks, models theories Theory definitions, theory types e.g. substantive, procedural, etc...		Lang, J. (1987). Creating Architectural Theory: The Role of Behavioral Sciences in Environmental Design. VNR, New York. Pp. 13-21 Lang, Jon. 1991. Design Theory from an Environment Behavior perspective. In: Zube, Ervin & Moore, Gary T. (editors), Advances in Environment, Behavior, and Design vol. 3. Plenum Press, New York & London, pp. 53-101. Zube, Ervin & Moore, Gary T. (editors). 1991. Advances in Environment, Behavior, and Design vol. 3. Plenum Press, New York & London. pp.vii-ix
3	<b>methodology</b>	Definitions, types, The 8 step synoptic methodology		
4	<b>Form and function</b>	Definitions by different philosophers, Plato, Aristotle Types of architectural form Function and performance		Arnheim, Rudolf, The Dynamics of Architectural Form. Eisenman, Peter, (1963). The formal Basis of Modern Architecture. PhD dissertation Cambridge form (ETH Zurich 1995). Forty, Adrian. (2000). Words and Buildings: A Vocabulary of Modern Architecture. New York: Thames & Hudson

				Hendrix, John Shannon, <i>The Contradiction Between Form and Function in Hendrix, John, Architectural Forms and Philosophical Structures</i> (New York: Lang, 2003) Madrazo, L. <i>The concept of type in architecture: An inquiry into the nature of architectural</i>
5	<b>Style, formal languages</b>	Architectural types, definitions, categorization etc...		Akerman, J. S. (1962). <i>A Theory of Style</i> . <i>The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism</i> . Vol. 20, No. 3. pp. 227-237. Knight, Terry (1994). <i>Transformations in Design: A Formal Approach to Stylistic Change and Innovation in the Visual Arts</i> . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
6	<b>Aesthetics</b>	General introduction. The good, the beautiful, and the truthful		Winters, Edward, <i>Aesthetics and Architecture</i> (London: Continuum, 2007)
7	<b>Analysis</b>	What is analysis, what is a precedent i.e. the five basic components of a precedent		CLARK, R. H., PAUSE, M., 1996. <i>Precedents in Architecture</i> . 2nd edition UNWIN, S., 2003. <i>Analyzing Architecture</i> . 2nd ed. London and New York: Routledge. UNWIN, S., 2008. <i>An Architecture Notebook</i> . 3rd ed. London and New York: Routledge.
8	<b>Morphology</b>	Etymology and history, definitions, types; relational, constructive, transformative, value and aim of morphology		
<b>Midterm exam</b>				
9	<b>criticism</b>	Etymology and definition. literary and art criticism		Raymond Williams, <i>Keywords: a vocabulary of culture and society</i> . Fontana, 1976, pp. 74–76.
10+11	<b>Architectural criticism</b>	The ten types of architectural criticism		Attoe, Wayne. (1987). <i>Architecture and Critical Imagination</i>
12+13	<b>Case study presentations</b>	Visual and written examples of architectural criticism (local, regional and international)		
14+15	<b>student presentations</b>			

## **21. Teaching Methods and Assignments:**

This course is theoretical in nature, as such, it will be run as a seminar that depends on lectures and literature reviews. Run as a seminar, the delivery is intended to be open-ended, well structured, and directed. Nevertheless, to maximize students benefit of the course, the course will include an application part where students will analyse and present case studies in criticism and morphology. The class will meet twice weekly. In the first third of the semester, lectures will depend on material prepared by the lecturer, which will provide students with basic knowledge required for the second and third parts of the course. During the second third of the semester, lectures will take more the form of a seminar where students will participate more through previously summarized reading material and essays. In the third part of the semester, students will take the lead through presenting a group project. All through the course, students will be encouraged to direct the objects of discussion, to discuss and workshop their own critical writing, and to comment critically on the work of their peers. There will be an emphasis on both writing as a craft, and architectural modelling skills. Discussions will centre around the analysis of texts as well as precedents.

Students will be provided with their reading material two weeks before its due time. Students will work in groups of 2-4 starting the second third of the semester.

## **22. Evaluation Methods and Course Requirements:**

For the final grades of this course, active involvement in the course during the seminars, exams and quizzes scores, the quality of the term paper writing, as well as verbal and visual presentation and the will be assessed. Participation therefore does not mean pure presence in the class room but active contributions to the seminar discussions, therefore, students who haven't made

any question or comments to the content of the course during the seminars cannot achieve a participation grade of B or above.

The midterm exam as well as the final exam will evaluate factual, procedural, and conceptual knowledge developed by students across the semester. For the term paper, the intellectual strength of the argumentation and the proper structuring of the paper are valued most. Nevertheless, a good or excellent grade (B or above) can only be achieved if the paper is based on a solid research on the specific topic and a professional presentation. Texts which fail to name all sources of their information (incl. image sources) properly will not be considered for grades in the B range or above. To be able to involve in the discussions and get a broader theoretical understanding students are expected to read the seminar texts for each session provided for the students.

### ASSESSMENT:

Midterm exam 30%

Paper 15% (An architectural critique, 4 A4 pages including participation)

Active discussion and participation 5%

Final Paper exam 50%

### Grade Scale:

Approximate distribution of students within scale

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	D-	F
88-100	84-87	79-83	75-78	71-74	66-70	62-65	0-61

**F Inadequate** Minimal achievement is observed in terms of meeting the objectives. Insufficient evidence of understanding of the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytical skills; limited or irrelevant use of the literature.

**D-**The student exhibits very limited achievement across all objectives, struggling to grasp the required knowledge and skills and facing challenges in applying them adequately even with support.

**D/D+ Marginal Pass** - The student displays limited achievement across most objectives, or encounters clear difficulties in specific areas. There is a restricted understanding of the required knowledge and skills, with full application possible only in typical situations with assistance.

**C+/C/C- Satisfactory** The student demonstrates a good overall understanding of the required knowledge and skills, effectively applying them in standard situations. Occasional instances of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation are evident.

**B+/B/B- Good** The student consistently and comprehensively grasps the required knowledge and skills, applying them proficiently in diverse contexts. Evidence of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation is typically present, with occasional displays of originality and insight.

**A- Very Good** The student exhibits a consistent and thorough understanding of the required knowledge and skills, applying them adeptly across a wide range of scenarios. There is consistent evidence of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, often accompanied by displays of originality and insight.

**A+/A Excellent** The student demonstrates a flawless and comprehensive understanding of the required knowledge and skills, executing them impeccably across various situations. Consistent evidence of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation is apparent, alongside frequent displays of originality, insight, and consistently high-quality work.

## **23. Course Policies:**

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**All university rules and regulations will be strictly followed in evaluating students.**

### **A- Attendance policies:**

Absence percentage will not exceed 15% of the total lectures of the semester, which means that by the sixth absence, the student will not attend the final exam. Leaving class before it ends, or taking an extended bathroom or water break that lasts 1/3 of the class time or longer, will be considered an unexcused absence.

Absences from exams and handing in assignments on time:

- assignments are to be handed in on the dates and times scheduled
- incomplete work is accepted with the highest grade being at a C
- late work is not accepted
- work submitted by others is not accepted
- extensions are not granted
- make-ups are not granted

If a student is unable to submit a piece of coursework or attend an exam by the published deadline due to circumstances beyond control such as an emergency or other mitigating reasons that is accepted by the University (The circumstances must be fully and officially documented), the student has to hand it in as soon as he/she can after that. There will be no adjustment made for absence, late work, or incomplete work due to controllable events (such as visits to the Student Health Center, job interviews, holiday flights, and work schedules).

The grade of I (Incomplete) is assigned ONLY in accordance with the criteria set out in the School of engineering Bulletin and University regulations. A grade of Incomplete may be given only when the work of the course is substantially completed when the student's work is of passing quality.

### **B- Health and safety procedures:**

### **C- Honesty policy regarding cheating, plagiarism, misbehaviour:**

Misbehaviour:

Instructor may refuse a student admission to a lecture, a tutorial or learning activity set out in the course outline because of lateness, misconduct, inattention or failure to meet the responsibilities of the course set out in the course outline. Students who neglect their academic work may be assigned a final grade of N or debarred from final examinations.

Behaviours that inhibits other students' ability to learn and an instructor's ability to teach persistently or grossly interferes with classroom activities is considered disruptive and is subject to disciplinary action. A student responsible for disruptive behaviour may be required to leave class pending discussion and resolution of the problem and may be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs for disciplinary action.

Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to acts such as cheating on exams or assignments; plagiarizing the words or ideas of others; fabricating material or citations; facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others; claiming authorship of works done by others whether students or professionals; submitting work completed previous works by self or others; and/or submitting the same work to multiple classes in which a student is enrolled simultaneously. All these cases will be dealt with according to the rules and regulation stated out in the rules and regulations applied at the University of Jordan as posted on the University webpage

### **D- Grading policy:**

Midterm exam 30%

Paper 20% (An architectural critique, 4 A4 pages including participation)

Final Paper exam 50%

### **E- Available university services that support achievement in the course:**

Access to Wi-Fi internet

Proper electronic library

Main Library/Department Library

## F-Lecture room courtesy

Academic and social manners and civility are not trivial; they help to establish and maintain the quality of relationships between individuals involved in the academic experience and they inform proper everyday behaviors. To that end, kindly observe the following guidelines for maintaining a civil educational environment (adopted from copyright 2004 Janet L. Hartranft):

- **Punctuality** in attendance and leaving: It's courteous to be on time and to not leave class early. Students who arrive late disrupt class unnecessarily. Students who walk out of class early risk giving an unintentionally negative impression by exiting unexpectedly. If circumstances require you to be late for class, or require you to leave early, please alert the instructor either before or after class. Punctuality is highly appreciated; habitual lateness is likely to have a negative impact on one's grade.
- In deciding whether or not to attend class: Please do not ask your instructor if she is covering anything "important" on that day. This course is carefully planned out – every lecture is important.
- **Respect for others:** treating opinions and ideas with respect is a basic courtesy that is appreciated by all. It's important that each of us extend this courtesy to each other as part of our everyday class interactions. Respectful behaviors include listening carefully and attentively to what others have to say, offering comments and challenges to ideas in ways that address issues rather than personalities, coming to class on time, being prepared for the day's readings and activities, and refraining from talking or reading while others are speaking.
- **Class Rules:** lecture halls are communal spaces. All students are expected to be respectful to others who share the space, no beverages or food is allowed into the lecture room. Keep the room tidy and clean, and give utmost care to the equipment.
- Working on the lab computers during presentations: all students are expected to pay attention and take notes during lectures. Please refrain from working on the individual computers during class, presentations or discussions unless you take permission or doing so is an explicit component of the class exercise. Working on anything not related to lecture topic will lead to immediate dismissal from class. Repeating such actions will eventually affect the final grade
- **Mobile phones:** the use of phones in any manners is strictly prohibited. All Please make certain that all electronic devices are turned off before class begins.
- Bringing a newspaper or study materials (from other classes) to class: do not study material from other classes during this class. If you feel that you must spend our class time studying or doing homework, please go to the library.
- The content of the syllabus, lectures, and presentations; the design of the assignments; and calculation of the grade you earn are not starting points for negotiation. While the instructor is always willing to work with students on a one-on one-basis, individual terms cannot be negotiated with each student.
- Bringing guests to class: If you wish to bring a guest to class e.g. friend, relative, sibling please consult with the instructor prior to the visit. Visitors are generally welcome in class; however, the instructor does reserve the right to decline accommodating requests for visits.
- The instructor reserves the right to request that a student (or visitor) leave the classroom in the event that his or her behaviour becomes unduly distracting or disruptive to the purposes of the class or to maintaining the civility of the classroom environment.

## 24. Required equipment: (Facilities, Tools, Labs, Training....)

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Properly equipped lecture/seminar room  
Data show  
lab tops/workstations

## 25. References:

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- Akerman, J. S. (1962). A Theory of Style. *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*. Vol. 20, No. 3. pp. 227-237. Wiley: on behalf of The American Society for Aesthetics. DOI: 10.2307/427321 Architecture(Routledge, 2013)
- Arnheim, Rudolf, *The Dynamics of Architectural Form* (Berkeley: University of
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- CLARK, R. H., PAUSE, M., 1996. *Precedents in Architecture*. 2nd edition. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold.
- DAHABREH, S. M., ABU GHANIMEH, A., 2012. Design as Formulation: from application to reflection, *Disegnare idee immagini*, 45, *Registrazione Presso, Univerita di Roma*, 76-88.
- DAHABREH. SALEEM M., 2006. *The Formulation of Design: the Case of the Islip Courthouse by Richard Meier*. PhD thesis, Georgia Institute of Technology, GA.
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- Jupp, J. Gero. J. (2006). Visual style: Qualitative and context-dependent categorization. *Artificial intelligence for engineering design analysis and manufacturing*. 20(3):247-266.
- Knight, Terry (1994). *Transformations in Design: A Formal Approach to Stylistic Change and Innovation in the Visual Arts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
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- References by the instructor
- 4F\_C: A Conceptual Framework for Understanding Architectural Works. Dr Saleem M. Dahabreh. Published (March, 2014) *Scientific Research and Essays*
- Design as Formulation: from application to reflection. Dr Saleem M. Dahabreh, Dr Ali Abu Ganemieh. Published: *Disegnare idee immagini* n.45/2012: 76-88



- Between the Abstract and the Analytic: The case of the Douglas house by Richard Meier. Dr Saleem M. Dahabreh, Sama A. Jabr. Publication at Scroope 22/2013: The Cambridge Architectural Journal: 102-109. (Supported research by the University of Jordan).
- Investigating the Quality of Open Educational Spaces: the case of Al-Bayt University Al-Mafraq/Jordan Dr. Mwfeq Haddad, Prof. Samer Abu Ghazalah, Dr. Ali Abu Ghanemieh, and Dr Saleem M. Dahabreh. Published: Research Journal of Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology 5(4) 2013: 1075-1085, Maxwell science Publication.
- The hidden Geometry of the Douglas House. Dr Saleem M. Dahabreh. Published 09/2013: Research Journal of Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology. Maxwell science Publication.
- The Architectural Design Machine (AD\_M): integrating architectural knowledge. Dr Saleem M. Dahabreh. 01/2014: International Journal of Applied Engineering Research. (Supported research by the University of Jordan).

**26. Additional information:**

Name of Course Coordinator: Prof. Saleem M Dahabreh-----Signature: ----- Date: -----

Head of curriculum committee/Department: ----- Signature: -----

Head of Department: ----- Signature: -----

Head of curriculum committee/Faculty: ----- Signature: -----

Dean: ----- -Signature: -----