Texas A&M University

Core Curriculum

Initial Request for a Course Addition to the Fall 2014 Core Curriculum

Foundational Component Area: Creative Arts

Courses in this category focus on the appreciation and analysis of creative artifacts and works of the human imagination. Courses involve the synthesis and interpretation of artistic expression and enable critical, creative, and innovative communication about works of art.

How does the proposed course specifically address the Foundational Component Area definition above?

ARCH 249 is a survey of the history of world architecture and the human-designed and built environment from prehistory to the 13th century CE. The course focuses on the origins and the evolution of ideas related to creativity in art and architecture. Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to

- Visually recognize and identify architectural illustrations (plans, elevations, sections).
- Observe, analyze, and describe, using formal and technical vocabulary, the defining characteristics of buildings.
- Distinguish significant developments in construction and design.
- Understand and communicate the importance of cultural heritage and its contribution to social memory, identity, adaptive reuse, and historic preservation.
- Investigate and interpret evidence for the transmission of styles and design across time and cultures
- Build a chronological framework for understanding the development of construction/engineering techniques.
- Apply critical thinking to theories in the history of architecture.

Core Objectives

Describe how the proposed course develops the required core objectives below by indicating how each learning objective will be addressed, what specific strategies will be used for each objective and how student learning of each objective will be evaluated.

Critical Thinking (to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information):

ARCH 249 addresses the Core Critical Thinking Objective through the critical examination of factual data and theories related to the development of the human-designed and built environment, the origins and the evolution of ideas related to creativity in art and architecture, and important innovations in architectural form, material and technique.
The following critical thinking skills will be assessed on exams and through in-class writing activities and discussions.

- Students will analyze architectural illustrations and make inferences concerning the essential elements, relationships, and organizing principles of design.
- Students will analyze and evaluate data concerning architectural precedents and concepts that have impacted the form of the built environment from antiquity to the present day.
- Students will investigate and interpret evidence for the transmission of architectural styles and innovations across time and cultures and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of different theories concerning cultural diffusion and/or parallel developments in architecture.
- Students will think creatively about symbolic communication in art and architecture, synthesize information from diverse historical/cultural precedents, and formulate innovative sets of relationships or guidelines that could be applied to other contexts.

Communication (to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication):

ARCH 249 addresses the Core Communication Objective by teaching students how to examine and interpret architecture and architectural illustrations (formal visual analysis) and how to describe defining characteristics using accurate and technical vocabulary.

The following aspects of communication skills will be assessed on exams and through in-class writing activities and discussions.

- Students will learn methods of visual communication, analysis and interpretation through work with architectural illustrations (plans, elevations, sections), photographs, and other visual media.
- Students will compare material remains of buildings with selections of contemporary writings to interpret architectural design and its relationship to cultural, religious, and philosophical traditions.
- Students will access relevant multi-media resources and explain in class what they have learned as the most important architectural concepts reflected in a monument’s design.
- Students will engage in oral communication through class discussions and formulate accurate and appropriate responses and questions during lectures.

Social Responsibility (to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities):

ARCH 249 addresses the Core Social Responsibility Objective by considering the parallel and divergent canons and traditions of architecture from around the world. It teaches students to appreciate, understand, and respect the built environment of the diverse cultures and belief systems that form the foundations of the modern world.
The following aspects of the social responsibility skills will be assessed on exams and through in-class activities and discussions.

- Students will demonstrate intercultural competence by explaining how the human-designed and built environment can be understood as expressions of culture at local, regional, national and global scales, and how the culturally encoded meanings of art and architecture can change over time.
- Students will summarize and explain the roles and responsibilities of individuals, societies, local governments, and international organizations concerning heritage preservation.
- Students will compare the societal roles and responsibilities of architects and patrons in their own and other cultures.

**Teamwork (to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal):**

ARCH 249 will address the Core Teamwork Objective through in-class and online activities, including minute papers, discussion in small groups, and analytical exercises. These activities will provide models for students to share individual perspectives with each other and develop more effective answers to questions that may appear on formal examinations.

The following aspects of teamwork skills will be assessed through in-class activities:

- Students will work in small groups to discuss and consider different observations, conclusions, and points of view in the analysis and interpretation of architecture.
- Students will share individual and small group responses orally with the larger class, receiving feedback and commentary both from other students and the instructor.