

ARCHITECTURE SPRING 2027 UNDERGRADUATE ELECTIVE DESCRIPTIONS

ARCH 3600: Sustainable Design

TR 10:00-11:45am

Shirine Boulos Anderson

Given the building sector's significant contribution to greenhouse gas emissions, it is imperative to decarbonize our buildings, new and old, and to conserve resources. This paradigm shift will drive creative, sustainable, resilient, and inclusive design in the fields of architecture and urban planning for the foreseeable future. This course explores the overarching context of climate change and the urgency to holistically implement integrated sustainable design, identifying high-impact strategies, illustrated by real world case studies from the practice. The course highlights social inequities exacerbated by climate change, with consequences for the health and welfare of subjected populations. The course consists of a mix of readings, discussions, team research projects, and collaborative design interventions to address designing for a low-carbon future, water conservation, social equity and inclusion, ecology, health and wellness, economy, material resources, adaptive change, innovation and discovery.

ARCH 3800-01: Domestic Futures in Latin America

TR 8:00-9:45am

Emmanuel Osorno

This seminar explores experimental housing prototypes in Latin America, with a focus on collective forms of living and their cultural, economic, and political contexts. Students will study historical and emerging case studies and document their findings through a collective project. The project will situate these housing experiments within broader global conversations about affordability, community, and design innovation.

ARCH3800-02: Interrogating the City Through Film

TR 10:00-11:45am

Tatjana Crossley

The perfect architectural dream is a filmic dream. Pictures become an environment. Architecture becomes a film. – Bruno, *Atlas of Emotion: Journeys in Art, Architecture, and Film* (Verso, 2002), 36

This course is an architectural history and theory course that examines the built environment through filmic representations of the city. Rather than proceeding chronologically, it is structured around themes framed through the discussion of specific cities and regions as they are depicted in cinema. It interrogates the urban landscape of these cities and considers the historical, social, cultural, economic and political forces that produced their present conditions. While it is impossible to cover the full histories of any one of these places, the course takes up specific episodes in which architectural history is inseparable from a social and political one, producing radical urban environments. There are many readings of the city, each arising from a subjective eye; film offers a mode of representation through which one such reading becomes legible. While most of these films are fictional, they give insight into a more critical understanding of our place within society and the city. Film has the capacity to materialize marginalized memory or perpetuate structures of power. Through it we can dissect the subjective experience of the built environment and critically analyze its successes, its failures, and its projected futures.

Each week pairs a film viewing with a lecture and discussion that delves into the respective 'place.'

This relation between film and the architectural ensemble involves an embodiment, for it is based on the inscription of an observer in the field. Such an observer is not a static contemplator, a fixed gaze, a disembodied eye/I. She is a physical entity, a moving spectator, a body making journeys in space. — Bruno, Atlas of Emotion, 56

Students occupy this position themselves in relation to Boston. Over the course of the semester, each student uses film to develop a critical reading of the city they inhabit daily, moving from spectator to analyst of their own urban environment.

ARCH3800-03: Ideas & Theory in Landscape

TR 10am-11:45am

Mark Klopfer

This course examines the history and theory of landscape as a cultural and design medium. Students will develop a familiarity with the language of landscape architecture, and be introduced to ideas of planting design, topographic manipulation, and cultural interpretation of landscapes over time. This background will be reinforced with course readings, research centering on a built project's conceptual and tactical strategies, and a design project of one's own that utilizes the strategies studied.

ARCH3800-04: Immersive XR

TR 6:30pm-8:15pm

Michael Kyes

This course examines the role of immersive XR (Virtual reality, Augmented reality, Mixed reality) as an active tool within the architectural design process, challenging students to move beyond conventional workflows and engage with the built environment through a fundamentally new lens. Through hands-on experience with leading XR applications (VRSketch, Arkio, Workshop XR, etc.), students will explore how immersive XR can sharpen spatial understanding, accelerate design decision-making, improve coordination across disciplines, and transform the way buildings are detailed, assembled, and communicated to stakeholders. The course is organized around four Design Use Cases — Spatial Awareness, Design Exploration, Systems Coordination, and Assembly Intelligence: each representing a distinct and increasingly sophisticated application of immersive technology in practice. Guest lecturers from the AEC industry and an XR researcher will bring real-world case studies and physical materials into the classroom, grounding digital immersion in the realities of professional practice. Students will work fluidly between headset and desktop environments, developing a designer-centered XR workflow they can carry into their careers.

ARCH3800-05: Housing Futures Lab*

TR 8am-9:45am

Suneeth John

Housing Futures Lab is a directed research studio-seminar combining creative finance, innovative architectural design, and community engagement. A core feature is the integration of development finance into the design process. As Boston's shifting demographics reshape neighborhoods and affordability, the City of Boston's Housing Innovation Lab has called for scalable, high-density, family-friendly designs.

The studio addresses that demand by focusing on new, intergenerational housing typologies. Students will tackle these issues through the adaptive reuse of a historic public-school building, partnering with a local affordable housing organization to transform the vacant school into affordable family housing. In the seminar component, students will build realistic pro formas evaluating construction costs and long-term feasibility. Key topics include Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, public land disposition, and climate financing. Additionally, students will engage in participatory design, embedding with the local affordable housing organization for community outreach and co-creation charrettes.

*Students work in interdisciplinary teams and must register for both the associated Studio 08 section and this seminar.

ARCH4075: Color Relationships

TR 10:00-11:45am

Ann Pitt

This course introduces students to color theory. Through readings and exercises, students develop an understanding of how color relationships affect our perceptions of color. Works and writings by many artists are studied, with particular focus on the work of twentieth-century abstract expressionist painter and teacher Hans Hofmann. Using acrylic paint, students do a series of formal color exercises and painting projects throughout the semester, with a painting as the semester's final project.

ARCH4080: Time, Memory + Silence: Searching for the Spiritual in Architecture

TR 10:00-11:45am

Meliti Dikeos

In this lecture- and discussion-based course, students will examine the sacred as defined by places of worship and rituals among world religions, both East and West, as well as less explicit religious sacredness as experienced in places of commemoration, the natural landscape, the home, and even in the selfless act of serving others. What role does architecture play in defining the spiritual, the ineffable? Can one understand the atmospheric character of a space through qualities of light, scale, materials, color, texture? Can silence be built? In this course, precedents will serve as the means for understanding built form (as that which remains) and its relationship to place, time, and culture. Students will examine how even a fleeting experience can leave a profound memory; how architecture – whether sacred or secular – may be imbued with “timelessness.” We will discuss readings by authors from various disciplines, including architects, art historians, theologians, anthropologists, and social justice leaders. Documentation and analytical “active-reading” drawings will support student interpretations, understanding, and group discussion.

ARCH9600: Professional Perspectives

[Please note that the graduate course ARCH9600: Professional Perspectives is open to BS Arch seniors and may serve as either an Architecture Elective or a General Elective; see catalog.]