

University of Southern California School of Architecture
MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE PROGRAM

ARCH 793bL/795bL

ARCH 793bL Architecture Directed Design Research Option I (6 units)

ARCH 795bL Architecture Thesis Option II (6 units)

Critical Topics in Architecture

COURSE OVERVIEW

Architecture 793b/795b is the final degree studio requirement in the professional MARCH and post-professional MAAS curriculum. A graduate student is required to demonstrate a comprehensive level of development in the design studio project including but not limited to: design process, technology, understanding of economic, social and environmental context, materiality of construction including primary building systems/components, structure, skin, life safety, environmental systems, and process of implementation. This course is taken subsequently to ARCH 793a/795a.

GOALS/OBJECTIVES

To this end, the course has three broad objectives:

1. To strengthen understanding of how design process mediates the formation of the design project through consideration of contemporary issues.
2. To develop critical reasoning, thinking and communication skills.
3. To develop critical design skills.

REQUIREMENTS

STUDIO PARTICIPATION

Studio participation is critical to you as an individual and to the collective success of the program. Traditional one-on-one desk crits, small group discussion and informal pinup review formats will be used. *It is essential that you utilize the studio class hours as a time for focused work.* You should be available for spontaneous group discussions and pinups at any time. Leaving the studio, for example to use the data or wood shop, must be arranged with your instructor. Budget a minimum of two hours of work outside of class for each class hour. Note that this is a minimum commitment of 24 hours a week in addition to the 12 hours of studio class time. You are strongly encouraged to work in studio outside of required class hours to benefit from the studio environment and interaction with fellow students and faculty. Informal discussion and exchange of ideas with classmates is a great opportunity.

Reviews are one of the most important elements of your architectural education. Full participation is required at all reviews: you are expected to be attentive, engaged and to participate from the beginning until the end of each review.

See item **Attendance** for school's policy on attendance.

LECTURES

A series of all-studio lectures on particular topics within the current discourse of architecture will occur over the course of the semester according to a schedule to be determined. Each of these lectures is intended to promote discussion, to influence design and to open one's mind to critical topics by bringing theory, technology and design together. All students are required to attend these lectures. Each studio instructor will conduct a discussion following the lectures within their studio group.

"All-school" lectures occur typically on Wednesday evenings at 6:00 p.m. You are required to attend all of these lectures. Please consult the studio schedule for lecture time and locations.

CONSULTANTS

Over the course of the semester, each studio will have the support of various consultants. Individual studio instructors will schedule these outside consultants according to the requirements of their section. The involvement of these consultants is to complement the studio effort in issues of structural order/synthesis and sustainability/environmental systems integration as well as additional topics at the discretion of the instructor. Independent Topic students will arrange through their instructors and committees for dedicated meetings as necessary with outside consultants.

READINGS

Each studio instructor will assign readings related to the studio topic. Students will be required to complete all readings assigned.

STUDIO DOCUMENT AND PORTFOLIO

The work of the Design Studio is process oriented. Documentation of each step in your work process is critical as a record of your ideas, process and products, and as a demonstration of graphic and written communication skills. Each student is required to maintain an 8 ½ x 11 binder in which the studio work is kept in an orderly manner over the entire course of the semester. This studio document will be submitted following the final presentations for evaluation by the studio faculty and replaces what has previously been referred to as the final portfolio. The studio document is to be a comprehensive record of the work of the semester and should include text to place the work in context, annotated diagrams, concept sketches as well as completed final presentation materials to demonstrate the full range of the students thought and work product. It is not expected that the work develop w/ linear consistency over the course of the semester and therefore, while the final product will demonstrate a consistent/coherent result, it is not required that completed early work be “redone” to make it align w/ the final project. A single bound copy of the Studio Document must be submitted at the completion of the semester and will be retained by the School in its archive.

UPLOADING OF PROJECT FILES

As part of the initiative to create a digital archive, the School of Architecture has established a digital drop box. Each student is required to submit 10 images and 1 word document according to the file format specified which may be found at arch-pubs.usc.edu/upload/. Files must be uploaded by each student. More specific directions/requirements may be presented by individual studio section instructors. Failure to upload your file will affect your final grade.

GRADING STRUCTURE

Final studio grades will be determined by the following breakdown.

Analysis/Preliminary Work	10%*
Midterm Review	25% (5% Diagrams/Analysis*)
Final Review	45% (10% Diagrams/Analysis*)
Overall Class Participation	10%
Final Studio Document	10%

*Certain items must be included in documentation. See Final Requirements for list of items with asterisk. A more detailed criteria/requirements will be handed in studio.

UNSATISFACTORY PROGRESS REPORTS

Unsatisfactory Progress reports will be issued to students whose work is not satisfactory at anytime during the semester. Remember that an incomplete grade (IN) is limited by University policy to cases of extended documented illness or family emergency involving a passing-level student in the last weeks of the semester.

SCHEDULE

See ARCH 793b/795b Schedule spreadsheet distributed on first day of class.

COURSE POLICIES

STUDIO RULES

1. If you wish to listen to music, please use headphones. Respect the fact that the studio is a collective workspace 24/7 and others may not share your musical interests at any particular moment.
2. Cell phones are to be turned off during studio hours.
3. Studio time is not to be used for email correspondence or web surfing.
4. Food and drink are discouraged in studio: one spill can jeopardize many hours of effort, and such mishaps seem to occur most often when one is tired and on deadline.
5. Do not use spray paint or spray adhesive inside the studio. When using such materials outside, always use the available brown kraft paper as a drop cloth to avoid overspray.
6. Always have an architectural scale and tracing paper available for desk crits.
7. You are encouraged to work with computer-integrated design, but the complications and unpredictable nature of CAD are not an acceptable excuse to miss class, to not be working during studio time, to not have drawings for critiques because of computer malfunctions or to not have printed final drawings at the time of reviews. It is your responsibility to have hard copy for each critique, printed out to an appropriate, measurable scale.
8. It is your responsibility to maintain secure backup of your work. In general, do not copy over known working files without maintaining previous known working versions of files in the event of file corruption problems. Keep backup files in a location separate from your primary work place.

THE 2010 IMPERATIVE STATEMENT

As the Architecture Faculty have voted to accept the 2010 Imperative-- to improvement of ecological literacy among the students and faculty and to achieve a carbon-neutral design school campus by 2010. The following statement should be added to all design studio syllabi where appropriate:

"The design should engage the environment in a way that dramatically reduces or eliminates the need for fossil fuel."

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

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. *Scampus*, the Student Guidebook, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00, while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A: <http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/SCAMPUS/gov/>. Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/>.

PLAGIARISM

University guidelines relative to plagiarism pertain to original design work. You are expected to do all of your own design and presentation work. Assistance received, in the form of model construction, drawing preparation, or the flagrant appropriation of the design work of others will be considered as non-original work and will be treated as plagiarism.

Plagiarism, the copying of any work in whole or in part without citation, will not be tolerated. If plagiarism is committed by any student and is confirmed by the instructor, the student will receive an F grade for the

assignment, and possibly the course. The severity of the violation will also determine whether the student is reported to the appropriate University offices for further sanctions.

ATTENDANCE

Attending classes is a basic responsibility of every USC student who is enrolled in courses at the School of Architecture. The School of Architecture's general absence policy is to allow a student to miss the equivalent of one week of class sessions, without directly affecting the student's grade and ability to complete the course (this is for excused absences for any confirmed personal illness/family emergency/religious observance or for any unexcused absences). For each absence over that allowed number, the student's letter grade can be lowered up to one full letter grade.

If additional absences are required for a personal illness/family emergency/religious observance, the situation should be discussed and evaluated with the faculty member and appropriate Chair on a case-by-case basis.

All students should understand that any false representation of their attendance is grounds to be considered for a violation of ethics before the University.

Any student not in class within the first 10 minutes is considered tardy, and any student absent (in any form including sleep, technological distraction, or by leaving mid class for a long bathroom/water break) for more than 1/3 of the class time can be considered fully absent. Each tardy class counts as half an absence. If arriving late, a student must be respectful of a class in session and do everything possible to minimize the disruption caused by a late arrival. It is always the student's responsibility to seek means (if possible) to make up work missed due to absences, not the instructor's, although such recourse is not always an option due to the nature of the material covered.

Being absent on the day a project presentation, exercise or other study is due can lead to an "F" for that project presentation, exercise, or study (unless the faculty concedes the reason is due to an excusable absence for personal illness/family emergency/religious observance.

STUDENT DISABILITY

Rehabilitation Act (Section 504) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The University of Southern California is committed to full compliance with the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). As part of the implementation of this law, the University will continue to provide reasonable accommodation of academically qualified students with disabilities so those student can participate fully in the University's educational programs and activities. Although USC is not required by law to change the "fundamental nature of essential curricular components of its programs in order to accommodate the needs of disabled students," the University will provide reasonable academic accommodations. The specific responsibility of the University administration and all faculty serving in a teaching capacity is to ensure the University's compliance with this policy.

The general definition of a student with a disability is any person who has "a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person's major life activities," and any person who has "a history of, or is regarded as having, such an impairment." Reasonable academic and physical accommodations include but are not limited to: extended time on examinations; substitution of similar or related work for a non-fundamental program requirement; time extensions on papers and projects; special testing procedures; advance notice regarding book list for visually impaired and some learning disabled students; use of academic aides in the classroom such as note takers and sign language interpreters; early advisement and assistance with registration; accessibility for students who use wheelchairs and those with mobility impairments; and need for special classroom furniture or special equipment in the classroom.

OBTAINING ACCOMMODATIONS

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to your instructor as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 AM. – 5:00 PM., Monday through Friday. Disability Services & Programs contact: 213.740.0776

ACCREDITATION STATEMENT

The USC School of Architecture's five-year Bachelor of Architecture program and the Master of Architecture program are accredited professional architectural degree programs. All students can access and review the NAAB Conditions of Accreditation (including the Student Performance Criteria) on the NAAB Website, http://www.naab.org/accreditation/2009_conditions.aspx.