



Winter 2024

Course Number	ARCH 680 (L05)	Classroom	CBDL TBD
Course Name	Special Topics in Architecture - Interrogating Quality in Architecture		
Pre/Co-Requisites			
Instructor	Dr. Brian R. Sinclair	Office Hours/Location	PF3103 By appointment
	brian.sinclair@ucalgary.ca	(403) 210-8613	
Class Dates	Tuesday 09:00-12:00		
Instructor Email Policy	Please note that all course communications must occur through your @ucalgary email – instructor will endeavor to respond to emails sent via student’s @ucalgary emails within 48 hours.		
Name and Email of Teaching Assistant(s)	Not applicable.		

Course Description:

Thematic inquiry and design related to special topics in architecture.

Interrogating Quality in Architecture: Place, Meaning, Context + Consequences in Modern Design

ARCH 680 L05 is an elective which critically examines how we consider, define and operationalize QUALITY in the built environment. Societies, globally, are shifting and transforming in dramatic and, at times, incomprehensible ways. Architecture, and associated constructed environments, prove vital as determinants of public health + wellbeing, as cultural signifiers, and as barometers of progress and of both tangible & intangible manifestations of human values.

In contemporary society our definitions, and understanding, of ‘good’ design are being dramatically questioned, reevaluated and revised. Moving from a long-accepted focus on the physical, on form and on aesthetics, modern design is now exploring and incorporating, in holistic ways, key aspects of quality of life that must inform, influence and inspire successful outcomes.

Significant issues such as public health, social justice, climate change, and rising inequity, to name but a few, all factor into our current and often radical reconsideration of what constitutes exemplary design. This elective examines the evolution of design, the changing demands on Architecture, and some trajectories for crafting more potent and more appropriate spaces & places in the built environment moving forward. Included in critical assessments of Architecture are aspects of wellness, spirit, values, needs and expectations – socially, psychologically, legally, culturally and so forth. Case studies are examined, including visits to actual sites and conversations with architects, developers and others responsible for the conception, creation, and construction of quality projects. Design matters.

The elective is shaped, developed and delineated over the Winter academic term with a clear intention to have students gain a valuable & strategic understanding of the opportunities and obligations concerning design decisions and associated Quality of Life. The curriculum and pedagogy for the elective are informed, inspired and supported by a major Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) research project, secured by the instructor (and national colleagues) addressing 'Quality in Canada's Built Environment'. Partners in this innovative & precedent-setting research project will be involved in aspects of this elective course.

Course Hours: (3-0)

Course Learning Outcomes:

1. To consider the roles, opportunities and obligations concerning research in design.
2. To develop research, analysis, design and critical thinking skills.
3. To develop knowledge of the shifting societal expectations for environmental design and associated design professionals.
4. To develop skills and awareness concerning ways of critically assessing then effectively realizing quality in design.
5. To understand the crucial need for interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary engagement in design thinking and problem solving.
6. To see the concept that buildings and constructed environments are ecologies that participate in larger ecologies (flow systems), and to understand the roles that people, place, technology, culture and context play in such (inter)relationships.

Learning Resources:

Recommending readings, textbooks and learning materials follows (initial list – more detailed information and targeted sources will follow as the semester unfolds).

Andonian, Greg (Editor). [Advances in Art & Architecture, Urbanity and Social Sustainability \(Volume XIII\)](#). International Institute for the Advanced Studies in Systems Research and Cybernetics: Ottawa, Canada. 2023.

Bahonar, Hosna and Sinclair, Brian R. "Enhancing Design Through Agility: An Integrative Architectural Framework Addressing Innovation, Adaptation and Quality". In: Andonian, Greg (Editor). Advances in Art & Architecture, Urbanity and Social Sustainability (Volume XIII). International Institute for the Advanced Studies in Systems Research and Cybernetics: Ottawa, Canada. 2023.

Chattopadhyay Swati and White, Jeremy (Editors). The Routledge Companion to Critical Approaches to Contemporary Architecture. Routledge: New York. 2020.

Couzens, Dustin, Sinclair, Brian R. and Klumper, Ben. "Rebellion, Robotics and a Radical Reboot: Emergent Processes in Turbulent Times". Co-authored with Dustin Couzens & Ben Klumper (Modern Office of Design and Architecture). Resilient City: Physical, Social and Economic Perspectives. ARCC-EAAE 2022 International Conference. Architectural Research Centers Consortium + European Association for Architectural Education. Miami, Florida, USA, 2022.

Cucuzzella, Carmela and Goubran, Sherif. Sustainable Architecture: Between Measurement and Meaning. Foreword by Brian R. Sinclair. Vernon Press: Wilmington, Delaware. 2020.

Sinclair, Brian R. "Design, Quality and Built Environments: Considering Lived Experience as a Fundamental Factor". In: Andonian, Greg (Editor). Advances in Art & Architecture, Urbanity and Social Sustainability (Volume XIII). International Institute for the Advanced Studies in Systems Research and Cybernetics: Ottawa, Canada. 2023. pp. 85-93.

Sinclair, Brian R. "Design Excellence Reset: Shifting Values and Interrogating Value in a Dramatically Different World." The Research-Design Interface: ARCC International Conference 2023. Architectural Research Centers Consortium. Dallas, Texas, USA 2023.

Sinclair, Brian R. "Architecture at a Critical Threshold: Meaningfully Migrating from Luxury to Essential Services". Symposium: Architecture, Urbanity & Social Sustainability of 21st Century: In Search of New Paradigms. Published in Advances in ARCHITECTURE, URBANITY and SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY. Volume XII. G. Andonian (Editor). Canada, 2022.

Sinclair, Brian R. and Esmaeili, Nooshin. "Design Quality Reset: Interrogating Definition, Delineation, Measurement + Meaning in a Shifting Ethos". Co-authored with Nooshin Esmaeili. Symposium: Architecture, Urbanity & Social Sustainability of 21st Century: In Search of New Paradigms. Published in Advances in ARCHITECTURE, URBANITY and SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY. Volume XII. G. Andonian (Editor). Canada, 2022.

Sinclair, Brian R. "Spirituality and the City". Book chapter: The Routledge International Handbook of Spirituality in Society and the Professions. Edited by Laszlo Zsolnai and Bernadette Flanagan. Routledge: Oxon, UK. 2019. Pp 93-102.

Sinclair, Brian R. "Integration | Innovation | Inclusion: Values, Variables and the Design of Human Environments". Cybernetics and Systems: An International Journal, 46:6-7, pp 554-579, 2015.

Sinclair, Brian R. "Devising Design: Agility, Aptness, Equilibrium, Imperfection". Pp 41-58. In: Building Dynamics: Exploring Architecture of Change (Editors: B. Kolarevic + V. Parlac). Routledge: London, 2015.

Technology requirements:

The elective will rely on D2L for communications, digital submissions, etc. UCalgary email addressed must be used for any digital engagement, correspondence and submissions.

The course may include both digital and analog deliverables, requiring use of a personal computer with relevant software as well as physical making activities.

Workshop Safety Training Requirement

This elective may necessitate the use of the SAPL workshop – necessitating all students to have access to the workshop (i.e., completed relevant University of Calgary safety courses, the online Trajectory safety training course, as well as in-person workshop training and a grade of pass on the final evaluation project).

Assessment Components:

The following components comprise the evaluation for this elective course:

Assessment Method	Description	Weight
A1. Assessing Quality	Research and Development concerning assessment criteria	20%
A2. Case Study	In-depth Exploration of Quality in a Constructed Project	30%
A3. Design Manifesto and Design Guidelines	Taking a Position and Delineating Actions	40%
A4. Book Production	Elective Publication	10%

Assessment and Evaluation Information

Attendance and Participation Expectations:

Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and actively participate in the culture, conduct and intellectual life of the course.

Guidelines for Submitting Assignments:

Elective assignments & specific deliverables will be distributed for each phase of the course. Digital components will, in general, be submitted to a phase dropbox in D2L. Physical deliverables will be submitted in accordance with instructor guidance.

Expectations for Writing

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-2.html>

Late Assignments:

All assignments (e.g., projects, papers, presentations, etc.) must be turned in on time. Late assignments will lose a letter grade every 24 hours after the submission date/time. Late assignments submitted more than four days late, without instructor approval, will constitute a failure.

Criteria that must be met to pass:

A passing grade on all components of the elective is essential if the student is to pass the course as a whole.

Grading Scale:

Grade	Grade Point Value	4-Point Range	Percent	Description
A+	4.00	4.00	95-100	Outstanding - evaluated by instructor
A	4.00	3.85-4.00	90-94.99	Excellent - superior performance showing comprehensive understanding of the subject matter
A-	3.70	3.50-3.84	85-89.99	Very good performance
B+	3.30	3.15-3.49	80-84.99	Good performance
B	3.00	2.85-3.14	75-79.99	Satisfactory performance
B-	2.70	2.50-2.84	70-74.99	Minimum pass for students in the Faculty of Graduate Studies
C+	2.30	2.15-2.49	65-69.99	All final grades below B- are indicative of failure at the graduate level and cannot be counted toward Faculty of Graduate Studies course requirements.
C	2.00	1.85-2.14	60-64.99	
C-	1.70	1.50-1.84	55-59.99	
D+	1.30	1.15-1.49	50-54.99	
D	1.00	0.50-1.14	45-49.99	
F	0.00	0-0.49	0-44.99	

A student who receives a "C+" or lower in any one course will be required to withdraw regardless of their grade point average (GPA) unless the program recommends otherwise. If the program

permits the student to retake a failed course, the second grade will replace the initial grade in the calculation of the GPA, and both grades will appear on the transcript.

The School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape will not permit the Flexible Grade Option (CG Grade) for any course offered by the School.

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/f-1-3.html>

Topic Areas & Detailed Class Schedule

Course Schedule Date	Topic	Assignments/Due Dates
Jan 8 – 12	Introducing Quality in Design	A1 Distributed Tue Jan 09
Jan 15 – 19	Topic 1 – Guest + Discussion	
Jan 22 – 26	Topic 2 – Guest + Discussion	
Jan 29 – Feb 2	Topic 3 – Guest + Discussion	
Feb 5 – 9	Presentations + Seminar	A1 Due Tue Feb 06 A2 Distributed
Feb 12 – 16	Winter SAPL Block week	
Feb 19	Family Day Observed	
Feb 19 – 23	Winter Term Break	
Feb 26 – Mar 1	Topic 4 – Guest + Discussion	
Mar 4 – 8	Topic 5 – Guest + Discussion	
Mar 11 – 15	Topic 6 – Guest + Discussion	
Mar 18 – 22	Presentations + Seminar	A2 Due Tue Mar 19 A3 Distributed
Mar 25 – 28	Topic 7 – Guest + Discussion	
Mar 29	Good Friday – University closed	
Apr 1	Easter Monday – University closed	
Apr 2 – 5	Topic 8 – Guest + Discussion	
Apr 8 – 9	Term Summary + Discussion	A3 Due Tue Apr 09
Apr 15 – 19	Final Review week	Elective Book Due
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Schedule is subject to change based on circumstances, opportunities, etc.</i> • <i>Some elective sessions may be held off-site at partners offices and facilities</i> 		

University of Calgary Policies and Supports

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations according to the University policies and procedures listed below. The student accommodation policy can be found at: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/student-accommodation-policy>

Students needing an accommodation because of a disability or medical condition should communicate this need to Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/sites/default/files/teams/1/Policies-Accommodation-for-Students-with-Disabilities-Procedure.pdf>. Students needing an accommodation in relation to their coursework or to fulfil requirements for a graduate degree, based on a Protected Ground other than Disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to their instructor (contact information on first page above).

SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

- Attendance and Participation Expectations:
 - Students are expected to attend and come prepared to meaningfully engage in all class sessions. This includes producing or preparing content necessary for discussion and contributing to individual and class-wide discussions and/or conversations/assessments with the Course Instructor.
 - **Excused Absences:** In the event of an exceptional circumstance (e.g., illness, bereavement, etc.) or an exceptional opportunity (e.g., varsity athletic competition, national conference or awards ceremony, pow wow, etc.) up to four excused absences (for courses that meet twice or more per week) and up to two excused absences (for courses that meet once per week) are allowable per semester before jeopardizing one's own course grade and ability to pass the course. However, any such accommodations must be approved by the Instructor with advance notice by the student.
 - **Unexcused Absences:** Attendance at all class sessions and participation in all assessments is mandatory. Unexcused absences in excess of two per semester (for courses that meet twice per week) and one per semester (for courses that meet once per week) are grounds for failure in the course.
 - **Total Number of Absences:** The combined total number of excused or unexcused absences per semester cannot exceed four per semester (for courses that meet twice per week) or two per semester (for courses that meet once per week). Any number in excess are grounds for failure in the course.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Academic Misconduct refers to student behavior which compromises proper assessment of a student's academic activities and includes: cheating; fabrication; falsification; plagiarism; unauthorized assistance; failure to comply with an instructor's expectations regarding conduct required of students completing academic assessments in their courses; and failure to comply with exam regulations applied by the Registrar.

For information on the Student Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure please visit: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/student-academic-misconduct-policy>

Additional information is available on the Academic Integrity Website at <https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/learning/academic-integrity>.

COPYRIGHT LEGISLATION:

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/acceptable-use-material-protected-copyright-policy>) and requirements of the copyright act (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorised sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>).

INSTRUCTOR INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Course materials created by instructors (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the course at the same time may be allowed under fair dealing.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY

Student information will be collected in accordance with typical (or usual) classroom practice. Students' assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty. Private information related to the individual student is treated with the utmost regard by the faculty at the University of Calgary.

SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE POLICY

The University recognizes that all members of the University Community should be able to learn, work, teach and live in an environment where they are free from harassment, discrimination, and violence. The University of Calgary's sexual violence policy guides us in how we respond to incidents of sexual violence, including supports available to those who have experienced or witnessed sexual violence, or those who are alleged to have committed sexual violence. It

provides clear response procedures and timelines, defines complex concepts, and addresses incidents that occur off-campus in certain circumstances. Please see the policy available at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/sexual-and-gender-based-violence-policy> .

UNIVERSITY STUDENT APPEALS OFFICE

If a student has a concern about a grade that they have received, they should refer to Section I of the Undergraduate Calendar (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i-3.html>) which describes how to have a grade reappraised. In addition, the student should refer to the SAPL's Procedure for reappraisal of grades.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Please visit the Registrar's website at: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines> for additional important information on the following:

- Wellness and Mental Health Resources
- Student Success
- Student Ombuds Office
- Student Union (SU) Information
- Graduate Students' Association (GSA) Information
- Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points
- Safewalk