CAS AH 383 Paris Architecture and Urbanism: From Monument to Urban Landscape

Credits: 4

Hub Units: Aesthetic Exploration (1 unit)  
Historical Consciousness (1 unit)  
Critical Thinking (1 unit)

Schedule: FALL & SPRING  
16 two-and-a-half-hour sessions over 7.5 weeks (2 weekly sessions + 2 additional sessions)  
Final exam (last Friday - take home)  
SUMMER  
5 five-hour sessions (first intensive week) + 4 four-hour sessions (following Fridays)

Course Material:  
- A Course Reader with the required readings (to be purchased by each student).  
- Supplemental and Thematic Readings posted on Blackboard.

Assessment for the course:  
- Attendance, participation and preparedness (10%),  
- Three quizzes (replaced by a midterm test in Summer) (20%),  
- Building Visit Discussion (10%),  
- Thematic Dossier (2 essays + Round table presentation) (60%),

Homework includes mandatory readings in English (15-20 pages) for each session, preparation for in-class tests (quizzes and exams), as well as extensive research and reflection for the building visit discussion, the round table presentation and the thematic dossier (10-12 pages total, plus iconography and bibliography).

Structure: 1/3 lecture, 2/3 visit

This course is accessible to students with no previous experience in art history.

This course, including assignments and additional visits, is conducted entirely in French.

I. COURSE PRESENTATION

This course traces the development of Parisian architecture and urbanism from the Roman period to the present. It is designed to offer students a sense of the dynamic exchange between architectural space and form, urban development, the history of ideas and the larger economic, cultural and political history of Paris. The course is organized into five units of three classes, each unit opening with an introductory lecture at the BU Center followed by two visit-based classes. Assignments are cumulative, developed throughout the semester through a thematic prism.

Course objectives
- Identifying the forces shaping the architectural and urban discourse concerning Paris within international, national and local debates. This will include the identification of major tendencies as well as significant events, actors and projects.
- Understanding the evolution of policies and practices of the French State, the City of Paris and, more recently, the Île-de-France Region, which frame the increasing intervention of public authorities in the domain of the built environment.
- Initiating students to the analysis of architectural and urban spaces and forms, in particular through observation, visual analysis and first hand experience.
- Accompanying students in the development of their own critical understanding of Paris through theme based course work pursued throughout the semester.
II. HUB AREAS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will have developed:

- approaches to the analysis of buildings and cities through observation, formal analysis, and first-hand experience, as well as an introduction to the technical terminology of the fields of architecture and urbanism.
- an understanding of the key moments and trends in the history of French architecture and urbanism.
- an understanding of the dynamics that have driven the development of the city historically, and that continue to shape it today.
- an understanding of the role that the competing interests of local and national authorities and various actors and stakeholders play in shaping the built environment.
- an understanding of key issues in architecture and urban design – notably, how the design of the built environment can promote social equality, respond to environmental imperatives as well as respect and accommodate established communities and historic urban forms.
- a critical understanding of the historical development of Paris through theme-based course work.

Hub area: Critical Thinking (1 unit)

1. Students will develop the ability to
   - Identify in their readings different ways of thinking, such as empirical claims about matter of fact statements (descriptive readings) and more analytical or interpretive readings, and recognize judgment and bias in such readings.
   - Identify different factors involved in making a judgment such as cultural standards (France vs. other countries) or time standards (current vs contemporary periods).
   - Observe, identify and use in the proper way spatial, visual, auditive, physical perceptions and experience as well as their immediate reactions in order to better understand a building or a place and its reception today as well as in their times.

2. Students will develop the ability to
   - Recognize in their own analysis a solid structure of reasoning underpinning their interpretations, including the role of perception/experience in the understanding of a building/place and how to mobilize it for the better, the need to identify when they are judging the past through present standards, the necessary critical distance to enter into the spirit of the time and place to understand the significance of works.
   - Formulate analytical/critical questions addressed to their peers about specific buildings/places during visits.
   - Create a formal comparative analysis, using appropriate specialized and standard language orally (round table) and in the writing of a critical Dossier.
Hub area: Aesthetic Exploration (1 unit)

1. This course focuses on architecture and urbanism from the Roman period to the present and deals with Roman, Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance, Classical, Eclectic, Modern, Post-Modern and Contemporary styles. It covers elements such as specific buildings (housing, theaters, fountains, monuments, public buildings, etc.) and infrastructures (roads, railroads, defensive walls, green spaces, etc.). It is divided in 5 chronological units comprised of one introductory lecture devoted to methodological, historical and aesthetic aspects and two visits of relevant buildings/areas in Paris. Throughout the course, individual elements are placed in their cultural context and their purpose, perception and use in their time and today are systematically addressed.

2. Five skill building skills units (Reading Maps and Drawings, Analysis via Observation and Experience, Critical Thinking and Thematic Analysis, Historical Thinking) serve as methodological foundations to build a comparative chronological analysis through a thematic prism such as Conceptions of the City, Heritage, Infrastructure, Natural & Built Environment, Public Realm, Dwelling in the City. Specialized vocabulary and analytical phrasing are used throughout the course both by students and professors.

3. Students will select one general theme through which to focus their investigation of Paris during the semester, which will be developed in four cumulative steps: building visit discussions, two thematic dossiers and a round table discussion. These themes will serve as a unifying lens through which to mark changes in architecture and urbanism across the city's 2,000-year history.

Hub area: Historical Consciousness (1 unit)

1. The theme-based course work explained above is chronological and aims to analyze the historical evolution of architectural and urbanistic conceptions over time, in relation with historical contexts. They use sources such as direct experience of buildings and places (visits), historical iconography (maps, plans, drawings, paintings) and texts from thinkers of the time as well as books and articles by present experts covering political, aesthetic, religious, social, economical, cultural aspects.

2. The interpretation of sources is at the core of this course, particularly the differences of standards used in different cultures and at different periods. The direct experience aspects of perception and how they can help to understand a building/place are also formally and constantly addressed. Students are also trained to recognize judgment and bias in analytical readings.

3. The course and the readings, as well as the students' productions and discussions cover not only the architectural and urbanistic aspects of specific buildings and places but also main political, cultural, religious, socioeconomic, intellectual forces throughout the centuries based on the idea that conceptions of urbanism, buildings, cities are instruments, products and testimonies of such forces.
III. ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

Reading
The required readings form the foundation of this course and are necessary preparation for in-class and on-site discussions, quizzes and the course work. There are, on average, the equivalent of 15-20 A-4 pages of required reading per class.

Attendance and Participation: 10%
This grade takes into account not only attendance and punctuality but also the quality of a student's participation in class, meaning: attentiveness, enthusiasm, thoughtful contributions to discussions and progress.

Quizzes (replaced by one midterm test in Summer): 20%
There will be three, knowledge-based, unit-focused quizzes. Quizzes will be based on the readings and lectures as they relate to site visits and could include slide identifications asking for essential information (architect, patron/client, approximate date, function, innovative features, etc…), identification of actors, definition of terms and/or a short answer questions.

THEME BASED COURSEWORK
Students will select one of six themes through which to focus their investigation of Paris during the semester, which will be developed in four cumulative steps: building visit discussions, two thematic dossiers and a round table discussion. These themes – Conceptions of the City, Heritage, Infrastructure, Natural & Built Environment, Public Realm, Dwelling in the City – will serve as a unifying lens through which to mark changes in architecture and urbanism across the city's 2,000-year history.

Building Visit Discussion: 10%
During the course of the semester students will be asked to individually prepare discussion questions for one of the visits. The monument or site chosen will be linked to the selected theme of the student. Students must develop at least one discussion question dealing with visual/experiential analysis and one dealing with thematic analysis.

Written Assignments – The Thematic Dossiers: 50%
During the semester students are to prepare two dossiers analyzing buildings and/or sites that were visited or discussed in class. The dossiers should build upon readings, classes, visits and on-site presentations, combining theoretical reflection with visual analysis. Students may reference other sources as needed. Dossiers should be typed and have correctly formatted footnotes and bibliographies. The final dossier fulfills the final exam requirement. Each dossier should include a typed essay, 4-5 pages long, with up to 3 additional pages of images.

Round Table Presentation 10%
The Round Table Presentations are aimed at moving towards the development and finalization of Thematic Dossier 2, and is focused on Units 4-5. Individual presentations of 5-7 minutes should communicate the envisioned dossier structure and a synthetic overview of the analysis and thematic interpretations in development. Students will be grouped in panels of 2 or 3, according to the resonances between either their themes or case studies. Presentations will be consecutive, followed by a common question/discussion period in which all students are expected to participate.

Research Methods
There is not a single, methodological formula for analyzing architecture or the city. Both are complex phenomena that can be analyzed and understood from a multiplicity of points of view (formal, representational, social, economic, philosophical, political, technical, biological, ethnographical, anthropological, etc…). It will be necessary to mobilize critical thinking skills in order to develop a methodological approach that brings together each student's theme, case studies, interests and experiences in a strategic, structured analysis. For critical thinking skills see: Sylvan Barnet, Hugo Bedau and John O'Hara, Critical Thinking, Reading and Writing: A Brief Guide to Argument, 9th edition, Boston: Bedford/St Martin's Press, 2016 [1993].
Grading conversion (out of 100)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>FINAL GRADE FOR THE COURSE</th>
<th>GRADES FOR INDIVIDUAL COMPONENTS/ASSIGMENTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93-100</td>
<td>A+ = 97, A/B+ = 86.5, A/C+ = 76.5, A/D+ = 66.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>90-92.5</td>
<td>B+ = 95, B = 85, C = 75, D = 65</td>
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<tr>
<td>87-89.5</td>
<td>A = 91, B- = 81, C- = 71, D- = 61</td>
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<tr>
<td>83-86.5</td>
<td>A/B+ = 89.5, B/C+ = 79.5, C/D+ = 69.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>80-82.5</td>
<td>B- = 59.5</td>
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BU Paris Attendance Policy

Our program is subject to French student visa laws where an active student status is mandatory. As the sponsor of your visa, Boston University has the legal obligation to ensure that you comply with visa requirements. If you do not attend classes or your internship as required, you will be considered to be in breach of your visa and can be deported. Any student who does not comply with this policy may be sent home from the program at the discretion of the program director, and may, as a result, forfeit credit and program costs for part or all of the semester.

**Excused Absences**

- Absence for illness excused by the certificate of a French doctor
- Internship interview
- OFII medical visit (must have convocation)
- Professional imperative that conflicts with academic workshop

Documentation to be submitted to buparis@bu.edu the day following the absence

TARDINESS

The professor reserves the right to not admit a tardy student to class or to count a tardy arrival as either a half or whole unexcused absence. Late arrivals to class will impact the class participation grade. Leaving class before it ends is considered as tardiness. Late submission of written work will entail a penalty on the assignment grade.

Written work submitted more than a week late will not receive credit (grade = F).

Students who do not complete a course on time will be given an F.

There are no withdrawals from classes, the internship, nor the internship course.

PLAGIARISM

Simply stated, plagiarism is taking another's work and presenting it as your own. It is, in fact, intellectual theft. It is one of the most serious forms of academic misconduct. Plagiarism committed by a student will certainly result in course failure and may result in suspension or dismissal. It can take many forms, including reproduction of published material without acknowledgement, or representing work done by others as your own. This includes the increasing common practice of purchasing and downloading work from the Internet "paper mills". Plagiarism applies to all media – printed matter of all kinds, video, audio, and oral presentation. Even unacknowledged paraphrasing or use of another's methodology, structure or management of material is plagiarism. You must use quotation when quoting even if you do the translating yourself.

All students are responsible for having read the Boston University statement on plagiarism, which is available in the Academic Conduct Code. Students are advised that the penalty against students on a Boston University program for cheating on the examinations or for plagiarism may be 'expulsion from the program or the University or such other penalty as may be recommended by the Committee on Student Academic Conduct, subject to approval by the dean'. Read the full Academic Conduct Code online at: [http://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/academic-conduct-code/](http://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/academic-conduct-code/) as well as the Policy on Religious Observance.

Accommodations for Students with Documented Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability or believe you might have a disability that requires accommodations, please contact the Office for Disability Services (ODS) at (617) 353-3658 or access@bu.edu to coordinate any reasonable accommodation requests. ODS is located at 19 Buick Street.
### IV. INDICATIVE CALENDAR (FALL & SPRING)

Readings will be specified in the syllabus handed out to students at the beginning of the semester.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Indicative Topics and Visits</th>
<th>Assignments and Activities</th>
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<tr>
<td>UNIT 1</td>
<td><strong>Session 1</strong></td>
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1. **Course Intro**  
2. **Skill Building: Reading Maps and Drawings**  
3. **Urban Form Determinants: The Origins of Paris**  
4. **Medieval Paris: The City as Cosmos** |  
**UNIT 2** |  
**Session 2** | Visit: The Île-de-la-Cité: The Heart of a Kingdom  
*Itinerary*: Sainte-Chapelle [15:30] and Notre-Dame de Paris | Required readings  
Due: Theme Selection |
|  | Visit: On The Traces of Roman & Merovingian Paris  
*Itinerary*: Crypte Archéologique [15h30], Cluny Baths [16h30], Arènes de Lutèces |  
**UNIT 3** |  
**Session 3** | Required readings |  
**Session 4** | Visit: Royal Urbanism and the Rise of the Marais  
*Itinerary*: Place des Vosges, Hôtel de Sully, Saint Paul-Saint Louis, Hôtel de Soubise (time permitting) | Required readings |  
**Session 5** | Visit: The Louvre Quarter: A New Administrative Center for the City  
*Itinerary*: Collège de Quatre nations, Louvre’s Cour carré, Rue de Rivoli, Palais Royal. | Required readings |  
|  | Visit: Urbanity & Commerce: Boulevards & Arcades  
*Itinerary*: Galerie Choiseul, Galerie Vivienne, Bourse, Passage des Panoramas, Boulevards. | Required readings |  
|  | Visit: The Opera Quarter: Modernity & Monumentality  
*Itinerary*: Opera Garnier, Galeries Lafayette (time permitting). | Required readings |  

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*Paris Internship Program*
### UNIT 4

| Session 10 | 1. **Skill Building: Historical Thinking**  
2. **Misery and Opulence: Two Tales of A Metropolis** | Required readings  
Due: Thematic Dossier 1 |
|---|---|---|
| Session 11 | **Visit: Western Paris: The Design of Modern Life**  
**Itinerary:** Housing by Hector Guimard, Pol Abraham, Corbusier [5:15] | Required readings |
| Session 12 | **Visit: Renewing the Fringe: Cités jardins and Habitations à bon marché**  
**Itinerary:** Cité Jardin Pré-Saint-Gervais and social housing around the Reservoir de Lilas and the Butte du Chapeau Rouge. | Required readings |

### UNIT 5

| Session 13 | 1. **Post-War Paris: The City of Tomorrow**  
2. **Affirming the Cultural Quotient**  
3. **Deindustrialization and the Livable City** | Required readings  
Quiz Unit 4 |
| Session 14 | **Visit: Rethinking the Center: Marais, Plateau Beaubourg and Les Halles**  
**Itinerary:** Le Marais: îlot insalubre no 16 (rue des Barres, Village Saint-Paul). Plateau Beaubourg: îlot insalubre no. 1 (Quartier de l’Horloge (time permitting), Centre Georges Pompidou, IRCAM), Les Halles (time permitting). | Required readings  
Due: Thematic Dossier 2 Abstract |
| Session 15 | **Visit: ZAC Stories: Bercy and Massena**  
**Itinerary:** Bercy: Ministry of Economy and Finances, Palais Omnisport Bercy, Housing, Maison du Cinéma (Gehry), Bercy Village, Bercy Park. Massena: Housing, Offices, Frigos, Grands Moulins, Jardins des Grandes Moulins. | Required readings |
| Session 16 | **Roundtable Presentations: Thematic Dossier 2 Development**  
**Exam Session (due at 12:30): Thematic Dossier 2** | Required readings |
IV. INDICATIVE CALENDAR (SUMMER)
Readings will be specified in the syllabus handed out to students at the beginning of the semester.

| Session 1 | Monday | Morning | 1. Course Intro  
2. Skill Building 1: Analysis via Observation and Experience + Reading Maps and Drawings  
3. The Origins of Paris: Pre-Roman to Merovingian Paris |
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<td></td>
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<td>Afternoon</td>
<td>Visit: On the Traces of Roman &amp; Merovingian Paris Itinerary: Cluny Baths exterior, Mont Sainte-Geneviève, Arènes de Lutèces</td>
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| Session 2 | Tuesday | Morning | 1. Skill Building 2: Dossier Introduction and Research Methodology  
2. Medieval Paris: The City as Cosmos |
|           |        | Afternoon | Visit: The Île-de-la-Cité: The Heart of the Medieval Kingdom Itinerary: Sainte-Chapelle, Conciergerie, Notre Dame de Paris, Saint Severin Church, Saint Severin Quarter |
| Session 3 | Wednesday | Morning | 1. Skill Building 3: Historical Thinking  
2. Classicism à la française: City and Nation |
| Session 4 | Thursday | Morning | 1. Skill Building 4: Critical Thinking and Thematic Analysis  
2. Grand siècle & Enlightenment: Towards an Urban Landscape (1682-1789) |
|           |        | Afternoon | Visit: The Louvre Quarter: A New Administrative Center for the City Itinerary: Colonnade du Louvre, Louvre’s Cour carré, Collège de Quatre Nations, Arche du Carrousel, Charles V Moat, Rue de Rivoli, Palais Royal. |
| Session 5 | Friday | Morning | From Revolution to the Second Empire: The City as a Work of Art |
| Session 6 | Friday | Morning | Misery and Opulence: Two Tales of a Metropolis (1871-1945) |
| Session 7 | Friday | Morning | Post-War Paris: The City of Tomorrow (1945-1977) |
|           | Weekly | Afternoon | Visit: Rethinking the Center: Plateau Beaubourg, Quartier de l’Horloge, Les Halles, Jardin, Bourse de Commerce |
| Session 8 | Friday | Morning | Post-War Paris: Deindustrialization and the Livable City (1977-today) |
|           | Weekly | Afternoon | Visit: ZAC Stories: Bercy and Massena |
| Session 9 | Last Friday | Roundtable Presentations | Dossier Due |
V. FURTHER READING

Our on site visits will experiment with observation, visual analysis and first hand experience, building upon notions mobilized in these works:

  - Public Space, Public Life: An Interaction; Who, What, Where?; Counting, Mapping, Tracking and Other Tools; Public Life Studies.
  - City Form: Designing the Paths, Design of Other Elements, Form Qualities, The Sense of the Whole, Metropolitan Form.
  - Phenomena of Perception; Order and Disorder; Measure and Balance; Fabric and Object; Space; Light and Shade; Places.

Websites:

Selection of Books available in the BU Paris Academic Center Library:

*The professor reserves the right to modify the course syllabus*