

Teaching guide

IDENTIFICATION DETAILS

Degree:	Architecture		
Scope	Architecture, construction, building and urban planning, and civil engineering		
Faculty/School:	Higher Polytechnic School		
Course:	ARCHITECTURAL CONCEPTS AND DESIGN		
Type:	Compulsory	ECTS credits:	6
Year:	1	Code:	3711
Teaching period:	First semester		
Subject:	Projects		
Module:	Projectual		
Teaching type:	Classroom-based		
Language:	Spanish		
Total number of student study hours:	150		

SUBJECT DESCRIPTION

The course provides the student with the conceptual tools necessary to analyze and develop the creative processes that generate the architectural project.

The course starts from the definition of Architecture and is developed around the basic questions whose complex interrelation defines every project: what, who, where, how and the aesthetic question. As conceptual keys, these five questions trigger as many other creative methods that the student must research and put into practice.

The development of the course includes carrying out various dynamics and exercises grouped into six modules: 'discovering our capacity to transform', 'conceptualizing', 'learning to look', 'discovering the place', 'intervening in space' and 'thinking about the city'. Thus, the student is gradually introduced to the conceptual dialogue that underlies each architectural approach.

The course of Architectural Concepts and Creativity provides students with the conceptual tools necessary to analyze and develop the creative processes that generate the architectural project. The course is based on the definition of Architecture and is developed around basic questions whose complex interrelation defines every project: what, who, where, how and the aesthetic question. As conceptual keys, these five questions trigger as many other creative methods that the student must research and put into practice.

The development of the course includes carrying out various dynamics and exercises that have to do with different aspects of the architect's training, such as discovering our capacity to transform as architects, conceptualize and develop ideas, learning to look at the reality that surrounds us, discovering the keys to the place, intervening in space and thinking about the city. Thus, the student is gradually introduced to the conceptual dialogue that underlies each architectural design approach.

This course marks the student's first encounter with the world of architectural projects, after which they will travel through the core subjects of Architectural Projects until reaching the Final Degree Project. This tour will address different problems for designing buildings, such as the relationship with man, scale, typology and the relationship with the landscape and the city. Architectural Concepts and Creativity focuses on three fundamental aspects that define the scope of the subject:

Abstract thinking applied to the development of creative processes to answer questions about architecture.

Learning an effective methodology both to approach an architectural project and to establish a critical framework with which to evaluate architecture, according to five fundamental questions: who, what, where, how and the aesthetic question.

Taking into account the centrality of architecture in the person makes it possible to overcome merely conceptual architectural discourse, to connect the architectural project with the most relevant aspects of reality, such as the fact of inhabiting, to which architecture provides its service through the intellectual and technical work of the architect.

From this perspective, worked in a practical way with the students, the creative process of architectural design is not reduced to understanding the project as a mere analysis that results in technical drawings suitable for constructing a building. The expanded perspective allows, on the one hand, to discover that a good architectural project meets problems of a diverse nature that in most cases are not evident. On the other hand, that the person understood in all its dimensions, individually and collectively, is the essential reference point for connecting and integrating the analysis of reality with the abstraction implicit in the architectural project.

Finally, decision-making by the architect must contemplate the crucible of possibilities, the result of the study and analysis of reality, to turn them into opportunities materialized in the design of a project. The final stretch of the course addresses the aesthetic question that underlies all the above methodological deployment. The question of beauty ends up building the intangible body of architectural fact, which is based on the experience of inhabiting space and without which, built form, and ultimately architecture, would not make sense. Themes such as order, memory and the relationship with the transcendent end up composing the framework within which the subject is framed, in which not only is the architect presented as a professional who seeks good, but also seeks, in the order of reality, the role that the person and society play in their relationship with buildings and cities.

GOAL

Establish the conceptual context necessary to carry out an architectural project.

PRIOR KNOWLEDGE

Those corresponding to Upper Baccalaureate.

COURSE SYLLABUS

The contents of the course of Architectural Concepts and Creativity are organized into two major themes, which are presented integrated into the development of the course. On the one hand, with regard to architectural concepts; on the other, with regard to the fact of triggering a creative process.

Architectural concepts

What is architecture? (debate on the epistemological status of the discipline)

How do you investigate a discipline? What is its scope and its limits? How do you connect the question about architecture to the truth? How do you connect this question to the fact of research? How do you approach this question with rigor? How does it help to develop a critical spirit?

What are the key questions to discuss about architecture? What are the fundamental issues addressed by architecture? Can we speak of a methodology for thinking about architecture?

The definition of Architecture.

What? (the ethical question)

Why do we do everything we do? What is the value and meaning of decision-making?

The needs program. What are we looking for with architecture? How to decide what is necessary based on what is existing and what is possible?

The value of listening and approaching the problem; the archetype, the type, the model and the object.

Who? (the inhabitant and the fact of inhabiting; the anthropological question)

What profound meaning does the fact of inhabiting have? How does inhabiting involve the person? What idea of a person underlies today's architecture? What are your needs?

Man as a measure of architecture; scale and proportion.

The person, society and architecture; fashions, customs and trends in architecture.

Where? (ethical, anthropological and epistemological question)

Looking for the genius of the place, which are the keys that each site offers, which are unique and unrepeatable opportunities for each project.

The footprint of architecture; the opportunities, obligations and the repercussions of decision-making in the project phase.

Respect and care for the common good of the planet we inhabit; what is sustainable.

How? (the subject)

More with less (principle of maximum performance with the use of minimum resources).

Bones, viscera and architectural skin. (Order, sincerity, and coherence between the parties).
Form and function. Material and performance.

I don't know what? (memory, recognition and beauty).

Truth, Good and Beauty as principles integrated into architecture.
Recognition as an integrating principle of memory.
Surprise, amazement and excitement. Permanence in memory.

Creative Processes:

Creativity and creative process.

Everyone is creative.
Creative thinking.
Prejudices about creativity.
Blocks to creativity.

Lateral thinking:

Phases of the creative process.
Evaluation of ideas.

Methodologies:

Vertical thinking/lateral thinking.
Mind maps.
Method 6-3-5.
Brainstorming/SCAMPER.
6 hats to think about.

EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

In-person activities:

Expository classes: Presentation of content and activities by the teacher, commentary, recommended reading, and with the participation of students in the debate and resolution of doubts about the topics proposed in class.

Solving exercises: Solve, individually, on the blackboard or on the table exercises proposed in class to apply the fundamental knowledge received.

Project workshop: Correction in groups of different sizes of the projects that students carry out in the classroom or at home, and they clarify in the light of the exercises of their classmates and the instructions of their teachers.

Group work: I work in small groups to deepen the fundamental teaching principles, and stimulate coordination capacity among students.

Mentoring:

Personalized: Individual attention to the student with the objective of reviewing and discussing the topics presented in class and clarifying doubts that the student cannot understand in their personal study.

Group: Attention to a small group of students who need additional help to follow the subject.

Evaluation: Carrying out knowledge assimilation checks throughout the course and with the greatest possible continuity.

Complementary activities: Guided tour of exhibitions, attendance at events with unique activities, or conferences by occasional guests depending on the topic to be developed.

Non-face-to-face activities:

Preparing projects for class discussion: Design and prepare a public presentation of a proposed exercise in class.

Group work: Group design and development of works.

Theoretical and practical study: Study of the theoretical and practical contents of the program and preparation of recommended readings.

Preparation of projects for discussion in class: Design and know how to explain the project by applying the knowledge acquired.

Virtual networking: Virtual space designed by the teacher where the student can work with other classmates, participate in forums organized by the teacher and maintain tutoring.

Complementary activities:

Visiting exhibitions and carrying out personal research, through which the student relates to fields other than the academic one, expanding their vision and links with the cultural and professional environment.

A workshop work scheme will be structured, integrating students in the responsibility of guiding their research.

The production of this workshop will be continuous and public. Somehow, the student must become a researcher, guided in their search and proposed by group work sessions, moderated by the workshop teacher.

Each working group will unify its research criteria: for each block of work, a variable number of proposals will be requested, ranging from personal proposals to the single response of a group exercise.

Each group will always deliver together, under the same graphic scheme, developing a single work.

The school weeks include two days of teaching, with different work profiles: the first of a methodological nature, and the second of a proactive nature.

The first day will focus on workshop work in class, with an emphasis on the application of specific creative processes.

The second day will be based on films, photographs and texts that will form a body of debate. The students will prepare different exhibitions and analyses on this material, giving shape to a space for the exchange of ideas. A research paper will be developed aimed at the practical application of creative processes to shape a reflection on architecture.

This work will be derived from the partial works proposed throughout the course. All initiatives will be supported by the digital edition of the course, with the Canvas platform. Discussion forums will be opened for each thematic block, including reference documentation, notes, web links, and suggestions for the development of the subject.

An introductory trip will be carried out as the first activity, aimed at confronting different possibilities of creation in contemporary culture. The nature of the trip is illustrative, meaning a contact with the general idea that will be developed throughout the course. This trip may be complemented by short trips to groups or exhibitions of special significance.

Visits to exhibition halls, museums, theaters, and music and dance shows will be actively proposed. Some visits will form part of the teaching proposal for the course.

The meetings, both with architects and with other professionals, will be integrated as essential elements of the course of the proposed activities. These meetings will take place as talks, in some cases, and as round tables, in others. Promoting a profile of research, activity and concern in students is the starting point of any learning.

DISTRIBUTION OF WORK TIME

TEACHER-LED TRAINING ACTIVITIES	INDIVIDUAL WORK
60 Horas	90 Horas

SKILLS

Basic Skills

Students must have demonstrated knowledge and understanding in an area of study that is founded on general secondary education. Moreover, the area of study is typically at a level that includes certain aspects implying knowledge at the forefront of its field of study, albeit supported by advanced textbooks

Students must be able to apply their knowledge to their work or vocation in a professional manner and possess skills that can typically be demonstrated by coming up with and sustaining arguments and solving problems within their field of study.

Students must have the ability to gather and interpret relevant data (usually within their field of study) in order to make judgments that include reflections on pertinent social, scientific or ethical issues

Students must be able to convey information, ideas, problems and solutions to both an expert and non-expert audience

Students must have developed the learning skills needed to undertake further study with a high degree of independence

Capacity for analytical, synthetic, reflective, critical, theoretical and practical thought.

Capacity for oral and written expression.

Ability to solve problems and to take decisions.

Ability to apply procedures.

Capacity for interpersonal communication.

Ability to understand the relationships between people and buildings and between buildings and their surroundings, and the need to associate buildings and the spaces in between them to meet human needs and on a human scale.

Ability to appreciate the architect's profession and its function in society, particularly with regard to the design of projects that involve social factors.

General Skills

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Specific skills

Ability to develop functional programs for buildings and urban spaces.

Ability to practice architectural criticism.

Adequate knowledge of methods for studying symbolization processes, practical functions and ergonomics.

Adequate knowledge of methods for studying social needs, quality of life, habitability and basic housing programs.

Adequate knowledge of the relationship between cultural patterns and the architect's social responsibilities.

LEARNING RESULTS

Identify what is pre-existing: Understand what is the starting point of any creative project. Know how to read and value the environment. Extract variables from any system by developing interaction strategies.

Establish research paths: Learn to research and document each proposal and access alternative information. Find effective information exchange systems.

Define objectives: Establish different possibilities of action for each situation. Specify action objectives, establishing their viability and coherence.

Accurately answer basic questions: What, Where, For Whom, How, I Don't Know What.

Establish project systems: Develop established objectives and propose alternative replicate possibilities. Discover systems and processes to structure and expand each action.

Managing creative resources: To know basic creative processes, developing the ability to identify their suitability and the different possibilities of their operation and application.

Develop basic critical positions: The student must be able to evaluate other people's proposals as well as their own to criticize and determine a starting position.

Acquire proposal capacity: To make the proposal work and that the proposal suggests that the proposal evokes over time. Acquire the ability to respond to any situation by unblocking conflict situations.

Expand the capacity for expression: Find and identify the necessary means to present and document an intervention. Know how to evaluate the expressive means and the different possible communication channels. Every action, after being planned and developed, must be transmitted and expressed effectively.

LEARNING APPRAISAL SYSTEM

The evaluation of the subject will be continuous. To this end, each student must carry out, throughout the course, a research paper marked by several partial installments, corresponding to the closing of each thematic block, the last installment being a final project, corresponding to the closing of the current workshop.

Evaluation in the ordinary call (continuous evaluation):

Submit ALL the practices and the notebook.

Practice 1. 'Definition of Architecture': 10%

Practice 2. 'What? ' : 15%

Practice 3. 'Who? ' : 15%

Practice 4. 'Where? ' : 15%

Practice 5. 'How? ' : 15%

Practice 6. 'I don't know what': 20%

Moleskine notebook: 5%

Class participation: 5%

All evaluation elements are rated from 0 to 10. Papers submitted after the deadline will have a maximum score of 5.0.

All submissions and submissions must be made through Canvas.

Plagiarism, as well as the use of illegitimate means in evaluation tests, will be sanctioned in accordance with those established in the Evaluation Regulations and the University's Coexistence Regulations.

Evaluation in the extraordinary call:

Submit ALL the internships of the course (essential condition to be evaluated): 30%

Take a written exam in which topics covered in the course will be asked: 70%

ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

1.- The use of any Artificial Intelligence (AI) system or service shall be determined by the lecturer, and may only be used in the manner and under the conditions indicated by them. In all cases, its use must comply with the following principles:

- a) The use of AI systems or services must be accompanied by critical reflection on the part of the student regarding their impact and/or limitations in the development of the assigned task or project.
- b) The selection of AI systems or services must be justified, explaining their advantages over other tools or methods of obtaining information. The chosen model and the version of AI used must be described in as much detail as possible.
- c) The student must appropriately cite the use of AI systems or services, specifying the parts of the work where they were used and describing the creative process followed. The use of citation formats and usage examples may be consulted on the Library website(https://www.ufv.es/gestion-de-la-informacion_biblioteca/).
- d) The results obtained through AI systems or services must always be verified. As the author, the student is responsible for their work and for the legitimacy of the sources used.

2.- In all cases, the use of AI systems or services must always respect the principles of responsible and ethical use upheld by the university, as outlined in the [Guide for the Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence in Studies at UFV](#). Additionally, the lecturer may request other types of individual commitments from the student when deemed necessary.

3.- Without prejudice to the above, in cases of doubt regarding the ethical and responsible use of any AI system or service, the lecturer may require an oral presentation of any assignment or partial submission. This oral evaluation shall take precedence over any other form of assessment outlined in the Teaching Guide. In this oral defense, the student must demonstrate knowledge of the subject, justify their decisions, and explain the development of their

work.

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND OTHER RESOURCES

Basic

Venturi, Robert; Scott Brown, Denise; Izenour, Steven Learning from Las Vegas. The forgotten symbolism of Barcelona architecture: Gustavo Gili, 2000

Delgado Martos, Emilio What is Architecture? Madrid: Editorial UFV, 2025

Arqués, Francisco Miguel Fiscac Madrid: Pronaos, 1996

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Medina Warmburg, Joaquín (ed.) Walter Gropius. What is architecture? Barcelona Anthology of Writings: Editorial Reverté, 2019

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