Form in 19th & 20th C Architecture
Comparative Case Studies

This course studies ideas and attitudes toward the making of architectural space in 19th & 20th Century architecture (from about 1850 to the present) through case studies of significant buildings and practitioners. A particular focus is describing underlying theoretical guidelines of the work and how they support or challenge fundamental spatial principles of the Modern Movement.

A secondary goal of the course is to provide students with an historic overview of influential modern architectural concepts and their effect on contemporary work, including their own. Students will use comparative case studies to investigate spatial concepts underlying representative buildings and projects, specifically their relationships to four major considerations: topography (site & the earth), typology (function, precedent & history), sustainability (climatic response) and tectonics (structure and material).

Specific topics are flexible in nature and will be determined partly by the existing strengths and weaknesses in individual backgrounds. The premise of the class is that it is an exploration by students, without preconceived answers.

Students are required to: 1) read required texts and keep a typewritten journal with notes, sketches and commentary on readings and presentations; 2) critique and discuss topics presented in class; and 3) make a single visual seminar presentation to the class. In creating their presentation, students/teams will meet 3-4 times with the instructor, reviewing draft presentations and receiving individual guidance and commentary. If the class size is over 16, students will work in groups of 2 or more.

Questions or comments: jmcava.architect@gmail.com