

Spring 2027 Elective Courses for Master of Architecture Program

The Master of Architecture degree program requires seven (7) to eight (8) elective courses, distributed across five distinct categories:

- 1x Representational Studies Required Elective: select *any* 65__ level course
- 1x Historical/Cultural Studies Required Elective: select *any* 62__ level course
- 1x Technical Studies Required Elective: select *any* 63__ level course
- 2x - 3X Architecture Elective: select *any ARCH-designated elective not already used for a different requirement; consult your degree sheet to confirm the total number of electives needed.*
- 2x Open Elective: select any graduate-level (e.g. 5000+) course; see below.

Open Electives: The M. ARCH degree requires the completion of two *Open Elective* classes; this represents the most flexible type of elective in the degree program. An *Open Elective* can be fulfilled by completing any graduate level course of the student's choosing that is not already in use for a different requirement; B- or higher grade required. Please consider searching for other content in CAP programs: Architecture (ARCH), Historic Preservation (HIPR), Interior Design (INTD), Landscape Architecture (LDAR), and Urban and Regional Planning (URPL), or other graduate level coursework at the university.

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- ***ARCH 5240 History & Theory of Architecture III**

- This course covers the histories and theories of architecture worldwide from the mid-19th century through the early 21st century. The focus of the course will be on the Modern Movements in architecture and the evolution of the broader concept of modernity and its theoretical, spatial, temporal, and experiential ramifications. The works of a select group of architects from across the world will be examined and discussed in relation to the diverse body of goals and objectives, ideas, and ideals that constituted the Modern Movements in architecture.
- In-person: Monday & Wednesday, 9:30 am – 10:45 am
- **This course is eligible for use toward the ARCH 62XX Historical/Cultural Studies Required Elective OR ARCH Elective OR Open Elective category for students matriculating prior to Fall 2025. For students matriculating Fall 2025 (thereafter), this is a required course and is not elective.*

- **ARCH 6259 Art of Traditional Design**

- The course will begin with an introduction to the Classical Tradition and its philosophical, political, and cultural assumptions. Classical concepts and methods will be traced from early Greek and Roman origins through the Renaissance to the Present. The tools and methods of Classical design will be discussed to provide students with an understandable design “language.” Design and presentation methodologies developed by the École des Beaux-Arts in France will be introduced and practiced. These concepts will be followed and examined in their current flowering in the United States.

This course engages the ‘head,’ as well as the ‘hand,’ in order to educate the whole person. For this reason, students will be expected to do the reading, make written as well as visual notes and to come to class prepared to discuss the issues presented in the reading.

To engage 'the hand,' students will develop Classical solutions to a variety of design problems, culminating in the design of a Classical Pavilion for Seaside, a Classical Writing Temple in Colorado, and a Neo-Classical House in Virginia. The projects will give multiple experiences of the Beaux Arts System of design, and will allow the students to produce finished designs worthy of inclusion in their portfolios.

- Remote: Tuesday & Thursday, 9:30 am – 10:45 am
- *This course is eligible for use toward the Cultural Studies Required Elective OR ARCH Elective OR Open Elective category*

- **ARCH 6261 Urban Design Economics & Equity**

- This course explores the economics of urban design through its relationship with private-sector real estate development, public-sector infrastructure, and budgetary/fiscal constraints on design implementation while emphasizing the critical role of urban design in advocating for social equity, affordable housing, and related issues.
- In-person: Thursday, 9:00 am – 11:45 am (double-check in student portal)
- *This course is eligible for use toward the Cultural Studies Required Elective OR ARCH Elective OR Open Elective category*

- **ARCH 6290-002 Special Topics Historical/Cultural Studies: Decay, Debris, and the un-Building of the Environment**

- Waste, according to sociologist Mary Douglas, is "matter out of place." Sigmund Freud once defined dirt similarly, pathologizing it as material located troublingly, "in the wrong place." Recognizing the politics of what has canonically been called 'place-making,' WASTELANDS probes architecture as it interfaces with the displaced matter of our eroding planet. From Metabolist excretions to rural sanitation reforms, leaky modernist residences, rat-infested streetscapes and post-extractive interventions, the course positions architecture as an active body to be dissected at multiple scales, histories, and sites of impact.

WASTELANDS will unfold through an accumulation of case studies, readings, guest lectures, and regional site visits. Discourse will not be centered on the architectural object itself, but on the debris which surrounds and moves through it. The variable definition of waste will be evaluated as not only ecologically impactful, but inherently political – a moralistic judgement which has resulted in racialized and gendered spatialities through history. Each student will be responsible for their own final research project, investigating a site of interest and their relationship to it through multiple media: film, material analysis, mapping, and site-writing. The course will culminate in a collective exhibition of these accumulated residues as artist books, accompanied by a roundtable conversation with visiting scholars and activists.

- In-person: Wednesday, 2:00 – 4:45 pm

- *This course is eligible for use toward the Cultural Studies Required Elective OR ARCH Elective OR Open Elective category*
- **ARCH 6290-H01 Special Topics Historical/Cultural Studies: The Bauhaus Revisited**
 - This course will examine the ideals and political context of the Bauhaus's origins during World War I through to its contentious development during the Weimar republic, culminating in its eventual demise at the hands of the Nazis. The conceptual ideals and fundamental rationale behind its innovative and integrative curriculum will be investigated as will a cross section of its most influential architects such as **Walter Gropius, Hannes Meyer, and Mies Van de Rohe**. The work of artists and designers such as **Paul Klee, Moholy-Nagy, Herbert Bayer, and Oskar Schlemmer** will also be explored to comprehend how their aesthetics, social ideas and personalities contributed to its highly charged multidisciplinary atmosphere. Within this context, the course will also lay bare the external and internal conflicts that plagued its existence and infected its legacy. Finally, the course will conclude by speculating upon the legacy of the Bauhaus and its role in shaping the processes of rapid globalization that exemplified the latter half of the twentieth century and still transform our lives to this day.
 - In-person: Thursday, 9:30 am – 10:45 am plus additional online component (hybrid)
 - *This course is eligible for use toward the Cultural Studies Required Elective OR ARCH Elective OR Open Elective category*
- **ARCH 6351 Building Materials Conservation**
 - This course introduces students to the fundamentals of historic material conservation. Students will learn to identify and evaluate a wide range of construction materials used in buildings of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Students will also learn the basic skills required to conduct a Historic Structure Assessment (HSA) and recommend appropriate preservation treatments.

Course objectives:

 - Acquire experience in identifying typical 19th and 20th century construction materials, understanding their properties, modes of deterioration and weathering, and identify preservation issues related to these materials.
 - Assess material deterioration and develop appropriate preservation treatments.
 - Become familiar with the multitude of informational resources for historic materials.
 - In-person: Thursday, 6:15 pm – 9:00 pm (double check in student portal)
 - *This course is eligible for use toward the Technological Studies Required Elective OR ARCH Elective OR Open Elective category*
- **ARCH 6390-001 Special Topics Representational Studies – Building (Un)Intelligence**
 - This seminar investigates how architecture intersects 20th-century technologies through spatial infrastructures and display cultures. Through creative research and visual production, students will build a collective set of references that interrogates concepts of "intelligence" while examining the social, environmental, and labor costs behind them. Potential subjects include Eames's collaboration with IBM, Sottsass's Olivetti

design research, Denver native Robert Propst and his engagement at Herman Miller Research Corporation, and the “Mother of All Demos” that became a model for most tech launches today.

- In-person: Wednesday, 12:30 pm – 3:15 pm
- *This course is eligible for use toward the Technological Studies Required Elective OR ARCH Elective OR Open Elective category*

- **ARCH 6390-002 Special Topics Representational Studies – Bricks**

- In "BRICKS" we will be looking at the history of masonry construction as a fruitful ground for new discovery in novel tectonics. We will use a combination of research, documentation, digital modeling, drawing, and 1:1 mock-ups to reconcile the facade-based use of the material with its centuries of use as structure."
- In-person: Tuesday, 9:30 am – 12:15 pm
- *This course is eligible for use toward the Technological Studies Required Elective OR ARCH Elective OR Open Elective category*

- **ARCH 6390-003 Special Topics Representational Studies – To Build a Case for Architecture**

- Architecture is made in print as much as in concrete. Books often outlast the buildings they represent, and through their weight, structure, and sequence, they construct the arguments by which the discipline configures and reconfigures itself. Part hands-on, part theoretical, this course asks what an architecture book can be today, then sets out to design and build one, from cover to binding, as a critical, physical manifesto situated within the wider cultural milieu of printmakers, editors, typographers, graphic designers, and publishers.
- In-person: Wednesday, 8:00 am – 10:45 am
- *This course is eligible for use toward the Technological Studies Required Elective OR ARCH Elective OR Open Elective category*

- **ARCH 6390-004 Special Topics Representational Studies – Model Building**

- Architectural Model Building will be taught as a critical tool for expressing building design, tectonics, and beauty. Students will learn to articulate overall architectural composition, materiality, structural systems and assembly, details, connections, and aesthetics through their own emerging design voice.
- In-person: Thursday, 12:15 pm – 3:15 pm
- *This course is eligible for use toward the Technological Studies Required Elective OR ARCH Elective OR Open Elective category*

- **ARCH 6470-900 ACE Mentoring**

- Earn academic credit by serving as an ACE Mentor Program volunteer. The ACE Mentor Program connects Front Range high school students to the allied fields of *architecture, construction, and engineering*, and advocates for inclusion, collaboration, and excellence. As an ACE Mentor, you will be assigned to a Front Range ACE cohort, with the expectation that you will facilitate 14 meetings (approximately two hours each; a brief report will be due at the end of your experience to complete the class.
 - Please connect with Leo Darnell to discuss your interest in this opportunity (Leonard.Darnell@ucdenver.edu).

- *This course is eligible for use toward the Elective OR Open Elective category*
- **ARCH 6570-001 Sketching as Seeing**
 - Sketching promotes seeing and seeing promotes thinking. This course is designed to help emerging designers to think & see by the regular practice of sketching & the discipline of keeping a sketchbook. 'Sketching As Seeing' goes beyond improving one's sketch ability, but also trains the student to "see" their environment through the lens of architectural relationships and descriptive forces. This course has three main goals:
 - 1) How to sketch: pen in hand, fill the page
 - 2) How to see: perceive architectonics of a space with the making of - not "taking" of - notes
 - 3) Learn to document via a sketch that communicates an idea, not simply provide a "view."
 - Requirements: Students must sketch for 30 min every day. In-person attendance component is mandatory, no exceptions.**
 - In-person: Friday, 2:00 pm – 4:45 pm
 - *This course is eligible for use toward the Representational Studies Required Elective OR ARCH Elective OR Open Elective category*
- **ARCH 6590-002 Special Topics Representational Studies – The Diagram and Design**
 - This seminar investigates the diagram as a multifaceted tool in architectural design—at once representational, analytical, speculative, and generative. Through key theoretical texts and case studies, students will develop a conceptual foundation in diagrammatic thinking and explore its roles across 2D, 3D, and 4D design practices, including temporal and computational dimensions. Historical and contemporary precedents will frame discussions on how diagrams shape and transform design processes. Through presentations, discussions, and project-based inquiry, students will engage diagrams as diagnostic and creative instruments—tools for revealing hidden structures, mapping new possibilities, and driving design innovation. The course invites students to approach complex architectural challenges with clarity, curiosity, and imagination, using the diagram not just as a means of representation, but as a catalyst for discovery.
 - In-person: Wednesday, 1:00 pm – 3:45 pm
 - *This course is eligible for use toward the Representational Studies Required Elective OR ARCH Elective OR Open Elective category*
- **ARCH 6930 / 6931 Internship I / II**
 - Students who have successfully been hired for internships during the academic term may receive academic credit by enrolling in a for-credit internship course. Please reach out to Jen Skidmore (they/them/theirs pronouns) CAP Director of Professional Development for more information. Please note: regular tuition charges apply for this course.

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