



# ROUGH DRAFT

## ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN COURSE SYLLABUS ARCH 202

SPRING 2026

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**Schedule/Location:** Section #6 – Studio: Mon/Wed/Fri 100-450PM AB 5<sup>th</sup> Floor

**Course Credit:** Arch 202 is a 4.0 credit hour course

### Course Description:

- Continuation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year architectural design sequence. Projects focus on conceptual architectural design and design methodologies in large-scale projects; introduction of architectural technology, research, analysis, and programming. Workshops in the exploration and development of visualization and communication skills at all stages of the design process.

### Course Goals & Objectives:

The studio will repeatedly engage the connection between conceptual intent and architectural design + design process. This focus on architectural design processes driven by ideas will be informed through the study of precedent examples and also through practice: design explorations with gradually increasing complexity. Specific objectives include:

- Develop skills in critically assessing noteworthy works of architecture to understand the relationship between ideas and design decisions (the language of architecture)
- Develop ability to articulate a clear conceptual agenda that can guide a design process
- Develop critical thinking skills in the initial analysis of a design investigation
- Refine ability to develop architectural programming and circulation strategies as part of design process
- Develop critical thinking skills in the assessment of design process products (evaluate design process products for their efficacy, i.e. is this idea working or do we need to start over?)
- Develop/reinforce effective design process methods: model making, drawing, diagramming, writing, and speaking
- Develop an understanding of the influence of context (site, culture, history), program and environment on design
- Develop an awareness of materials, structure and fabrication methods and their influence on design
- Develop an awareness of the experiential considerations of design (scale, space, light, movement)

### Topical Outline:

- Precedent analyses** studying IDEAS and the influence of these on design decisions of program, context, environment, materials, methods of fabrication, structure, experience (human scale, space, movement/procession, light), organization AND effective representation. Learning from examples.
- Developing a design process and methods of investigation:** exploring/developing/clarifying YOUR IDEAS and the influence of these on VISUALIZING, REPRESENTING, ANALYZING and EVALUATING design decisions of program, context, environment, materials, methods of fabrication, structure, experience (human scale, space, movement/procession, light), and organization. Effective representational methods will also be explored. Learning by doing.
- Develop representation and communication methods** (writing, speaking, making) that effectively communicate design ideas and decisions and facilitate the evolutionary development of the design.

**Evaluation:**

You are evaluated for your work on projects, and your participation in class. There projects are weighted per the table below. Evaluation criteria for Projects will be included in the project handout.

Project #1	15%	15 points
Project #2	30%	30 points
Project #3 (IHLA Competition)	50%	50 points
Digital Portfolio & Exit Interview	5%	5 points
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100 points</b>

95% of your final grade will be based upon the work products for the precedent analyses and the design explorations ALONG WITH the intensity of the effort and quality of process products along the way. Projects will be weighted by the length of time spent on them in determining final grades. I will schedule mid-semester discussions of your work and performance to that point in the course; we can use this time to jointly identify objectives for the remainder of the semester. A digital portfolio (PDF) of your work for the semester needs to be brought to the exit interviews for the course, tentatively scheduled for the last Monday of classes. The digital portfolio will constitute 5% of your final grade.

Excellent and above average work can be characterized as evolving from a rich intellectual curiosity and interest in expanding issues beyond defined expectations; a rigorous and innovative consideration of the issues identified in the assignment; a multitude of process products that are carefully considered, well-crafted and are effectively, critically assessed in order to inform subsequent design iterations; **intensity of effort in the pursuit of a design solution**; contributing to and raising the level of group discussions; participating in the teamwork essential for a studio’s collective success.

**Grading Scale: (see scale below)**

Note that attendance record will be considered when evaluating all “borderline” grades. *Students with more than three (3) unexcused absences may have their overall grade downgraded at the discretion of the instructor.*

Grade	Percentage Range
A	93% and 100%
A-	90% and less than 93%
B+	87% and less than 90%
B	83% and less than 87%
B-	80% and less than 83%
C+	77% and less than 80%
C	73% and less than 77%
C-	70% and less than 73%
D+	67% and less than 70%
D	63% and less than 67%
D-	60% and less than 63%
F	0% and less than 60%

**Attendance and Late Work Policy:**

The studio meets MWF from 1:00 to 4:50. Attendance (in studio) and productivity during studio hours are required. Missing studio will impact your success. More than three (3) unexcused absences will result in your final grade being reduced by 10%; more than six (6) absences will result in a failing grade. The required work for design reviews and pin-ups must be ready ON TIME, i.e. 1:00 PM, for the due date indicated. No late work will be considered unless justified by exceptional circumstances. Preparation for each studio session is also required; each student must produce tangible work for desk crits and pin-ups for them to be worthwhile. Please prepare for desk crits by considering what it is you want/need feedback on. Participation in all studio activities is part of the requirements for the course. Repeated unexcused absences will result in a failing grade.

**Material Required:**

- Sketchbook to be used daily as a diary of ideas and design thoughts and observations
- Tracing paper (12" roll)
- Model materials (balsa wood, board, glue, craftsmanship, etc.)
- Jumbo pencils (minimum #2 soft lead) lots of them

**General Information:** (Compliments of Professor Andrea Swartz, Associate Dean)

- Learn by SEEING – observe and consider everything in your day; observation feeds design thinking
- Learn by TRYING – it is ineffective to just come up with good ideas, test them by making things. The hardest part is sometimes just starting.
- Learning by DOING – and then observing and critically assessing and then repeating the process. Designs get better with every refinement.
- There is NO right or wrong – just productivity, thoughtfulness, craft (the more carefully you make something the more opportunity there is to learn), and critical reflection. And productivity (do it again and again). Since there is no right or wrong, take chances!
- Develop your critical abilities to effectively refine your own work; look at your process products and evaluate them for their successes and failures. Take the good and move forward with your next iteration of ideas, drawings and models.
- Be responsible for good time management and pursue effective productivity as demanded by the course schedule. Constant productivity throughout the semester will directly impact your success with the projects.
- Have fun, stay focused, and produce; work through the slow points of your process, find ways to stay curious about your design. The richest designs evolve through constant care, effort and productivity.
- Representation – learn the importance of exploratory drawing and modeling to discover the effectiveness of design decisions as well as discover new ideas AND the importance of representation to convey ideas + decisions; good drawings and models HELP YOU LEARN about what you are trying to do...the best models and drawings don't stop with simple representation but rather they propel further thought, clarify ideas and open new avenues of investigation. Believe in the importance of CRAFTSMANSHIP in the process.
- Don't be afraid to try new things, to explore unconventional ideas; as long as you are thinking and making and evaluating and reframing and redoing the world will be a better place
- References to particular architects, writings and projects will be cited from time to time relative to a particular student's work; use the internet or library to pursue these; make use of the library, other students and faculty often. If you find an article of general interest, please share with the entire studio.
- The studio is a delightful environment for learning from one another. Do so by participating in it to the fullest. Work here as much as possible to learn from your colleagues and feed off the collective studio energy.

**Rules of Conduct:**

Working on coursework unrelated to A202 during class is not permitted. Using any device (phone, tablet, laptop, etc.) for any purpose other than course-related work is STRONGLY DISCOURAGED during class time because of potential disruption to me and other students.

**Academic Integrity:**

Students must comply with, and are responsible for knowing, the student academics ethics policy as published in the Ball State University Student Handbook. Do your own work. Copying work, etc. is not acceptable on planet Earth.

**Diversity Statement:**

Ball State University aspires to be a university that attracts and retains a diverse faculty, staff, and student body. We are committed to ensuring that all members of the community are welcome, through valuing the various experiences and worldviews represented at Ball State and among those we serve. We promote a culture of respect and civil discourse as expressed in our [Beneficence Pledge](http://cms.bsu.edu/campuslife/multiculturalcenter) and through university resources found at <http://cms.bsu.edu/campuslife/multiculturalcenter>.

**Disability Services Statement:**

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please contact me as soon as possible. Ball State's Disability Services office coordinates services for students with disabilities; documentation of a disability needs to be on file in that office before any accommodations can be provided. Disability Services can be contacted at 765-285-5293 or [dsd@bsu.edu](mailto:dsd@bsu.edu).

**Learning Center:**

The Learning Center offers free tutoring for many courses at Ball State in the science and humanities area, a variety of math and business courses, any writing task, some foreign language courses, and study skills such as organization, time management, test taking, and notetaking. For more information about all of the available programming, visit [bsu.edu/learning\\_center](http://bsu.edu/learning_center) or call 765-285-1006.

**Note:**

Syllabus is subject to change at the instructor's discretion.

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