Patrick Spence

Teaching Architecture

1. Teaching Philosophy

My goal as a professor is to act as a bridge between the academic world of architecture and the professional practicing world of architecture. Both are fundamentally valuable in their own way. The synthesis of these two is where I see architectural education is at its best. I intend to be able to prepare my students for what is expected of them in both environments. My passion for this approach to teaching architecture was instilled in me as an undergraduate student. Dan Wheeler, an architecture studio professor of mine, taught a studio that had students engaging with professional in the architecture industry. Each studio class he brought his full attention and energy to the table, I always felt heard and engaged. The organization of his studio and his demeanor as an educator demonstrated to me the value between these two seemingly distinct sectors of architecture. His studio changed the way I saw architecture and planted the seed that has grown into how I decided to pursue my career. It was after taking his class that I realized the impact it had on me and in turn decided I wanted to be able to do the same for students of architecture one day.

Energy

The energy that a professor brings to class has the ability lift and mold the energy of the students, and therefore set a tone for the class and in turn contributes to creating a class culture. I admire at once an enthusiastic energy, that can captivate and engage students, but also a grounded and pragmatic confidence, the kind of great leaders that people naturally gravitate toward and want to listen to. I think it's important both to meet a student at their energy level for a one on one connection, but useful for inviting and encouraging a student to become enthusiastic and self-motivated in their education.

Collaboration/Teamwork

Many studio projects I've worked on in architecture school have aired on the conceptual and idealistic side. I think this is a very interesting and good approach to teaching design. Yet, personally, it wasn't until I have a studio whose prompt and project were more edited down did, I become aware of the scope of the profession of architecture. It's important to understand that in the profession of architecture our ideas are one voice in a host of voices and visions. As a teacher I want to be able to help students understand the importance of collaboration and the inherent benefit of multiple minds coming together to problem solve and create optimal solutions. I think this can be accomplished through group work, also class discussions where ideas are shared and discussed based on reading or project work

Patience

Patience as a professor is critical to listening, listening will help me understand my students and enable me to create a bond and understanding with each student. I strive to have patience with my students for my own understanding of how to engage them and encourage them toward their personal goals, bring out their individual skill and interests, and work with them to incorporate these into their project. With this understanding I can be best positioned to point a student of mine in a direction which will encourage them to be self-motivated in their work.

Tailoring to Student Strengths

Each student, having a background all their own, brings something different to the table. There are many ways a person can engage with architecture, many paths of how to work in the field of architecture. A student's interests will be of great value in helping a student understand their own goals if they haven't already figured this out. Encouraging students to bring themselves into the equation and use their interest, background and future goals to the table will help me not only facilitate their creating a project in my class that fulfills basic prompts and provides them with useful skills in the field of architecture, but bigger picture, helps the student understand themselves more and locate themselves within the vast field of architecture.

Understanding Student Skill Level

One of my first experiences teaching was at my first job, I was training an intern one on one. I was teaching her how to use the architectural software Revit. I had several years' experience using the program but had struggled initially with learning it myself. Initially the thought of teaching this software to someone was rather daunting. The intern, however, had no experience at all with the program. I realized in giving tasks and my instruction that could understand the level at which she was at very well. I remember being very patient, but also was able to help her learn in ways I wished someone had done for me, such as allowing her to drive the program by driving the mouse at all times while receiving my direction.

2. Inclusivity Statement

I had decided early in life, about nine years old, that it was my dream to become an architect. I became obsessed with the idea that I could design a building and it could actually be built. I used to design houses on graph paper in my spare time as a form of play. In eighth grade, my teacher told me, that with my performance in math, a subject I struggled with, I should start looking into other career paths, as it was not realistic for me to pursue a career as an architect. I remember being upset by this, yet it did not deter me. Luckily, I'm the kind of person who digs their heels in the ground when I've made up my mind. I've never forgotten those words that my teacher spoke in eighth grade. I wonder, would they have deterred someone else from pursuing a dream of theirs? Out of this I've become aware of the power of passion when choosing a career path. If someone has an interest, a passion or a dream, I believe it is my responsibility as a teacher to build a student up and equip them with the tools to succeed.

With every action we make, every word we speak, we are contributing to the culture of the classroom. As academic citizens, we're all responsible, both students and professors, for cultivating an atmosphere conducive to everyone's freedom to teach and to learn. At times this will mean sharing or listening to ideas and opinions that are unconventional, unusual, and uncomfortable and perhaps stand contradictory to our own. Empathy is one of our most powerful tools. If we look, listen, we can adapt to those in our community, we will strive for understanding over judgment. Empathy applies just as well to the method of learning and creation a student brings to the table. It is important that each student have the freedom to learn in the manner that suits them

Along with my responsibility to build up students comes setting a tone for inclusivity in the classroom. In my classroom I intend to lead by example. Leading by example pairs back to my teaching philosophy principles. Beginning with the energy I bring to the classroom, fostering teamwork between students, exhibiting patience for all perspectives and voices in class, tailoring to students' strengths and finally understanding varying student skill levels.

3. Potential Class Briefs

Memory Systems

RISD Architecture – Arch 1526
Wintersession 2020
Studio/Seminar (3 credits)
14 Seats available
Graduate & Undergraduate Level
Open to non-majors
Patrick Spence, pspence@risd.edu

Course Description:
 Architecture will always be built in place of, (or in addition to) the memory of something or some place that came before. Similarly, our experience, (or perception) of architecture will always be influenced by the memories we carry in our minds. In this class each student will individually answer the question: How can I reconcile this knowledge of memory to inform the design of space? Over six weeks students will have the opportunity to engage memory in the development of a personalized system, (or design process) leading to the final design of a 'memory space'. The first part of this architecture course will engage fundamental design skills used every day by architects through a series of memory exercises. This is an important first step that we will use to design in an informed manner.   We will hand draw to see our memories, remember through iterative physical study modeling, and contain our memories by way of digital modeling. Part two of this course will see students working toward the final design of a 'memory space'. Building off of part one, fundamental design skills such as hand drawing, physical study modeling and digital modeling will be used again, emphasizing the importance of repetition as a device for memory. This 'memory space' will utilize memory with respect and sensitivity to the memory of a 'place'.

 Throughout the six weeks of class students will be asked to articulate thoughts and strategies through writing and presenting finished work to the class, helping students test and strengthen their executed ideas. Course reading will help students contextualize memory in cross-disciplinary ways, such as understanding what memory means to a cognitive neuroscientist. By the end of six weeks students will have created a system for designing that can be used and built upon in future design work.

 Course Aspirations:
 - By the completion of six weeks students will have been presented with a new outlook by which to discern value of architecture and our built environment with respect and sensitivity to place.
 - We will utilize our memory as a design tool for the design of a 'memory space'
 - Students will engage in reflection as part of the design process
 - Balance out the dominance of vision in architectural culture with a focus on all other human senses

Wearing other Shoes

RISD Architecture - 1522
Spring 2020
Studio (3 credits)
 14 Seats available
Graduate & Undergraduate Level
Architecture Majors Only
Patrick Spence, pspence@risd.edu

Course Description:
 An Architect is a generalist, when it comes to a buildings, design and construction, the Architect acts as a mediator and organizer for all specialist disciplines as they come together into the realization of a building. This class asks the architecture student to place themselves in the shoes of several disciplines related to the creation of architecture. As a class we will visit the studio's and offices of a lighting designer, acoustic engineer, structural engineer, contractor, graphic designer, museum curator, painter, sculptor, school director, gallery owner, steel fabricator and more. Your goal as a student will be to understand what each skilled specialist does in their work, and how you as the architect can best work with this skill. Following each visit the class will meet to discuss lessons learned. A 500-750 word reaction/meditation

The student will be asked to synthesize knowledge gained from meeting with these experts of their field into a building design which considers each in relation to each other.

Learning Aspirations:

Building a Building

Year-long hands on experience learning about and implementing building systems for the realization of a single-family home (Inspired by Rural studio and Yale Jim Vlock building project)

Architecture
Fall & Spring 2025
Studio/ Seminar (6 credits)
14 Seats available
Graduate Level
Architecture Majors Only
Patrick Spence, pspence@risd.edu

Course Description:
It's time to build a building. In this class we will work as a team, collaborating on the design and construction of a family home. This is a fast paced, small build project with a client. Students will be learning through hands-on experience what it takes to be an architect, in coming up with a concept and design. Following the design process, students will organize an efficient build working with a contractor and consultants to realize the home. In the fall semester will begin with conceptualizing a home based on the programmatic requirements and wishes directly from our client. The fall semester will end with a fully developed design. Spring Semester will see to students managing the construction project and taking on equal roles of responsibility. Summer semester will realize the construction and hold the key ceremony welcoming the new home owner into their home.
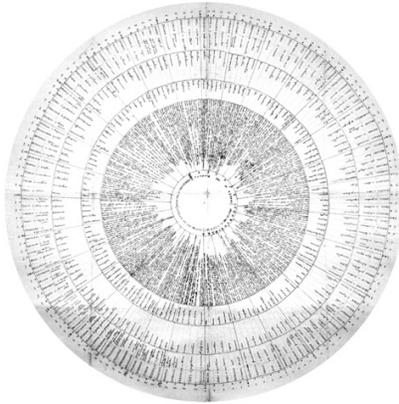. . .

Required texts: Art's Principles, Arthur Gensler

4. Memory Systems Course Syllabus

Realizing a system for creating space through individual and collective memory

RISD Architecture
Wintersession 2020
Studio/Seminar (3 credits)
Patrick Spence, pspence@risd.edu

Memory System based on Giordano Bruno's De umbris idearum (Shadows), Paris, 1582

memory noun
mem-o-ry
a : capacity for storing information

system noun
sys-tem
b : a set of principles or procedures according to which something is done; an organized scheme or method

imagination noun
im-a-gin-a-tion
a : the faculty or action of forming new ideas, or images or concepts of external objects not present to the senses.

Course Description

Architecture will always be built in place of, (or in addition to) the memory of something or some place that came before. Similarly, our experience, (or perception) of architecture will always be influenced by the memories we carry with us. In this class each student will individually answer the question: How can I reconcile this knowledge of memory, both personal and collective, to inform the design of space? Over six weeks students will have the opportunity to engage memory in the development of a personalized system, (or design process) leading to the final design of a 'memory space'. The first part of this architecture course will engage fundamental design skills used every day by architects through a series of memory exercises. This is an important first step that we will use to design in an informed manner. We will hand draw to see our memories, remember through iterative physical study modeling, and contain our memories by way of digital modeling. Part two of this course will see students working toward the final design of a 'memory space'. Building off of part one, fundamental design skills such as hand drawing, physical study modeling and digital modeling will be used again, emphasizing the importance of repetition as a device for memory. This 'memory space' will utilize memory with respect and sensitivity to 'place'.

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understanding what memory means to a cognitive neuroscientist. By the end of six weeks students will have created a system for designing that can be used and built upon in future design work.

Learning Aspiration
- Students will have been presented with a new outlook by which to discern value of architecture and our built environment with respect and sensitivity to place.
- We will utilize our memory as a design tool for the design of a 'memory space'
- Students will engage in reflection through the design process
- Balance out the dominance of vision in architectural culture with a focus on all other human sense's aspects of architecture

Learning Outcomes
- The student will develop an individualized design process in the form of a 'Memory System book' to create architecture using memory as a design tool
- Students will understand the how to utilize hand drawing as a tool through which to see something new through the design process
- Students will gain experience with articulating their thoughts through keyword assignments
- Students will gain confidence in their speaking and presentation ability through presenting their work after each exercise. This will give students multiple opportunities to articulate their process as well as design solution in simple terms to fellow classmates
- Students will sharpen their memory through in class learning techniques for memory improvement
- By exercising our memory through hand drawing the memory of an object students will engage their own memories bringing personal experience and individual value to the project.
- Through three 'creative keyword writing' the student will think through, or 'meditate', on an important theme they have picked up on in relation to memory
- Students will develop the skill of study model as a way of thinking through the design process
- Students will understand memory in the context of basic cognitive neuroscience

Fulfillments/ Projects
1. 1-week mini project exploring embodied memory
2. Site research and collective memory mapping
3. Design a memory space
4. Creative keyword writing x3
5. Maintain exhaustive sketchbook
6. Compose memory system book

Course Schedule

Part 1: Embodied memory mini project
Overview: Every person holds a unique set of memories. Memories of our childhood, memories of last year or memories of yesterday. These memories, whether we are conscious to it or not, impact how we perceive our world; the people we meet, new spaces or buildings we encounter. Just as we as individuals hold a unique set of memories, so too do spaces, buildings, objects, and land hold the memory of their histories and the experiences that have taken place in and around them

Week 1: Hand drawing
Class 1: Introduction. In class memory exercise
- Assignment 1: Memory Drawing exercise: Due class 3
- Reading 1: Read The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture & the Senses" - Juhanni Pallasmaa (p. 18-25), be prepared to discuss in class 3. Write 500-750 word reaction/meditation, due class 3.

Class 2: Class reading discussion of 'The Eyes of the Skin'. Reaction/ meditations due.
In class: Work time/ desk critique for memory drawing assignment
- Assignment 2: Case Study

Week 2: Research Mapping

Class 3: Class presentations of Memory drawing assignment. Sketch walking tour of site and surrounding areas.

- Assignment 3: Reading 1: Read The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture & the Senses" - Juhanni Pallasmaa (p. 18-25), be prepared to discuss in class 3. Write 500-750 word reaction/meditation, due class 6.
- Class 4: In class memory exercise.
- Assignment 4:

Week 3: Concept Study (hand drawing + study modeling)
Class 5: Present series of five iterative study models to class. Presentation of digital modeling.
- Assignment 5: Using iterative study models as starting point, model digitally in Rhino
Class 6: Students present digital models to class. Reflect on part 1
- Assignment 6: Creative keyword writing 2- choose a word relating to how you've engaged memory from the hand drawing assignment. In 500-750 words articulate through an open creative writing the significance of that word as it relates to how you are working through memory

Week 4: Present architectural parti
Class 7: First part of class, potential field trip to class site for memory space. Second part of class, introduction to memory space final project. Professor presentation of successful 'memory spaces', that have used memory of place for the successful design of a building that is sensitive and respectful to a place.
- Assignment 7: Research site. All class group assignment, work as a team to create site model
Class 8: First part-Compile class research on site, Second part-work time/desk crits
- Assignment 8: Hand draw concept based (inspired by) work from part one.

Week 5: Detailed memory
Class 9: Student presentations of hand drawn concepts. Work time/Desk Crit
- Assignment 9: Creative keyword writing 3- choose a word relating to how you've engaged memory from the hand drawing assignment. In 500-750 words articulate through an open creative writing the significance of that word as it relates to how you are working through memory. Bring physical modeling materials to class
Class 10: Work time for Physical modeling. Desk Crits.
- Assignment 10: Develop concept through physical modeling

Week 6: Compose Memory System book
Class 11: Work day/ Desk crits (Discuss presentation talking points and final touches)
- Assignment 11: Complete project for presentation
Class 12: Final Presentation of memory system and memory space

Course Resources

Text & Articles
(Required texts will be provided to students as excerpts. Students are _not_ required to buy texts)

"The Eyes of the Skin", Pallasma, Juhani. The Narcissistic and Nihilistic Eye
(To help the student deconstruct the idea that architecture is about what a building looks like)

"Replacement", WG Clark
(To help the student contextualize a mindset of architecture and building)

"The Art of Memory", Francis Yates. "Chapter 6, Giordano Bruno: The secret of Shadows"

"Spatial Memory: Visuospatial Processes, Cognitive Performance and Development Effects"

"Memory Lands", Christina M. DeLucia

"A Feeling of History", Peter Zumthor

Software
- Rhinoceros 4.0, 5.0 or 6.0
- Adobe Creative suite

Required tools and equipment
- Sketchbook
- 12" Roll of trace
- Pencils (a range)
- Pens

Required physical modeling materials
- Budget No less than $50-$150 for materials of student choosing

Grading Policy/ Evaluation Criteria

All assignments will be factored evenly into the final grade and given proportional weight according to their duration. The prompts articulated in this syllabus will be augmented with additional assignment parameters.

The following criteria will be evenly weighted when evaluating student work: First, meeting the literal requirements described in the prompts (are the deliverables, including the process iterations, complete, and do they follow the direction of the prompt?) Second, meeting the conceptual requirements of the prompt (does the project perform relative to the goals, ambitions and challenges set forth by the prompt?). Third, discourse (has the student participated and responded to input from others during the course of the project?)

Answering "yes" to the questions above can ensure the grade of 'C'. Answering "yes" and with a demonstrated level of high craft, an obvious self-directed and self-imposed agenda, evidence of meticulous editing, and iterative refinement, can ensure a grade of 'B'. Answering "yes" and with a demonstrated level of high craft, an obviously challenging self-directed and self-imposed agenda and critical agenda explicitly cited and positioned relative to the works of others, evidence of exhaustive editing, and a patient, iterative refinement well above the requirements, " can ensure a grade of 'A'.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory unless an absence is discussed with the instructor beforehand. Please contact instructor via email prior to the start of class.

Civility & Diversity

Membership in an academic community means that we are all a special kind of academic citizen. As academic citizens, we're all responsible for cultivating an atmosphere conducive to the freedom to teach and to learn. This means reaching for ideas and opinions that are unconventional, unusual, and uncomfortable. It also demands empathy. Look, listen, and adapt to those in your community to ensure that you do no harm. We will talk about all issues that arise. At any time, you should feel free voice a concern privately to the instructor, who will look listen and adapt to concerns.

Disability Statement

Rhode Island School of Design is committed to providing equal opportunity for all students. If you are a student with a disability that may require accommodations to complete the requirements of this class, I encourage you to discuss your learning needs with me during the first week of the term. Once an approval letter from the Office of Disability Support Services is submitted, accommodations will be provided as needed. For more information on how to receive accommodations, please contact Disability Support Services at 401 709-8460 or disabilitysupportservices@risd.edu."

Policies & Expectations

Students are expected to attend 100% of all class time. Even when there is no formal instruction, students are expected to self-direct their work in studio (or in the classroom). Students will be evaluated

based on their response to the written prompts, their participation in-class discussions and critique, and are expected to respond to in-class input through their work. There will undoubtedly involve outside of class work on the assignments. Though there is no set amount of time that guarantees success on these assignments, students should estimate 10-20 hours of outside of class time per week. Students are responsible for collectively contributing to a productive, inclusive and positive learning and working environment. Faculty will not police attendance, but students should know that there is no amount of absence that is considered acceptable. Any amount of class time ("excused" or otherwise) will affect performance, can't be made up, and will therefore inevitably affect grades.

5. Course Assignment Brief

Project 1:   Drawing Our Collective Memory
How can we use the classes collective memory of RISD's campus to understand how people's experiences of spaces differ?

Assignment

Choose a public place on RISD's campus that carries some emotional significance and triggers your memory. This place can be a building, a park, a street, garden, plaza, or any public space of your choosing. Represent this memory in a media format of your choosing. You may choose to draw, paint, 3d model or physical model.

Aims

Begin to unpack our collective experience of space in order to understand our personal experience of space in contrasted with our collective experience of space.

Objectives
- Students will begin to understand how their own memory of a place has influenced their impression of the architecture.
- Our class collective discussion will offer all students perspective on how other students experience space in potentially different or similar ways.

Methods

Your individual representation of your memory is an opportunity for you to exercise your own skills in making. You may draw (computer or by hand), build a model, 3D computer model, create a map, paint, sculpt, etc.

Assessment

We will begin with each student presenting their work to the class individually. Once presented the memory representation will be placed into our class collective map made up of each student's individual work. We will discuss as a group and draw connections, discuss similarities and differences to unpack the meaning behind the varying ways we experience space on RISD's campus.

Addition to Memory System Book
- Document all work and place into book
- scan any relevant pages of sketchbook
- Reflect on Project 1 with 500-750 creative keyword writing. Choose a word you feel embodies your understanding of this assignment and expand on why, reflecting on what you've learned and realized.

6. Mid-Semester Feedback Form

As we hit the mid-way point of the course, please help me understand how the studio is going for you. I'd appreciate your feedback in three respects; reflecting on your progress as a student, your feedback on the studio, and your feedback for me as your professor. This evaluation is anonymous and is meant to help me better understand how best to help you succeed in this course.

Student Reflection

Please evaluate the following on your understanding and progress as a student
5 = very comfortable, 1 = very uncomfortable

Your understanding of how memory

1   2   3   4   5

Your understanding of how memory

1   2   3   4   5

Your understanding of how memory

1   2   3   4   5

Additional Comments:

Studio Reflection

Please evaluate the following on your understanding of the studio
5 = great, 1 = poor

Studio assignments are clear

1   2   3   4   5

Discussions are helpful and inspiring

1   2   3   4   5

Course goals and outcomes have been stated and met

1   2   3   4   5

Critiques have been insightful and constructive

1   2   3   4   5

Additional Comments:

Instructor Feedback

Please evaluate your instructor on the following criteria
5 = great, 1 = poor

Provides helpful and constructive criticism and feedback

1   2   3   4   5

Is prepared and on time to class meetings

1   2   3   4   5

Has a strong knowledge on the class subject that they are able to communicate

1   2   3   4   5

Consideration for student workload and inclusivity

1   2   3   4   5

Additional Comments:

What is your favorite thing about this class so far?

Is there anything you would change about this class?

Which assignment have you learned the most from?

7. Assessment Rubric

Creativity & Design Relevance	Student Initiative & Development	Collaborative Ability & Individual Craft	Proficiency, Resolution & Criticism
0 Unoriginal &/or Plagiarized design	**0** Student does not exhibit any initiative or commitment for their work. Misses class	**0** Student does not participate, show no care for craftsmanship	**0** Poor presentation skills, student shows little or no interest. Responds poorly to criticism
1 Underdeveloped design, lacking relevance	**1** Student is disengaged from work. Shows slow progress and little effort.	**1** Incomplete but most project requirements are fulfilled.	**1** Presentations skills need work, lack of effort. Responds poorly to criticism.
2 Complete design addressing many factors with high degree of relevance	**2** Student is on time to class, engaged with their project, and progresses throughout course	**2** Participates often in group discussion, is always engaged, asks questions with high level of induvial craft	**2** Student shows solid effort to present work with an interest in improving. Accepts criticism.
3 Complete design exceeding all criteria. Design is highly original, insightful, with a high degree of relevance	**3** Highly inventive. Goes well beyond expectations. Self-directed and pushes themselves forward	**3** Highly engaged and collaborative, prompts group discussion with comment/ questions and exhibits the highest level of craftsmanship	**3** Student exhibits excellent presentation skills. Welcomes criticism & alternate points of view.

0 = Fail   1 - 3 =D   4 - 6 = C   7 – 9 = B   10+ = A