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UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO  
ACCENT ROME PROGRAM

**LAYERS OF ROME.**  
**A SURVEY OF ARCHITECTURE, PLANNING, & COMMUNITY**  
SEMESTER & YEAR: SUMMER 2020

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Instructor name : **Dr. Antonella De Michelis**  
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Classroom location : **see class schedule**  
Office Hours : **by appointment**

### Course Description

This three-week intensive on-site course traces the architectural and planning history of the city from the height of the Roman Empire to the present day. Lectures will address key themes such as place-making, community, and housing. Topics covered will include the changing residential patterns of the city; theories of utopia and Garden City planning; the effect of industry and the consequences of urbanization; architecture and planning as mechanisms of social control; and the relationship between national identity, and historical context.

### Course Aims

- provide an overview of the city's history and many transformations
- focus on architecture, building materials, and construction methods
- understand architectural projects within a socio-historic framework
- apply design and urban theory and concepts as appropriate to course material
- exercise critical thought and learn to develop an argument through research and writing
- acquire a deeper understanding of the city layout, its topography and infrastructures

### Requirements and Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Requirements for the course are as follows:

(I) *Presentation of one assigned reading* (component 1: oral presentation, 10-12 minutes; component 2: written summary & critique, 2 pages); (II) *urban site analysis* (component 1: annotated sketches comparing two sites; component 2: written analysis, 4-5 pages in length; component 3: PowerPoint presentation "Lessons from Rome").

### Learning outcomes

General learning outcomes:

At the end of the course students should be able to identify, define, and solve problems; locate and critically evaluate information; master a body of knowledge and a mode of inquiry; communicate effectively; understand the role of creativity, innovation, discovery, and expression across disciplines; acquire skills for effective citizenship and life-long learning.

Course specific outcomes:

This course will provide you with a clear grasp of the topography, urban makeup and history of the city and its architecture- specifically methods of construction and materials; as well as introduce the theoretical tools needed to examine, evaluate and critically assess city form, design and architecture.

At the end of the course, students should have shown to be able to:

- how to 'read' architecture: identifying building materials & methods; elements of style & structure
- how to critically assess urban space: learning and applying the vocabulary and theory associated with architecture and urban planning
- how to express and formulate your ideas about architecture
- how to develop and substantiate arguments about architecture and the history of the city

## Developmental Outcomes

Students should demonstrate: responsibility & accountability, independence & initiative, sensibility and appreciation of cultural differences.

## Class methodology

This course has been designed as an on-site seminar to take full advantage of the city so that whenever possible a student can learn through first-hand observation. A strong emphasis is placed on class discussions and active participation is encouraged. The city's architecture will be explored chronologically through a series of on-site lectures beginning with ancient Rome and concluding with an examination of contemporary projects.

## Class participation and attendance

Regular attendance and punctuality are *mandatory* in order to earn full marks. The final grade will take into consideration preparation required for class (i.e. readings) and participation in class discussions. If you need to miss class for medical reasons, please let the Director of Academic Affairs know in advance of meetings so plans can be made accordingly. If you miss any meetings without an excused absence from the Director, your final grade will be dropped accordingly. In the case of absences, it is the student's responsibility to find out what information was given in class including any announcements.

## Assessment/Grading Policy

Preparation and Participation	10%	
Presentation of Assigned Reading	20%	DUE: TBA
Site Analysis:		
-Annotated Sketches	25%	DUE: Friday, 27 May
-Written Analysis (5 pages)	25%	DUE: Friday, 3 June
-Final Presentation (PowerPoint)	20%	DUE: Friday, 3 June

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<b>Overall grade</b>	<b>100%</b>
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Descriptor	Alpha	US	GPA	Requirement
Excellent	A A-	95+ 90-94	4.0 3.7	<b>Excellent to Outstanding</b> work. Shows <i>superior</i> use and understanding of assigned readings and notes as well as literature <i>beyond</i> what is presented in the course. Directly addresses questions and problems raised; focused, analytical, and well-substantiated argument; critically evaluates concepts and theory; independent thought.
Good	B+ B B-	86-89 83-85 80-82	3.3 3.0 2.7	<b>Highly competent</b> level of work. Significant use and understanding of assigned readings and notes; coherent argument drawing on relevant information.
Average	C+ C	76-79 73-75	2.3 2.0	<b>Acceptable</b> level of work. Shows an understanding and some insight into the material in the textbook and notes, but not beyond. Answers are clear but limited; some omissions and inaccuracies but no major errors.
Below Average / Poor	C- D+ D	70-72 66-69 60-65	1.7 1.3 0.7 1.0	Fails to show a clear understanding or much insight into the material in the textbook and notes; work is, on the whole, weak. Points made are not always well-supported by argument and evidence; errors; parts of the question remain unanswered; answers unduly brief.
Fail	F	<60	0	Shows little or no understanding of any of the material.

## PRESENTATION OF ASSIGNED READINGS GROUP ASSIGNMENT: ORAL PRESENTATION

Each student will be responsible for one assigned reading that they are to 'teach' the class. A written document will be prepared as a 'handout' to your presentation where you will provide the following: abstract of the article; authors' thesis and arguments/evidence; key concepts; relevant quotes. The aim is to create, collectively, a master document of all the assigned readings to support and inform your site analysis and final presentation.

### Course Assigned Readings

You have been provided with digital copies of the assigned readings for this course. Indicated in the class schedule are when oral presentations will be delivered. Whether you are presenting or not, all students are expected to have prepared the reading (see Canvas for access to presentation notes). Class participation will be graded on your contributions to discussions of the readings.

1. Stephen W. Semes, "Adaptation as a Model for New Architecture in Historic Setting. Some Observations from Rome," *Change Over Time* 2.2 (Fall 2012): 88-105.
2. Elisha Ann Dumser, "Visual Literacy and Reuse in the Architecture of Late Imperial Rome" edited by Diana Y. Ng and Molly Swetnam Burland in *Reuse and Renovation in Rome Material Culture* (Cambridge University Press: 2018), 140-159.
3. Terry Kirk, "Framing St. Peter's: Urban Planning in Fascist Rome," *Art Bulletin* 88.4 (2006): 755-776.
4. Glauco Schettini, "Building the Third Rome: Italy, The Vatican, and the New District in Prati di Castello, 1870-1895," *Modern Italy* 24.1 (2019): 63-79.
5. Spiro Kostof, "The Drafting of a Master Plan for 'Roma Capitale'. An Exordium," 35.1 *Journal of Architectural History* (1976): 4-20.
6. Diana Y. Ng and Molly Swetnam Burland, "Introduction. Reuse, Renovation, Reiteration," in *Reuse and Renovation in Rome Material Culture* (Cambridge University Press: 2018), 1-23.
7. Kristie Cheramie, "Clay. Spies in the Making. Imperial Oil Economies and the Geographies of Mediterranean Food," in *Atlas of Material Worlds* (Routledge: 2021), 181-212.
8. Michelangelo Sabatino, "Space of Criticism: Exhibitions and the Vernacular in Italian Modernism," *Journal of Architectural Education* 62.3 (2009): 35-52.
9. Michelangelo Sabatino, "The Politics of Mediterraneanity in Italian Modernist Architecture," in *Modern Architecture and the Mediterranean* (Routledge: 2009), 41-64.
10. Hans-Christian Wilhem, "Corviale Megastructure: Narratives of Utopia and Roman Realism," *Fabrications. Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, Australia and New Zealand* 28.3 (2018): 331-354.
11. Giorgio Piccinato "Rome: Where Great Events Not Regular Planning Bring Development," in *Planning Twentieth Century Capital Cities*, edited by David Gordon (Routledge: 2009), 213-255.
12. Valerie Higgins, "Rome's Contemporary Past," in *Global Rome. Changing Faces of the Eternal City* (Indiana University Press, 2014), 185-201.

## SITE ANALYSIS ASSIGNMENT

You are asked to choose from the following three pairs of sites. Each comparison brings to the fore certain issues and themes. In all comparisons contextualise your understanding with a grounding in architectural history.

(1)

This analysis will consider elements which contribute to vibrant public spaces. Key word: spaces

- What multiple functions do these spaces serve?
- How do landmarks inform and shape the design and use of these spaces?
- What elements contribute to place-making and community?

- What formal elements organize the minor spaces and the patterns of circulation within the piazzas?

(2)

This analysis will consider broad planning issues and address programmatic elements on an urban scale.

Key words: programmatic elements; urban scale

- To what degree are these sites connected & interconnected to larger systems?  
For example, waterways, transportation, traffic patterns (vehicular and pedestrian)
- How do these sites negotiate changes in grade?
- How do these sites respond to topographic elements as the Tiber River and the Aurelian Walls?
- How are these sites topographically defined?

(3)

This analysis will consider the question of historic preservation.

Key words: historic preservation

- What are the challenges posed by these landmarks to the day-to-day functioning of contemporary Rome?
- How has the city addressed these challenges; what strategies do you consider successful and what issues remain unresolved?
- If palimpsest is a process of additive destruction, how has the line between preservation and demolition at these sites shifted over time?

## **PART ONE: VISUAL ANALYSIS**

**DUE: Friday, 27 May**

Students are asked to compare and contrast two sites in Rome and produce a series of annotated sketches (visual analysis). The aim is to document the process of understanding the historical, social, and infrastructural aspects of these spaces.

To guide the content and structure of your visual analysis refer specifically to the introduction of Norman Crowe and Paul Laseau's book, *Visual Notes for Architects and Designers* (2011). Study closely how they organize their introduction and to the subheadings; adopt and adapt their method, their structure and approach. In doing so, your annotated sketches will address the four issues and themes posed by the questions provided.

## **PART TWO: WRITTEN ANALYSIS & CONCLUSIONS**

**DUE: Friday, 3 June**

An analysis centred on the thematic prompts (see bullet points) where you go *beyond* description and make deeper connections. In your written analysis of your chosen sites (4-5 pages), you are asked to build on what you have learned from your annotated sketches by informing your discussion with information from your assigned readings and class discussions, and ultimately, draw conclusions.

## **FINAL PRESENTATION**

**DUE: Friday, 3 June**

Your final presentation will be delivered by PowerPoint to the class where you visualize your written analysis and conclusions. Your presentation will, however, add a new element to your discussion. That is, to identify the lessons of Rome. What does Rome teach us? From your site analyses, what ideas can be translated applied in a North American context and your contemporary practice. Consider integrity of place and culture, and what aspects transcend the specificity of any given city.

Excerpt from *101 Things I Learned in Architecture School* by Matthew Frederick:

"An effective oral presentation of a studio project begins with the general and proceeds toward the specific.

1. State the design problem assigned
2. Discuss the values, attitude, and approach you brought to the design problem
3. Describe your design process and the major discoveries and ideas you encountered along the way
4. State the parti, or unifying concept, that emerged from your process, Illustrate this with a simple diagram
5. Present your drawings and models, always describing them in relationship to the parti
6. Perform a modest and confident self-critique

Never begin a presentation by saying, "Well, you go in the front door here" unless your goal is to put your audience asleep."

To which I would add on more:

7. History. History. History. Ground and enrich your understanding of the project in local context and history.

## Recommended Readings

These readings will be provided digitally and are meant to support and compliment the course aims and learning goals.

Fraco Archibugi, *Rome. A New Planning Strategy* (Routledge, 2005).

Marco Ascione et al., "Exploring an Urban System's Dependence on the Environment as a Source and a Sink: The City of Rome (Italy) Across Space and Time Scales," *CheSusChem* 4 (2011): 613-627.

Kristie Cheramie and Antonella De Michelis, *Through Time and the City. Notes on Rome* (Routledge, 2021).

Ana Isabel Ribiero, "Public Health: Why Study Neighborhoods?" *Porto Biomedical Journal* 3.1 (2018): 16.

Gregory Smith and Jan Gadeyne, *Perspectives on Public Space in Orme from Antiquity to the Present Day* (Routledge, 2013)

## CLASS SCHEDULE

Class meetings are a combination of in-person and recorded Zoom presentations. Below is the schedule of in-class and on-site meetings. In addition, there will be 2 recorded lectures in preparation for the study trips to Siena and Venice.

Class Meeting 1. Tuesday, May 17.	
In-class	<b>Lecture:</b> Introduction to course
	<b>Topics:</b> Overview of the course, its methods; a historic introduction to the city
Class Meeting 2. Wednesday, May 18.	
On-site	<b>Topics:</b> Ancient City, its topography, and its infrastructure; processions and urbanism; triumphal monuments
Class Meeting 3. Thursday, May 19.	
On-site	<b>Topics:</b> Collapse of the ancient city; Pilgrimage and Rome's infrastructure; reuse of ancient building material (spolia)
	Presentations of readings 1. Semes and 2. Dumser

<b>Class Meeting 4. Monday, May 23.</b>	
<b>On-site</b>	<b>Topics:</b> Creating and obfuscating vistas, Renaissance and Fascist Urban Planning
	Presentation readings 3. Kirk and 4. Schettini
<b>Class Meeting 5. Tuesday, May 24.</b>	
<b>On-site</b>	<b>Topics:</b> Baroque Rome and the City as Theatre
	Presentation of reading 5. Kostof
<b>Class Meeting 6. Wednesday, May 25.</b>	
<b>On-site</b>	<b>Topics:</b> National Identity and urban planning
	Presentation of reading 6. Ng & Burland
<b>Class Meeting 7. Thursday, May 26.</b>	
<b>On-site</b>	<b>Topics:</b> Vernacular architecture, social housing, historic preservation of industrial architecture
	Presentations of reading 7. Cheramie, 8. Sabatino and 9. Sabatino
<b>Friday, May 27</b>	
	<b>DUE</b> Annotated Sketches <b>Your sketches are to be turned in by 1pm</b>
<b>Class Meeting 8. Monday, May 30.</b>	
<b>On-site</b>	<b>Topics:</b> Fascism; 1941 World Fair; Corbusier, Modernism, and housing
	Presentation on readings 10. Wilhem

<p align="center"><b>Class Meeting 9.</b> <b>Thursday, June 2.</b></p>	
<p><b>On-site</b></p>	<p><b>Topics:</b> 1960 Olympics; archi-stars Piano and Hadid</p>
	<p>Presentations of readings 11. Piccinato, 12. Higgins</p>
<p align="center"><b>Class Meeting 10.</b> <b>Friday, June 3.</b></p>	
<p><b>In-class Accent</b></p>	<p><b>Final Presentations</b></p>