

**ARCH 5112 Architectural Design IX- Pre-Thesis Preparation: Design Research**

1 Discussion hour and 8 lab/9 studio hours, 5 credits

Course coordinators, academic year 2023-24

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**Course Description:** Design IX is the first semester of a yearlong thesis studio working closely with a faculty advisor. Students assemble comprehensive research on a pre-approved topic. Research includes user needs, precedent studies, site analysis, along with social, cultural, historical and technical implications of a proposed architectural intervention. Thesis research clearly focuses on the selected area of study presenting well-formed arguments to advance student approaches to architectural design and methodology. Students will prepare a comprehensive document that includes their research and analysis, a written project statement along with all design methodology as part of their final presentation.

**Course context:** The thesis documentation should include: a project statement that clearly outlines the problem to be addressed, its architectural implications, and its projected material results along with all research and analysis to be used to fully develop the design of the project during Design X – the following semester. It is essential that the proposal present a concept, design methodology, site, and program for the project.

**Prerequisites:** ARCH 4812 or ARCH 4830 with a grade of C or higher

**Course Structure:**

Discussions and group discussions / reviews will be your in-person on Wednesdays with the entire class. A weekly desk reviews with your thesis adviser will be scheduled individually. It is mandatory that you meet with your advisor at the set appointment time weekly.

**Course Goals and Objectives:**

- To develop Knowledge from the range of architectural disciplinary perspectives presented in the course.
- To Utilize Skills and demonstrate knowledge needed to facilitate communication and critical thinking.
- To Integrate knowledge and work productively to communicate ideas through oral, graphic and written media.

**NAAB Performance Criteria Addressed:**

PC.2 Design  
PC.5 Research

**Required Texts:** Per Individual advisor

**Recommended Text:** Clark, Roger H. (2004) *Precedents in Architecture: Analytic Diagrams, Formative Ideas, and Partis*. John Wiley & Sons; 3<sup>rd</sup> edition [ISBN # 0471479748]

**Suggested Reference:** Varies depending upon the subject of the course and recommendations of advisor.

### **CLASS PARTICIPATION POLICY**

Class will start promptly at the scheduled time and will end when the students are dismissed. If absent for a class, it is entirely the student's responsibility to obtain notes and assignments for the next class. The student is expected to attend each class and participate in discussions, reviews, Discussions, presentations, and juries. Students will be required to perform research, readings, design and construction documentation external to class time as required by the assignments. No more than 10% absences are permitted during the semester. For the purposes of record, two late arrivals are considered as one absence. Exceeding this limit will expose the student to failing at the discretion of the instructor due to lack of class participation and mastery of class material.

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY**

Students and all others who work with information, ideas, texts, images, music, inventions, and other intellectual property owe their audience and sources accuracy and honesty in using, crediting and citation of sources. As a community of intellectual and professional workers, the college recognizes its responsibility for providing instruction in information literacy and academic integrity, offering models of good practice, and responding vigilantly and appropriately to infractions of academic integrity. Accordingly, academic dishonesty is prohibited in The City University of New York and is punishable by penalties, including failing grades, suspension, and expulsion.

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<b>Grading:</b>	15%	Typology research
	15%	Precedent studies
	15%	Site analysis
	15%	Program development
	30%	Final Thesis Documentation and Presentation
	10%	Class Participation

**General Education Learning Outcomes / Assessment  
Methods**

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Methods
Upon successful completion of this course the student shall be able to:	To evaluate the students' achievement of the learning objectives, the professor will do the following:
1. Develop <b>Knowledge</b> from the range of architectural disciplinary perspectives presented in the course.	1. <b>Review</b> student observations of site visits and Discussions and assess written, graphic and oral reports.
2. Utilize <b>Skills</b> and demonstrate knowledge needed to facilitate communication and critical thinking.	2. <b>Assess</b> student research and critical thinking abilities by monitoring weekly progress of lab work and readings.
3. <b>Integrate</b> knowledge and work productively to communicate ideas through oral, graphic and written media.	3. <b>Assess</b> the students' ability to integrate and communicate through peer and juried review of student presentations.

**National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB) Performance Criteria (PC)/ Assessment Methods**

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Methods
Upon successful completion of this course the student shall be able to:	To evaluate the students' achievement of the learning objectives, the professor will do the following:
1. (PC.2) <b>Design</b> ABILITY to prepare a comprehensive program for an architectural project that includes an assessment of client and user needs; an inventory of spaces and their requirements; an analysis of site conditions (including existing buildings); a review of the relevant building codes and standards, including relevant sustainability requirements, and an assessment of their implications for the project; and a definition of site selection and design assessment criteria.	1. <b>Review</b> student process and final documentation of the design methodology based on
2. (PC.5) <b>Research:</b> of the theoretical and applied research methodologies and practices used during the design process.	2. <b>Analyze</b> the final presentation and documentation of the students research in a variety of aspects to guide their final thesis decisions.

**Course Specific Learning Outcomes / Assessment Methods**

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Methods
Upon successful completion of this course the student shall be able to:	To evaluate the students' achievement of the learning objectives, the professor will do the following:
1. <b>Observe</b> with a critical eye and engage in discussion on the subject of the course. (Skill)	1. <b>Review</b> student observations and <b>Assess</b> the quality of critical thinking and contributions to discussions during oral and graphic presentations.

2. <b>Synthesize and Apply</b> what is learned to synthesize understanding and to complete assignments given in the class. (Skill)	2. <b>Assess</b> the students' ability to synthesize apply what is learned from lab work and through the grading of assignments.
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### Weekly Course Outline:

1. August 30, 2023: Introduction MD + PA + JB

#### **Discussion 1: What Is a Thesis? Preparing a Thesis Abstract – 300 words**

1. What is a thesis; why do BArch students undertake a year-long thesis project?
2. Anatomy of a thesis abstract:
  - a. Clear statement of intent – one to two sentences max
  - b. What issues are you investigating, that is, what problem do you want to solve or question do you want to answer?
  - c. How is your proposal important in today's cultural-scientific milieu?
3. (Approach and methodology do not need to be addressed here.)
4. Students should remember that their project at the end of the second semester should reinforce their thesis statement – did your project conclude what you stated in your abstract? As they research, they gain knowledge, and in doing so, the assumptions they made in their abstract may evolve and change. They should periodically return to their abstract and make appropriate changes as they build their argument.
5. Examples of thesis abstracts

2. September 6, 2023: PA

#### **Discussion 2: Thesis Methodology - What is the process to investigate and prove your thesis?**

1. Process
  - a. Annotated bibliography to enumerate literature available on selected topic issues.
  - b. Prepare a complete set of notes summarizing the key points within the literature that relate to your thesis and issues.
  - c. Support readings that indirectly affect your research. For example, if you are proposing supportive housing in East New York, faculty can direct you to resources on how programs are implemented and paid for by foundations or the municipal government.
2. Outline in writing, with faculty support, how you intend to pursue your research.

3. September 13, 2023: JB

#### **Discussion 3: Site / Context Selection / Inventory / Site Analysis**

1. How does your site choice reinforce your thesis and the issues you want to address?
2. Boiler plate inventory/analysis: It is common for students (and architects) to fill their presentation with "boiler plate" analyses, e. g., sun angles, wind direction, etc. that have no direct bearing on the issues they are addressing. While this should be considered and documented, you must make sure that your analysis emphasizes the issues you identify in your abstract. For example, if you are looking to achieve LEED Platinum, you will want to do a careful (quantitative) analysis of public transportation, or availability of locally-sourced building materials.

4. September 20, 2023: MD

#### **Discussion 4: Precedent Study**

1. Summary of precedents relevant to Thesis and how they will be documented / analyzed and

how they are graphically presented and summarized.

- a. A case study / example of a thesis precedent study
- b. Faculty to assist in precedent selection: do your choices address similar issues/problems you state in your thesis?

5. September 27, 2023: JB

**Discussion 5: Programming:**

1. Program Spaces and Requirements
2. Program Matrix / Bubble Diagrams

6. October 4, 2023: All

**Student Presentations of abstracts, site selection, analysis, and precedents**

7. October 11, 2023: MD

**Discussion 6: Readings + Deliverables Bibliography and Appendices Discussion and formats: How to list and document sources**

1. At this point students must have a firm grasp on the thesis and issues. This would be the time to make any refinements to the thesis statement and issues if research and analysis have opened the student to a new avenue of research.

8. October 18, 2023: PA

**Discussion 7: Site Strategy Diagram + Documentation based on Site, Readings, references, precedents**

1. Types and methods of diagramming
2. Summing up and presenting research findings

9. October 25, 2023: MD

**Discussion 8: Site Design**

1. Design strategies for various site selections
2. Site Organization for building typologies

10. November 1, 2023: JB

**Discussion 9: Parti Development**

1. Introduction to development of conceptual ideas using a variety of methods. Individual desk critiques.
2. Assignment: Working with the design concept and program requirements, students will continue to develop their concepts.
3. Continuation of manipulation of models, through expansion of ideas, combination of models and subtraction of elements.

11. November 8, 2023: PA

**Discussion 10: Parti Continuation**

Continuation of manipulation of models, through expansion of ideas, combination of models and subtraction of elements.

12. November 15, 2023:

**Student dry run presentations of thesis problem and research backup**

13. November 29, 2023:

Individual Reviews (production)

14. December 6, 2023: **FINAL REVIEWS**

15. December 20, 2023: **Design Narrative Documentation due**