

**New York City College of Technology  
Interdisciplinary Committee  
Course Review Form**

**DATE:** November 13, 2024

**REVIEWER:** Christopher Swift

**COURSE TITLE & NUMBER:** PHIL2214ID

**PROPOSED BY:** Laureen Park and Phillip Anzalone

**CREDIT HOURS:** 3

**PREREQUISITES:** ENG 1101

**COURSE IS:**  Existing  New  In development (??)

**PROPOSED COURSE DESIGNATION:**  College Option  elective  Capstone  other:

**DEPARTMENT HOUSED IN:** Social Sciences

**PROPOSED STRUCTURE (e.g., co-taught, guest lecture, LC, other):** Co-taught

**CREDIT DISTRIBUTION (if co-taught):** Split evenly

**CATALOG DESCRIPTION:** The course is guided by the question, ‘what role does the built environment play in how **the individual relate** to the natural and social world?’ Theories and concepts regarding dwelling, designing and building architecture from philosophy, sociology, architectural theory, art history, and others are explored and analyzed. They are also the basis for reflecting upon and evaluating the development of the built environment through time as a response to existential, ethical, cultural, environmental, technological and aesthetic demands.

**DESCRIBE & EVALUATE HOW COURSE MEETS INTERDISCIPLINARY CRITERIA?**

Our interdisciplinary definition: The concepts of the course will be challenging for some of our students, many of whom will be coming from disciplines far afield of PHIL and ARCH. But the structure of the semester will help students move from simple concepts to more complex ones. The learning outcomes are excellent – but perhaps ambitious? The way they are explained makes sense, but don’t we need to accomplish only three of the six? This course echoes many of the themes I explore in THE2280ID (History of the Theatre, ID with Architecture).

**DESCRIBE & EVALUATE THE INTERDISCIPLINARY STRUCTURE?**

The teaching structure works fine, but I worry that the instructors may be contributing more than their 1.5 credit hours due to the double-grading method. Philosophy and architecture are a natural fit – philosophers write about social space and architects design buildings that shape how people interact in space. This is an excellent course.

**DOES COURSE MEET REQUIREMENTS FOR GENERAL EDUCATION?** Absolutely  
[http://www.300jaystreet.com/college-council/curriculum\\_proposals/past\\_proposals](http://www.300jaystreet.com/college-council/curriculum_proposals/past_proposals) [THIS LINK IS DEAD] NYS: <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/ocue/lrp/liberalarts.htm> >

**STRENGTHS:** The two disciplines are woven expertly and in interesting ways. The weekly themes are clearly defined. The learning outcomes are very well explicated, and I believe can be explored in the

writing and reading assignments. For a course that is heavy on reading and writing, I would like to know more about how the writing is structured (assignment design). Do the low stake writing assignments connect to the final paper? How is the final paper written collaboratively (it's a "group project")? Having the students present their papers orally (and extemporaneously) in class is an excellent way of ensuring that they understand the concepts of their papers. They should be ready to converse with the theoretical ideas of the course in a Q&A.

**WEAKNESSES:** Missing the name of an architect in week 12. Why does Erik Rodriguez write that the course is WI? Yes, there is a lot of writing, but did this proposal go through the WI committee? How are the writing assignments scaffolded? Since there are a significant of low- and high-stakes writing assignments, a clearer policy about GAI needs to be articulated. To what level is GAI permitted, in which assignments and for what purposes? If not, then how will professors ensure that the writing is original? Some of the readings are very challenging (Heidegger, Tschumi). Will students conduct the readings in-class, or will professors preview the main concepts before assigning reading for homework? Will students be allowed to use generative artificial intelligence to summarize texts for them? Students do and will use GAI to summarize and simplify the readings – is this what you want, or do you want them engaging with the original texts? How does the Walter Benjamin text address ecology – I suppose a connection could be made, but isn't Mechanical Reproduction about art and aura? Are there opportunities for students to do site visits, incorporate architectural drawing, and get involved in more embodied ways with the subjects? Physical and sensory engagements with architecture can be effective. This will connect theories of phenomenology with the real experience for students. Fix grammatical error in the first sentence of the course description (number).

P.S. to committee and course proposers: my review is focused on ways to perhaps improve the course. Although the "strengths" section is shorter, this does not reflect how I rate the proposal overall. This is an excellent ID course and I think one that the students will find engaging.