

W2027 ARCH 572-001 (15609)

ARCHITECTURE CRITICISM

W 1:00 – 3:00

Dr. Craig L. Wilkins, Associate Professor, Taubman College of Architecture + Urban Planning
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This course founded on the belief that the built environment is a field worthy of critical study and educational, creative storytelling in which ideas about design, culture, people, power, and history intersect with and engage the larger body politic.

The field of architecture has a long and storied history of scholarship as an important means of public discourse, most notably in the form of the traditional monograph, manifesto, philosophical proposition, theoretical speculation, and historical narrative. Books like *Learning From Las Vegas*, *Towards a New Architecture*, and *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* are a few of the publications that have been quite influential in shaping architectural discourse, debate, and practice.

Recently, newer forms of literary production – long-form critique, exhibit catalogue, e-books and journals, and blogs to mention but a few – have joined the ranks of publications regarded as respected sites of architectural research, thinking, and writing. Each book, chapter, essay, article, or op-ed is a provocation, a vital form of civic engagement. Each an architectural exploration in which ideas come into contact with broad audiences, offering the public new ways to see, understand, and access design as a space to change and enhance social relations across differing, if not competing, peoples and places.

It is within this legacy of architectural production – where thinking-through-writing is situated alongside thinking-through-making – that we will engage our criticism project.

Individually and in group workshops, students will:

- Become acquainted with selected examples of architectural criticism
- Attend virtual discussions with current architectural critics that inhabit various publication spaces – newspapers, academia, journals, and presses
- Explore how to structure a written argument for various audiences
- Review assigned essays as well as write, share, and critique essays written by colleagues

Finally, understanding that writing is a particular form of design itself, students will ultimately construct a high-quality critique of a subject, building, or topic of their own choosing.

