CIEE Madrid, Spain

Course title: Architecture, Cultural Identity, and Spanish Urban Landscapes
Course code: URBS 3101 MASP
Programs offering course: Madrid Open Campus Block
Open Campus Track: International Relations and Political Science
Language of instruction: English
U.S. semester credits: 3
Contact hours: 45
Term: Spring Block III 2020

Course Description

This course examines the legacy of architects who adapted styles to the social and political as well as geographical idiosyncrasies of Spain. Students survey specific projects of different interpretations of Gothic architectures, the adaptation of Modernism, and the Moorish influence in urban landscapes. Throughout the duration of the course, students will analyze the interplay of architectural projects in Madrid by collecting project plans and applying in class theories to onsite landscapes. Students will identify challenges of cultural identity as it affects the design process and the impact several architectural works have on the public at large. The course probes on topics often debated regarding specificity of urban landscapes and the relation to a countries identity.

Learning Objectives

By completing this course, students will:

- Draw illustrations of the evolution of Spanish architecture and urban landscapes through the Roman era to the present.
- Interpret the association between architectonic languages and the cultural circumstances by highlighting the repercussion of public imagery and the process of construction of collective Identities.
- Be able to formulate critical summaries and become conscience of the tends that politics have in organizations concerning urban landscapes.
Learn about the contemporary debates that are facing Architecture and Urban Landscapes.

Course Prerequisites

Students are recommended to be familiar with general notions of European history and geography. The interest in architecture, art, history, landscape and sociology will be welcome. Guided visits to emblematic sites and architectures are scheduled in the course program. Yet, students will be invited to complement these activities by doing additional visits on their own, especially in Madrid city. Drawing and sketching skills will be helpful in the development of the landscape workshop.

Methods of Instruction

Lessons will mainly follow a chronologic order, but with constant references and allusions to the contemporary situation of Spain in order to enlighten the inertias related to culture, politics and collective identity issues.

Beside theoretical lessons, students will be instructed also through a more practical activity: the Urban Landscape Workshop. Its objective will be to provide basic tools for the analysis of urban landscapes as for the elaboration of simple proposals of intervention/improvement. A consistent part of the didactic will be articulated through guided visits.

Basic bibliographic references are indicated for each session in order to boost the specific contents of lectures. Due to the difficulty of achieving an entirely English bibliography, a few texts and materials will be provided by the teacher in the development of the course. Either way, students are strongly recommended to get familiarized with the readings listed at the end of this document.

Evaluation will be constant during the course: students will be asked to do weekly homework referred to the contents explained. The final exam will be principally based on the practical learning of the landscape workshop (exercise of analysis, proposition of a project of intervention). Nevertheless, students will also have to refer their works to a basic theoretical frame and bibliography research.

Assessment and Final Grade

1. Homework 20%
2. Monographic Paper 20%
3. Midterm Exam 20%
4. Final Exam 20%
5. Class Participation 20%
TOTAL 100%

Course Requirements

Homework

Homework will be assigned weekly up to a total of 5. Their purpose is to check progressively student’s understanding of the explained contents, as to monitor the general “pace” of the class in order to reasonably adjust lectures intensity.

Monographic Paper

Students will also be asked to develop a short monographic essay on theme of their choice related to the topics of the course. They will have 4 weeks available to complete the task, being the oral presentation of their works scheduled for the fifth week.

Midterm Exam

The midterm exam (scheduled at the beginning of week four) will consist in a test with multiple choice answers.

Final Exam

The final exam will be mainly based on the landscape workshop contents: students will have to develop a proposal for the improvement of a given landscape previously analyzed.

Class Participation

Participation is valued as meaningful contribution in the digital and tangible classroom, utilizing the resources and materials presented to students as part of the course. Meaningful contribution requires students to be prepared in advance of each class session and to have regular attendance. Students must clearly demonstrate
they have engaged with the materials as directed, for example, through classroom discussions, online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after presentations), interaction with guest speakers, and attentiveness on co-curricular and outside-of-classroom activities.

**Attendance**

Regular class attendance is required throughout the program, and all absences will result in a lower participation grade for any affected CIEE course. Due to the intensive schedules for Open Campus and Short Term programs, absences that constitute more than 10% of the total course will result in a written warning.

Students who transfer from one CIEE class to another during the add/drop period will not be considered absent from the first session(s) of their new class, provided they were marked present for the first session(s) of their original class. Otherwise, the absence(s) from the original class carry over to the new class and count against the grade in that class.

For CIEE classes, excessively tardy (over 15 minutes late) students must be marked absent.

Attendance policies also apply to any required co-curricular class excursion or event, as well as to any required field placement. Students may not miss placement/work hours at an internship or service learning site unless approved in advance by the Academic Director and placement supervisor. All students must complete all of the requisite 100 minimum work hours on site at the internship or service learning placement to be eligible for academic credit.

Students who miss class for personal travel, including unforeseen delays that arise as a result of personal travel, will be marked as absent. No make-up or re-sit opportunity will be provided.

Attendance policies also apply to any required class excursion, with the exception that some class excursions cannot accommodate any tardiness, and students risk being marked as absent if they fail to be present at the appointed time.

Absences for classes will lead to the following penalties:
N.B. Course schedule is subject to change due to study tours, excursions, or local holidays. Final schedules will be included in the final syllabus provided to students on site.

Weekly Schedule

Week 1
Class: 1.1

Presentation of the course: geographical context, theoretical frame and proposed approaches.

The spatial context: Spain and its historical and geopolitical idiosyncrasy; main concepts: architecture, landscape and identity and their interactions.
Presentation and schedule of the continuous evaluation milestones: weekly homework, midterm exam, monographic paper and final exam.

Introduction to the Urban Landscape Workshop: a backwards journey through the city (objectives, individual/group works, guided visits, etc.); new methodological approaches: the landscape as a crime scene.

Week 2

Class: 2.1

The Romans urban heritage in the Iberian Peninsula. The heritage of the Roman urban network of Hispania and its hierarchy; the predominance of the infrastructures; civil monuments as elements of collective identity. Two examples of civitates: Tarraco and Emerita Augusta.

Urban Landscape Workshop: Reading the landscape; the far view, the city in its territorial contest; the Urban Landscapes Units: methodological approaches and examples from the Madrid Urban Landscape Masterplan (2006).

Home-work 1: resume the principles of Roman urbanism and the significance of its main architectonic elements.

Readings:


William D. Phillips, Jr; Carla Rahn Phillips, A Concise History of Spain, Cambridge University Press, 2015, p. 27-60

Class: 2.2

The Early Middle Age: the architectural and landscape marks of the Arab domination
Introduction: the features of the middle age urbanism and its landscape consequences.

Case Studies: Cordoba and Granada, two capitals of the Al-Andalus; the Alhambra and Generalife, landscapes of water; the great mosque of Cordoba. The emergence of the Christian Kingdoms of the North and the diffusion of Romanic style: Santiago cathedral; merging identities under the common enemy of the cross.

Readings:


Class: 2.3

The route of the Gothic along the Camino the Santiago, a middle age cultural “highway”.

Introduction: the transcendence of the religious itineraries in the Middle Age; devotion, culture, business and venture. The cathedral as the main expression of the Gothic style: the cases of Burgos, Toledo and León.

Urban Landscape Workshop: the intermediate and close views, a contemporary reinterpretation of Kevin Lynch’s approach to the analysis of the urban landscape; introduction to next lecture’s outdoor activity

Readings:


Kevin Lynch, The Image of the City, Massachusetts, The MIT Press, 1660

Week 3
Class: 3.1
Site Visit: Itinerant lecture through Madrid’s urban landscapes (3 hrs. activity)

Students are taken to visit a sequence of urban landscapes in central Madrid in order to accomplish to main didactic goals:

- To put into practice the theoretical notions about landscape analysis exposed in the previous classes;
- To take advantage of the visit also to understand the specific urban landscape stratification that took place in Madrid according to its socio-economical and cultural transformations.

The Madrid Río Park is proposed to be the main leading element of the visit. According to student’s availability, displacements could be made by bicycle.

Home-work 2: research work of examples of Muslim and Gothic architecture, description of their general features.

Class: 3.2.

Clashes and dialectics of three cultures in the late middle age: the long process of the “Reconquista”. Introduction: a seven-centuries-long process of territorial and cultural unification. Toledo, Cuenca and Segovia: examples of urban landscape stratification; the dialectic between urban imperatives and natural constrains. Cultural and identity resistance through adaptation and negotiation: the Mozarab and Mudejar styles.

“Castle by castle”: the transcendence of the frontier and the landscape of the Reconquista

Midterm Exam: Test exam (multiple choice answer) based on the contents explained in previous sessions

Readings:

Class: 3.3

The rise (and fall) of an Empire: the “Siglo de Oro” and its architectural expression from Renaissance to Baroques. Introduction: four key episodes; the union of reigns, the fall of Granada, the expulsion of the Jews, the discovering of America. The architectural language and symbolism of Renaissance: Carlos V Palace in Granada; the university campus of Alcalá and Salamanca; the monastery of San Lorenzo al Escorial. When kings go on holidays: the ideals of domestication of nature in the landscape architecture of Aranjuez and la Granja de San Ildefonso.

Home-work 3: Renaissance and Baroque; comparative analysis of the main architectural and urban features

Readings:


Week 4

Class: 4.1

Shifting dynasties and ideologies: first (and uncertain) illuminist spots under the Borbons. Introduction: from the Habsburg to the Borbons,
France kingdom and neoclassicism as the new models, the fear of the revolution. Shaping power into space: the transformation of Madrid across the XVII and XVIII centuries, moving towards the east (Prado-Recoletos, the trident of the south expansion). Episodes of neoclassicism: the Palacio Real (1738), the Prado Museum (1786)

From the loss of the colonies to the loss of democracy, the troubled landscapes across XIX and XX Century. Entering a new era: needs, identities and conflicts in the industrial city. Main urban transformations: the case of Barcelona and Madrid (Cerdá’s Enxample and the Ensanche Castro). The flourishing of regional styles as the reaffirmation of local identities (Gaudi’s Modernism, Seville and Zaragoza’s Neomudejar, examples of Ecleptism); the influence of the EXPO: wide-world showrooms. Influences of the CIAM: the Spanish Racionalism (the University Campus of Madrid)

Home-work 4: research and description of examples of XX Century architectonic eclecticism in central Madrid

Readings:


Class: 4.2

“One, great and free!” : the reframing of national identity through official architecture under Franco’s dictatorship (1939-1975)

Introduction: the identity pillars of the Regime, linkage to Christianity and Empire splendor, acceptance of the hierarchy as guarantee of the social peace, populism strategies for the inclusion of the historically
excluded. Examples at different scale: Ejercito del Aire headquarter, “Valle de los Caídos” monument and the everlasting polemic, the Nuevos Ministerios urban complex, The “Universidad Laboral” of Gijon

Readings:


Week 5
Class: 5.1

Back to democracy: reconstruction of places and identities between the late ‘70 and early ‘90

Introduction: giving voice to common people, architecture and urbanism as instruments of social integration and promotion. Dignifying the city: examples of social housing and urban renewal in pre-existing self-built and deprived areas; Barcelona Olympic city. The new monuments of the social welfare: museums, public, libraries, sport facilities, cultural centers... a tour across the contemporary public architecture. The impulse of UNESCO to patrimonial valorization and urban regeneration of the periphery: Cáceres, Salamanca, Ávila, Santiago.

Individual oral presentation of monographic papers

Home-work 5: redaction of a short essay inspired by the 2nd outdoor Friday activity (the “Route of power”)

Readings:

H. Stappel, Remaking Madrid: Culture, Politics, and Identity after Franco, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010

Class: 5.2
Itinerant lecture through Madrid’s urban landscapes (3 hrs. activity)

The route of power: urban landscape and architecture evolution across five centuries of expansion in central Madrid.

Week 6
Class: 6.1

Let’s be foolish: successes and excesses of the architecture in the prodigious decade (1996-2007)


Serial dreamland landscapes: the middleclass identity myth and the “urbanization” process; the impact of low-cost intensive tourism on landscape

When the music is over: the landscapes of the crisis and the reconsideration of the public mission of architecture.

Introduction: a painful paradox; a overbuilt landscape for a homeless/hopeless society.

Modern ruins (Julia Shultz-Dornburg experience): back to the places of the urban “hangover”, from empty airports to ghost new towns. The architects of the non-material: reconstruction of social dignity and new approaches to “glocal” identity through grassroots and participation-based urban actions. Old problems and new threatens: gentrification, touristification, “authentic fake” landscapes and identity struggles in the globalized city.

Readings:
Final examination

Election of an urban site for the development of a landscape proposal. Students will have to develop a program of actions/interventions aimed to the improvement of the selected site. Proposals will have to be referred to the previous analysis work, in which identity issues have to be taken into scrupulous consideration.

Course Materials

Readings

Textbook


Additional Readings


