

# CA6302: THEORY AND CRITICISM OF ARCHITECTURE

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## Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

## Part I Course Overview

### Course Title

Theory and Criticism of Architecture

### Subject Code

CA - Civil and Architectural Engineering

### Course Number

6302

### Academic Unit

Architecture and Civil Engineering (CA)

### College/School

College of Engineering (EG)

### Course Duration

One Semester

### Credit Units

3

### Level

P5, P6 - Postgraduate Degree

### Medium of Instruction

English

### Medium of Assessment

English

### Prerequisites

Nil

### Precursors

Nil

### Equivalent Courses

Nil

### Exclusive Courses

Nil

## Part II Course Details

### Abstract

This course aims at exploring the prominent theory and criticism of architecture worldwide. The course focuses primarily on theoretical discourses and contemplations in several directions since the 1970s:

- Generic City, the global city of late capitalism (Castells, Sassen, Koolhaas);
- Post-colonialism and architecture in Asia, Africa, Oceania, and Latin America (tropical modernism);
- China/Asian modernism (modern contemporary) - Beijing, Shanghai, HK, Seoul, Singapore, Tokyo;
- Architectonic and buildability;
- Infrastructural architecture;
- Transnational design in the global era;
- Architecture in the AI age.

#### Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Describe the background and performance of various theories;		x	x	
2	Discuss the influence of theory and criticism on the building practice;		x	x	
3	Demonstrate understandings of the prominent figures and their ecological environment;		x	x	x
4	Criticize architectural phenomena and matters.			x	x

#### A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

#### A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

#### A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

#### Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs	Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Lectures	Students will engage in lectures that involve the introduction of architectural theory and criticism, about social, environmental, and historical contexts. Local and international cases will also be considered.	1, 2, 3, 4
2	Tutorials	Students will engage in tutorials with in-class discussions and activities on problems related to lecture themes.	1, 2, 3

**Additional Information for LTAs**

Semester Hours: 3 hours per week

Lecture/Tutorial/Laboratory Mix: Lecture (Mix); Tutorial (Mix); Laboratory (-)

**Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)**

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- " for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Assignments	1, 2, 3, 4	70		No

**Continuous Assessment (%)**

70

**Examination (%)**

30

**Examination Duration (Hours)**

2

**Minimum Continuous Assessment Passing Requirement (%)**

30

**Minimum Examination Passing Requirement (%)**

30

**Additional Information for ATs**

To pass a course, a student must obtain minimum marks of 30% in both coursework and examination components, and an overall mark of at least 40%.

**Assessment Rubrics (AR)****Assessment Task**

Assignments (Applicable to students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 &amp; thereafter)

**Criterion**

ABILITY to UNDERSTAND and APPLY theories and knowledge of topics related to urban design and planning;  
CAPACITY to EXPLORE, INVESTIGATE, and ORGANIZE knowledge and ideas in topics related to urban design and planning;  
CAPACITY to DISCUSS, ANALYZE, INNOVATE on given problems or scenarios in topics related to urban design and planning

**Excellent**

(A+, A, A-) High

**Good**

(B+, B, B-) Significant

**Fair**

(C+, C, C-) Moderate

**Marginal**

(D) Basic

**Failure**

(F) Not even reaching marginal levels

**Assessment Task**

Examination (Applicable to students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

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**Assessment Task**

Assignments (Applicable to students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

**Criterion**

ABILITY to UNDERSTAND and APPLY theories and knowledge of topics related to urban design and planning;  
CAPACITY to EXPLORE, INVESTIGATE, and ORGANIZE knowledge and ideas in topics related to urban design and planning;  
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**Part III Other Information****Keyword Syllabus**

Generic city; S, M, L, XL; Consumerism and architecture; global cities; Post-colonialism; tropical modernism; regional architecture; stadium diplomacy; experimental architecture in China; local identity; East Asian modern; Transnational design; cross-border practice; urban complex; cultural mega-structure; architectonic; skin and facade engineering; Infrastructural architecture; AI design; Man and AI cooperation.

**Reading List****Compulsory Readings**

Title	
1	Nil

**Additional Readings**

Title	
1	Crysler, G; Heynen, H. and Cairns, S. The Sage Handbook of Architectural Theory, London: Sage Publication, 2011.
2	Grahame Shane D., Urban Design Since 1945: A Global Perspective, New York: Wiley, 2011.
3	Zhu, J., Chen, W. and Li, H. The Routledge Handbook of Chinese Architecture, London and New York: Routledge, 2023.
4	Xue, C. Q. L., Grand Theater Urbanism: Chinese cities in the 21st century. Singapore: Springer, 2019.
5	Xue, C. Q. L. and Ding, G. Exporting Chinese Architecture: history, issues and One Belt One Road. Singapore: Routledge, 2022.
6	Frampton, K. Studies in Tectonic Culture: the poetics of construction in Nineteenth and Twenties Century. Boston: MIT Press, 1995.
7	Heathcott, J. The Routledge Handbook on Infrastructure Designs: global view from architectural history, London and New York: Routledge, 2022.
8	Koolhaas, R. and Mau, B. S, M, L, XL. New York: The Monacelli Press, 1997.
9	As, I. and Basu, P. The Routledge Companion to Artificial Intelligence in Architecture. London and New York: Routledge, 2021.
10	McNeill, D. The Global Architect: firms, fame and urban form. London and New York: Routledge, 2009.
11	Bishop, R., Philips, J. and Yeo, W. Postcolonial Urbanism. New York: Routledge, 2003.