California State University
Architecture Program in Florence

ARCHITECTURE LAB	**2018-2019** **ARC 401 / 403 / 405A**

FALL SEMESTER SYLLABUS

professors: **Gianni Pettena (GP)**, pettena@giannipettena.it
Marco Brizzi (MB), marco.brizzi@image-web.org
Paola Giaconia (PG), paola.giaconia@image-web.org
Achille Michelizzi (AM), achille@michelizziarchitettura.com

SCHEDULE
Monday: 4.00pm-9.00pm
Wednesday: 9am-1pm; 4.00pm-9.00pm

OFFICE HOURS
Marco Brizzi: Wednesday 9am-9:40am or by appointment
Paola Giaconia: Wednesday 4pm-4:40pm or by appointment
Achille Michelizzi: Monday 4pm-4:40pm or by appointment

COURSE FEES
There are no specific course fees for the ARCHITECTURE LAB for the fall semester.
Expenses can vary greatly, from student to student, depending on how much each is investing on printing boards and making models.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
The ARCHITECTURE LAB fosters an interdisciplinary approach to research in architecture and aims at promoting critical thinking on the disciplines and activities that shape our environment.
A combination of informative lectures by the instructors, field trips and personal research and readings will support the development of studio projects that will exhibit a creative approach, conceptual precision and aesthetic sophistication.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
Comprehending people, place, and context while at the same time recognizing the disparate needs of client, community, and society.
Comprehending the importance of research pursuits to inform the design process.
Responding to site characteristics in the development of a project design.
Demonstrating and articulating design skills through an iterative and considered design process, to resolve ideas from concept formation through to design development.
Synthesizing a body of practical and theoretical knowledge into the design process.

Comprehending architecture and its relationship with place, program, form and representation to a high level.
Making technically clear drawings and preparing models.
Communicating complex design ideas graphically in a range of media and through verbal media.
Comprehending key architectural works, cultural movements and ideas, their theoretical and cultural context and relevance to architecture today.

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This cross discipline course -where Architecture, Urban, Landscape and Interior Design overlap- combines site visits to get knowledge of the project site, along with projects carried out in class as studio assignments.
In the first semester students will develop an architectural project that is deeply rooted within the urban context. In particular the students will focus the attention to issues related to construction in historical contexts as dealt with by the contemporary architectural culture.
This first phase will serve as a foundation for the development, in the second half of the course, of two projects that will be located on the outskirts of the city but still within a historically charged context. Issues of urban planning and design within the contemporary urban condition will be at the core of the discussions.
Lectures by the professors and by invited guests, as well as readings on various themes related to the project topics, will be addressed to generate a common cultural ground and reinforce the multidisciplinary approach of this course.

ASSIGNMENTS
The ARCHITECTURE LAB is structured in a "project oriented" framework.

— **ASSIGNMENT 1 (fall semester).** The introductory (warm-up) assignment, titled "Sky is the Limit", is aimed to having the students develop an environmental analysis (through pictures, sketches, written texts) of a specific building or site in the city of Florence and to propose a small extension to it, defining new solutions for inhabiting historic cities. The assignment is about going to visit the "site" and graphically and photographically documenting the environment; understanding the historic urban environment, its morphology and its constraints; exploring the possibility of intervening within such contexts by designing a piece of contemporary architecture. This assignment is a good opportunity for the students to rehearse their design and drawing skills as well as their abilities in oral and graphic presentation. Also it proves a fundamental way for the professors to understand the degree of competence of the single student. Last, but not least, it will make the students learn more about the city of Florence, which will be their home for a whole year.

— **ASSIGNMENT 2 (fall semester)**. With the first project (fall semester) we have the intent of experimenting the activity of design into an existing urban context. The students will be asked to design an addition to an existing building. A site visit will be planned before starting the project.

UPCOMING SPRING SEMESTER ASSIGNMENTS AND EVENTS
Below is an anticipation of assignments and events that will take place in the Spring semester:

— **ASSIGNMENT 3 (spring semester).** The second project (spring semester) will deal with larger urban and territorial issues. Not only will this exercise deal with a larger scale, it will also bear more complex implications; different conditions, constraints and possibilities await for a coherent and effective design response. The city of Florence will be, once again, the object/subject of a didactic investigation, that will see the students work in teams and that will further enrich the curriculum.

— **CSU Florence Architecture Day (spring semester) - TBC.** After the first edition of the CSU Florence Architecture Day, which took place in May 2011 as a review of the development of the CSU Florence architecture program in the last 35 years, the program will continue in its mission of highlighting its successes by inviting an alumn who will lecture on his/her work as well as discuss with the students the state of the profession and of research in architecture.
In May 2011, Tim Power, CalPoly San Luis Obispo alumn, now principal at his firm in Milan, started the program; in 2012 we invited Johanna Grawunder, CalPoly San Luis Obispo alumn (1983) and former partner at Sottsass Associati in Milan, now principal at her firm with offices in Milan and San Francisco; in 2013 we invited Mike Ryan (Milan / San Diego, www.mmryan.net); in 2014 our guest was Thom Faulders, principal at his own multidisciplinary practice in Oakland, CA (faulders-studio.com); Dan Parks, project leader at L22 in Milan (www.l22.it), was our guest in 2014; Tim Power returned in 2015. In Spring 2017 we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the CSU Florence program. On that occasion, we invited Russel Thomsen, 1979-1980 alumnus of the Florence program and currently principal of RNThomsen ARCHITECTURE in downtown Los Angeles as well as history and theory professor at SCI-Arc.

— **Coast-2-Coast in Ascoli Piceno (spring semester) - TBC.** This workshop provides an important occasion for CSU students in terms of knowledge exchange as they will work side by side with Italian students from the Facoltà di Architettura in Ascoli Piceno. Originally conceived by Cristiano Toraldo di Francia, the Coast-2-Coast is now in its 13th edition.

— **Image: HOT SEASON'S PIX (spring semester).** Image, the company run by Marco Brizzi and Paola Giaconia (www.image-web.org), is exceptionally opening up its architecture video ARCHIVE, unparalleled repository of its kind, to liven up a special evening devoted to some hot topics in contemporary architecture.

— **Lecture series.** Italian and European architects will be invited to talk to the students, who will have the opportunity of hearing from them in person, seeing their most recent projects -completed and under construction- which relate to their own studio projects, and asking them questions in the informal Q&A session that takes place at the end of each event. The lectures, which will be fine-tuned with the programs developed in studio,

will span the whole spectrum of architecture-related activities, from industrial design to art and urban installations, from videos to architectural projects, ranging in scale from residential to institutional to urban design.

Given the relations established by California State University - Florence Program with other institutions in the city of Florence (for example, the Municipality of Florence, the University of Florence, Kent State University, Syracuse University, etc.), our program will be enriched by a series of architecture-related events which will be communicated to the students in the course of the year. The architecture faculty will introduce the events as details on them become available and will frame them -whenever possible- in the didactic course described in this syllabus.

BIBLIOGRAPHY
Readings from the texts mentioned below, as well as from current magazines/newspapers, will be discussed during classes:

- Benevolo, Leonardo. The Origins of Modern Town Planning. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1967.
- Bruno, Giuliana. Atlas of Emotion: Journeys in Art, Architecture, and Film. New York: Verso, 2002.
- Colomina, Beatriz. Privacy and Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1996.
- Colquhoun, Alan. Modern Architecture. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Frampton, Kenneth. Modern Architecture: A Critical History. London, UK: Thames and Hudson, 1992.
- Gehl, Jan. Life Between Building: Using Public Space. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1987.
- Hays, Michael. Architecture Theory Since 1968. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000.
- Jacobs, Jane. The Death and Life of Great American Cities. New York: Random House, 1961.
- Lang, Peter and William Menking. Superstudio: Life without Objects. Milan: Skira, 2003.
- Lynch, Kevin. The Image of the City. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1960.
- Mumford, Lewis. The Culture of Cities. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1938.
- Pettena, Gianni. Radicals: architettura e design. Venezia: La Biennale di Venezia, 1996.
- Vidler, Anthony. Architecture Between Spectacle and Use. Williamstown, MA: Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 2008.

ARCHITECTURE LAB LECTURES
Gianni Pettena
Marco Brizzi
Paola Giaconia
Achille Michelizzi

ATTENDANCE POLICY
Class meets on Mondays, 4.00-9.00pm, and on Wednesdays, 9am-1 pm and 4.00-9.00pm. Attendance for the entire duration of each and every studio meeting and studio jury is mandatory.

Attendance to all CSU architecture courses is mandatory. Two unexcused absences are allowed during the semester but more than two unexcused absences will lower your grade as follows (excused absences will be accepted for serious medical reasons or emergencies): **3 unexcused absences**, lowers one letter grade; **4 unexcused absences**, lowers two letter grades; **5 unexcused absences**, lowers 3 letter grades. **More than five unexcused absences could result in failure of the course**.

In order not to disrupt the class, punctuality is required. Students are expected to be in class at the beginning of the class hour; any delay exceeding 30 minutes will be considered an absence.

Dates of mid-term and final crits **can not** be changed for individual travel plans or personal needs. Students should take note of the dates and hours of the midterm and final crits and plan their trips after the last crit. It is important to inform friends and relatives about these crit dates so that no tickets are purchased for you that will interfere with these crit dates. Missing the midterm or the final crit could mean failure of the course.

During the academic year photocopies and other material may be distributed in class by the instructors. Students who were not in class are responsible for getting the material from their classmates and making their own photocopies.

GRADING POLICY
Evaluation is based on daily work in studio, presentations, and quality and completeness of assignments.

Students are expected to work consistently during the week, bringing sufficient new and/or revised work to each studio class.

Grades are given by the instructors. The final course grade will be determined as indicated below:
—   Assignment 1 - Sky is the Limit: 20%
—   Assignment 2 (phase 1): 40%
—   Assignment 2 (phase 2): 40%

GRADING SCALE
00-94	A
93-90	A-
89-88	B+
87-83	B
82-80	B-
79-77	C+
76-73	C
72-69	C-
68-67	D+
66-63	D
62-60	D-
59 and below	F

CLASS CODE OF CONDUCT
Activities unrelated to the course (including private conversations, emailing, text messaging, reading, web surfing, etc.) are not permitted during class time. Please turn off or put all electronic devices on silent mode prior to the beginning of the class.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED
Any form of plagiarism or cheating may result in a failing final grade in the course and might be reported to IP and your campus. You are better off spending your time studying for the class. If you have questions about what constitutes academic dishonesty, please refer to the student handbook and catalog of your campus and also ask me and/ or the Resident Director for more information.

COPYRIGHT AND PRIVACY LAWS
No portion of the texts, films, videos, and other material used in this course can be reproduced in any format including scanning, electronic downloading or sharing of files.
In addition, no portion of class lectures, discussions, and activities can be reproduced and used in any format, including electronic, without the written consent of the instructor and/or guest speakers.

CHANGES- IMPORTANT
Information contained in this syllabus, including the class calendar, other than that mandated by the University, may be subject to change with advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor.

CALENDAR

Nov 5	Monday	**Sky is the Limit project crits** (in aula magna)	GP+MB+PG+AM
Nov 7	Wednesday am	**Presentation of assignment 2** (in aula magna)	GP+MB+PG+AM
	Wednesday pm	Visit to the project site (TBC)	PG
Nov 12	Monday	desk crits	AM
Nov 14	Wednesday am	**Visit to the DIDALABS at the University of Florence with prof. Giovanni Anzani (TBC)**	
		Marco Brizzi's presentation + deskcrits	MB
	Wednesday pm	Paola Giaconia's presentation + deskcrits	PG
Nov 19	Monday	desk crits	AM
Nov 21	Wednesday am	desk crits	MB
	Wednesday pm	**Assignment 2: class models (1 per room) at scale 1:200 ready**	PG
Nov 26	Monday	desk crits	AM
Nov 28	Wednesday am	desk crits	MB
	Wednesday pm	**guest lecturer (TBC)**	PG
Dec 3	Monday	desk crits	AM
Dec 5	Wednesday am	desk crits	MB
	Wednesday pm	**guest lecturer (TBC)**	
Dec 10	Monday	desk crits	
Dec 12	Wednesday am	desk crits	MB
	Wednesday pm	desk crits	PG
Dec. 17/19 Mon/Wed		**Midterm crits - assignment 2 (phase 1)**	GP+MB+PG+AM

------------------------ WINTER BREAK------------------------

Jan 7	Monday	desk crits	AM
Jan 9	Wednesday am	desk crits	MB
	Wednesday pm	desk crits	PG
Jan 14	Monday	desk crits	AM
Jan 16	Wednesday am	desk crits	MB
	Wednesday pm	desk crits	PG
Jan 21	Monday	desk crits	AM
Jan 23	Wednesday am	desk crits	MB
	Wednesday pm	**guest lecturer (TBC)**	PG
Jan 28	Monday	desk crits	AM
Jan 30	Wednesday	desk crits	MB
	Wednesday pm	desk crits	PG
Feb 4	Monday	desk crits	AM
Feb 6	Wednesday	desk crits	MB
	Wednesday pm	desk crits	PG
Feb 11/13 Mon/Wed		**Final crits - assignment 2 (phase 2)**	GP+MB+PG+AM