

**SYLLABUS**

ARCH 540.002 'FORGETTING ARCHITECTURE'

**Instructor**

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course studies how architecture has attempted to memorialise traumatic historical events. What are the gaps between the intentions and results? What are the divergent forces at play between design and production? How are some memorials able to speak to the collective memory of a specific group and to society at large?

On a broader level, through the study of various works of philosophy and literature, the course asks whether transforming memory into artifice is the best means of preserving a subject, whether absence can be presented in built works, and what role incompleteness plays in maintaining and changing memory.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

The course should give students a broad basis on which to critically evaluate monuments and memorials from multiple points of view through an array of readings and discussion as well as examinations of case studies.

**SCHEDULE****Week 1 / Sep 6**

The problem of memory

Course overview

Group presentations assigned

**required reading**

Jorge Luis Borges, 'Funes the Memorius' from *Ficciones*

**Week 2 / Sep 13**

Trauma

**readings**

Sigmund Freud, 'Beyond the Pleasure Principle' from *The Standard Edition*, vol 18

Cathy Caruth, Introductions to parts 1 and 2 from *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*

Dominick LaCapra, Excerpts, *Writing History, Writing Trauma*

Michael Rothberg, Introduction to *Traumatic Realism*

**Week 3 / Sep 20**

Storytelling and History

**readings**

Aristotle, *The Poetics*

Mikhail Bakhtin, 'Epic and Novel' from *The Dialogic Imagination*

Plato Excerpts from *Timaeus*

Robert Jan van Pelt, 'Heraclitian Heritage' from *Architectural Principles in the Age of Historicism*

Friedrich Nietzsche 'On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life', from *Untimely Meditations*

**Week 4 / Sep 27**

Community and Collective Memory

Case studies determined

Essays assigned

**readings**

Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*

W G Sebald, 'Air War and Literature' from *On the Natural History of Destruction*

Frances Yates, Chapter 1 to 3 from *The Art of Memory*

Maurice Halbwachs, *Collective Memory*

**Week 5 / Oct 4**

The Counter-Monument

**readings**

Theodor Adorno, 'Meditations and Metaphysics' from *Negative Dialectics*

James Young, 'The Counter-Monument'

Sue-Anne Ware, 'Memory Slips'

Walter Benjamin, 'The Author as Producer'

**Week 6 / Oct 18**

Memorialisation by Georges Perec

Essay Part One Due

**required reading**

*W or The Memory of Childhood*, Georges Perec

**Week 7/ Oct 25**

One on One

**Week 8 / Nov 1**

One on One

**Week 9 / Nov 8**

One on One

**Week 11 / Nov 15**

Presentations

**Week 12 / Nov 22**

Presentations

**Week 12 / Nov 29**

Conclusions

Completed Essays Due

reading

Maurice Blanchot, 'The Gaze of Orpheus' from *The Gaze of Orpheus*

**EVALUATION**

30% Presentations (20% first presentation, 10% second presentation)

50% Essay (15% Part One, 35% Completed Essay)

20% Participation and development over term

During the first week of class, students will sign up to present, as part of a group, a selection of readings for one of the topics covered during the following four weeks. Including time for questions and discussion, the presentations should last about one hour. Every person in the group will receive the same mark, which will be determined by the depth and precision of the group's analysis and critical positions, as well as questions raised by the group's presentation.

At week four, students will choose a memorial or monument on which to focus. The memorial or monument can take any form, though the choice must be approved by the instructor. At week six, part one of the essay (defined below) is due. During weeks seven through nine, students will meet individually with the instructor to review part one and discuss further research and writing for the completed essay.

During weeks 11 to 12, students will individually present part one and any subsequent material from their research to the class. The mark for this presentation will be determined according to the same criteria as above

– depth and precision of analysis and critical positions and questions raised by the presentation.

As stated above, each student will choose a specific memorial by week four that will be the subject of the essay and individual presentation. The essay assignment is divided into two components: part one of the essay and the completed essay. Part one comprises what would be the opening two paragraphs of your completed essay. It presents relevant facts about the case study, proposes a theme on which the student proposes to approach the critical interpretation of the case study, and may include précis of texts used to support the critical interpretation. It is a maximum of 250 words. It must be written in typical academic style, with notations where required.

The completed essay, maximum 1,500 words, will critically interpret the monument. The critical essay can take any form chosen by the student, so long as it is an outstanding example of that form.

Both part one and the completed essay must be submitted electronically, to the instructor's address, as well as in hard copy. Depending on the availability of presentation space, and solely at the instructor's discretion, students may be required to turn in a one-page précis of their presentation material in lieu of a presentation.

Participation and development is a reflection of an individual's student sustained contribution to the class discussion in the form of comments and question.

## **Course Delivery**

Course material is available to students through the Learn Site.

Student access is granted by using their QUEST login and password. For any technical inquiries please contact the Learn Helpdesk at <http://ist.uwaterloo.ca/cs/learn/learn.html>.

## **Avoidance of Academic Offenses**

Students are expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, avoid committing academic offenses, and take responsibility for their actions. Students who are unsure whether an action constitutes an offense, or who need help in learning how to avoid offenses (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about rules for group work / collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, TA, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy #71 (Student Academic Discipline) at the following URL: <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm>

Students who believe that they have been wrongfully or unjustly penalized have the right to grieve; refer to Policy #70 (Student Grievance) at the following URL: <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm>

With the onset of high volume data transfers, recent increases in student academic dishonesty, including the use of pirated software applications, have been met with severe penalties ranging from mark dropping, failures, and expulsions. Please be aware that academic integrity includes the appropriate use of software, and failing to comply with university standards will result in prosecution to the highest degree.

## **Students with Disabilities**

The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD) is located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, and collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities, without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term. Once registered with OPD, please email the instructor, in confidence, to discuss your needs.