

ADV 9203: Thesis project / Project Thesis

Instructors: John McMorrhough, Andrew Holder, Jon Lott

Schedule: Mondays 1-4PM

Units: 4

Course description:

As the culminating requirement of the Master in Architecture degree, "Thesis" entails multiple expectations. It is a demonstration, not only of competency and expertise but of originality and relevance. It requires the ability to conceive and execute work that is both a specific project (delimited in scope, a specific set of deliverables) as well as the indication of a wider Project (possessing disciplinary value, contributing to the larger discourse). The class will address both valances of the Thesis project. In a series of lectures and workshops, students will study the theory and practice of the architectural thesis by examining its institutional history at the GSD and its development in the field at large in order to understand the conventions and possibilities of the format. In preparation for their own thesis, students will, in a guided series of exercises, produce definitive statements ("what is the topic?"), relevant research ("what is the position?"), and studies of implementation ("what is the method?"). With this preparation, students will be equipped to undertake a thesis "Project" in every sense of the word.

The course consists of a lecture and a series of workshops to structure the production of research and initial design exercises.

The course is intended to complement any arrangements already made with thesis advisors. Thesis advisors are welcome to review progress in the course and suggest individually-tailored topics for the research work that each student will complete as part of the course.

Eligibility:

This course is intended for second semester MArch IIs, fourth semester MArch I APs, and sixth semester MArch Is.

Information for MArch Is and APs:

- This course is the preferred method of thesis prep for all MArch I and MArch I APs. While MArch I and MArch I APs who entered their program prior to fall 2018 are not required to take this course, enrollment is strongly encouraged. MArch I and APs who entered the program in fall 2018 or later are required to take this course or an approved substitution.
- The course is open to MArch Is and APs even if they elect a Spring 2021 thesis; this course doesn't have to be taken in the semester immediately preceding your thesis semester.

Information for MArch IIs:

- MArch II students may opt to do thesis with prior approval from the department. Approval must be obtained via a departmental application process at the end of the first year of studies. MArch II students who opt to enroll in this course are not guaranteed placement into the thesis program and are still subject to the application process.
- This course will count towards the MArch II Discourses & Techniques distributional elective requirement.