Architectural Studies

Overview

The built environment is created through a complex interaction of history, human cognition, economics and public policy. As an architectural studies major, you learn how to distinguish those forces and understand the interplay between them. You draw on many different academic fields to do this, from art and design to math and environmental studies. In the best tradition of the liberal arts, you are encouraged to take the broadest possible view. Your studies prepare you for professional school in architecture, landscape architecture, historic preservation or urban planning, or to pursue a wide range of other careers.

Personalized Learning

You work closely with faculty mentors who lead small courses and seminars. Your final integrative project might be an internship in architecture, landscape architecture, urban planning or interior design. Students periodically visit firms and take trips to historic sites. Assignments often involve primary research. Recently, students worked with curator Stephen Fan on an exhibition at the Lyman Allyn Art Museum that explored architectural and social issues related to local Chinese immigrant communities.

International Opportunities and Study Abroad

Most architectural studies majors spend time abroad, either in a semester-long program or a summer internship. You might take part in an archaeological field project in Greece, visit architectural sites in Italy with classmates, or complete an internship with an architectural firm in Germany, Spain or England.

Q. Why architectural studies?
A: As a visual person, I started college by taking art courses. Since I was also interested in writing, history and the sciences, I decided to major in architectural studies because of the program’s interdisciplinary nature. There are so many areas to explore – from history to design to preservation. The luxury of choice and flexibility are quite appealing. The professors are also passionate and dedicated. It’s hard not to get pulled in!

Q. Did you study abroad?
A: I studied in Florence the spring of my junior year. As a double major in architectural studies and Italian studies, the location was a perfect fusion of my interests. I took courses on architectural history, preservation and art and spent most of my class time around the city exploring the urban fabric. I also interned for a museum, giving tours and helping with programs at Palazzo Vecchio.

Q. What types of research have you done?
A: I’ve participated in several projects. The summer between junior and senior year, I worked for a historical society near Boston. I conducted research on noteworthy mid-century modern developments in the area and collected material for the society’s archives. Near the College, I’ve researched houses in and around historic districts for a local preservation organization, New London Landmarks.
Faculty
Faculty from many departments and disciplines offer courses for the major in architectural studies. Among them:

Joseph D. Alchermes, Associate Professor of Art History; Director of the Architectural Studies Program
B.A., Wesleyan University; M.A., Ph.D., Institute of Fine Arts, NYU
Roman art; Early Christian and Byzantine art; medieval architecture; Islamic art and architecture

Abigail A. Van Slyck, Dayton Professor of Art History; Dean of the Faculty
A.B., Smith College; Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley
American architecture; gender issues in architecture; vernacular architecture and cultural landscape studies; spaces of childhood; library architecture

Stephen Fan, Adjunct Assistant Professor of Architecture
A.B., Harvard College
M.Arch., Harvard Graduate School of Design
Architectural design; geography; race and architecture; community engagement

Emily C. Morash, Visiting Assistant Instructor
B.A., Smith College; M.Arch. History, University of Virginia; Ph.D. Candidate, Brown University
Modern and contemporary architecture; Italian architecture; American architecture; architecture and media

Christopher Steiner, Lucy C. McDannel ’22 Professor of Art History, Chair of Art History and Architectural Studies
B.A., M.A., Johns Hopkins University; M.A., Ph.D., Harvard University
African art and material culture; art market and collecting; Images of race and “otherness” in visual culture; offbeat museums and visionary art; censorship and museum controversies

Gregory Bailey, Associate Professor of Art
B.A., Sonoma State University; M.F.A., University of Hartford
Sculpture; mold making and casting; welding and fabrication; wood construction

Selected Courses
Survey of the History of Art; Architecture, 1400-Present; Ancient and Medieval Rome; Christian Pilgrimage in the Middle Ages: Ritual, Architecture, and Urbanism; New London: A Cultural Landscape Approach; The Arts & Crafts Movement in America; American Architecture; 20th-Century Architecture & Design, Contemporary Architecture; Architectural Design Studio; Landscape Architecture Design Studio; Three-Dimensional Design and Sculpture; Urban and Regional Economics; Environmental Psychology; Environmental Studies; Calculus; Physics

About Connecticut College
Connecticut College is a private, highly selective liberal arts college with 1,850 students and more than 40 majors in the arts, sciences, social sciences and humanities, and the option for students to self-design majors. The College offers a high level of intellectual challenge, and a campus culture that supports students to tailor their educational experience to their own interests and goals. A four-year career development program teaches students how to translate a liberal arts degree into a first job or graduate school admission.