History / Theory of Architecture: Prehistory to 1750

FALL 2016 Tuesdays, Thursdays + Fridays 9:30 – 10:45 / Storrs 290

Premise: This course is the first part of a three-semester sequence on the global history and theory of architecture and urbanism from an overview perspective. This semester explores the major buildings, building cultures, and architectural ideas from around 10,000 BCE to around 1750 CE.

Method, Content and Organization: The material in this course will be presented through lectures with corresponding readings. This course is divided into four segments addressing: (1) traditional building cultures around the Mediterranean that are considered the antecedents of western architectural traditions, (2) other traditional building cultures around the world, (3) western medieval architecture and urbanism, and (4) western renaissance and baroque architecture and urbanism.

Objectives: The primary goals of this course are for students (1) to acquire a general knowledge of architectural and urban projects typical of each building culture and period; (2) to understand the formal and spatial characteristics that distinguish the structures of distinct building cultures and periods; (3) to understand the social, political, economic, religious, and other forces that have influenced the history of architecture and cities; (4) to understand the ways in which the western tradition has influenced, and been influenced by, other building cultures; and (5) to acquire the ability to express ideas about architecture and cities in writing.

Required Readings: Some readings will made available on moodle; however, students are required to purchase the following textbooks and references:

Assignments and Assessment: Each segment of the course will be followed by a test that includes image identifications, vocabulary, multiple-choice questions, and/or a short essay. In addition, all students will also complete a series of written assignments meant to hone critical thinking and analytical abilities through focused examination of historic architecture. These assignments will focus on image description and analysis, comparison/contrast analysis, argument development, and research/using sources effectively.