ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN – ROME, FALL 2014

Professors:	**Francesco Bedeschi, Riccardo d'Aquino, Francesca Riccardo, Davide Vitali**	
Regular Class Hours:	**Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, 14:00 – 18:00**	
Required Field Trips:	**as per calendar**	
Course milestones:	**09/18**	**Project 1 Final Review**
	10/16	**Project 2 1st deadline (phase I)**
	10/27 to 10/31	**AACUPI – Roma Tre Workshop**
	11/25	**Project 2 phase II interim review**
	12/13	**Project 2 phase II due date**
	12/15-16	**Final Reviews**
	12/18	**Super jury**

1.1 COURSE DESCRIPTION

Focusing on the analysis of the Roman urban stratification (Palimpsest), the students attending the University of Arkansas Rome Center develop a series of critical works within complex urban conditions and scales of urban space. Sites are selected to address the issues of design within the layered cultural and historical context of Rome and to address the question of significance within the process of contemporary design.

Throughout the term we will engage with the notion of the **Urban Palimpsest**:

*A **palimpsest** is a manuscript page from a scroll or book from which the text has been scraped or washed off and which can be used again. The word "palimpsest" comes through Latin palimpsēstus from Ancient Greek παλίμψηστος (palímpsestos… compounded from πάλιν (palin, "again") and ψάω (psao, "I scrape") literally meaning "scraped clean and used again". Romans wrote on wax-coated tablets that could be smoothed and reused, and a passing use of the term "palimpsest" by Cicero seems to refer to this practice.*
(see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palimpsest)

The course engages study of urban ideas, documentation, analysis and synthesis through observation and drawing, with specific reference to place-based learning and experience. Topics discussed include typology, mapping, neighborhoods, streets, urban spaces and fundamental issues of urban dwelling and design that shape the contemporary Roman city.
Through the development of adequate skills in drawing, sketching, and watercolor, special emphasis is placed upon the craft of making as a method of recording and analysis.
By studying urban and architectural spaces at different scales, the students are encouraged to use their analytical work as a tool to understand the existing relationships between urban and architectural forms, and as a means to address the public realm of architecture and its role in expressing epistemological values within a given society.

2.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Premises

The program is built upon three premises:

- To help the student learn to critically see;
- To develop an understanding of how the city of Rome is organized and its unique palimpsest, with three-thousand years of urban history coexisting in one urban aggregation;
- To foster personal growth through the focused experience of a (foreign) place;

By seeing, the intent is to structure exercises that ask the student to observe closely in a manner, which is analytical, critical and graphic (drawing). Through the study and analysis of urban form and the first-hand experience of the city, the student will better understand and be able to develop strategies for the making of public spaces and architecture in cities.
The first two premises are dependent upon the third: the holistic experience of the place, and active engagement in the life and analysis of the City.

Objectives

The objectives can therefore be described thus:

1. To understand the order and organization of urban spaces

The city (of Rome) will be at the center of our studies, the urban conditions of each site will be addressed, studied and analyzed, and they will be central to the discussion and to the work; the projects will emphasize Rome's space and space making procedures, with the intent of highlighting the deep relationship between site, history, and project;

2. To understand the role of architecture in the Roman urban environment

Through a series of analytical processes, the urban conditions which generate and/or inform the architectural form will be explored, represented and highlighted. Similarly, the architectural projects which expressed a public and urban program within the city's context will be identified and studied.
A series of design proposals, based upon the critical interpretation of the analyzed sites will suggest potential urban or architectural transformations of the given sites as well as possible changes, future adaptations and/or improvement. These design proposals will be generated through the application of a critical use of precedent and analysis, rather than by the generation of autonomous rules.

3. To identify and critically articulate the generating ideas of an architectural process

The generating rules of design, or canons, as a complex system of signs expressed by a culture within an historic period will be described, discussed and explored with the intention of emphasizing the role of design process/es (and its rules) within the architectural work.
The use of precedent will then be framed within the current dialogue in architecture. The course will encourage critical thinking in selecting and using precedent in design procedures.

4. To recognize the values of cultural diversity and civic engagement in the academy and the profession

Through the active participation in workshops and seminars organized in collaboration with the local institutions and the development of urban proposals as well as developmental guidelines for

urban areas and natural environments, the students are encouraged to comprehend the role of the architectural profession as a service to the community. The immersion within a new cultural environment, and the collaboration and exchange with the local communities aims at recognizing cultural diversity as a value for reciprocal understanding.

2.2 TOPIC OBJECTIVES

Cultural diversity
Understanding of the diverse needs, values, behavioral norms, physical abilities, and social and spatial patterns that characterize different cultures and individuals, and the implication of this diversity on the societal roles and responsibilities of architects.

Community and social responsibility
Understanding of the architect's responsibility to work in the public interest, to respect historic resources, and to improve the quality of life for local and global neighbors.

Historical traditions and global culture
Understanding of parallel and divergent canons and traditions of architecture, landscape and urban design including examples of indigenous, vernacular, local, regional, national settings from the Eastern, Western, Northern, and Southern hemispheres in terms of their climatic, ecological, technological, socioeconomic, public health, and cultural factors.

Integrated building practice
Understanding of how sustainability and the impact of natural forces on organization inform the theory and practice of architecture.

2.3 KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS OBJECTIVES

Design Thinking
Ability to raise clear and precise questions, use abstract ideas to interpret information, consider diverse points of view, reach well-reasoned conclusions, and test alternative outcomes against relevant criteria and standards.

Investigative Skills
Ability to gather, assess, record, apply, and comparatively evaluate relevant information within architectural coursework and design processes.

Use of Precedents
Ability to examine and comprehend the fundamental principles present in relevant precedents and to make choices regarding the incorporation of such principles into architecture projects.

Ordering Systems Skills
Understanding of the fundamentals of both natural and formal ordering systems and the capacity of each to inform two- and three-dimensional design.

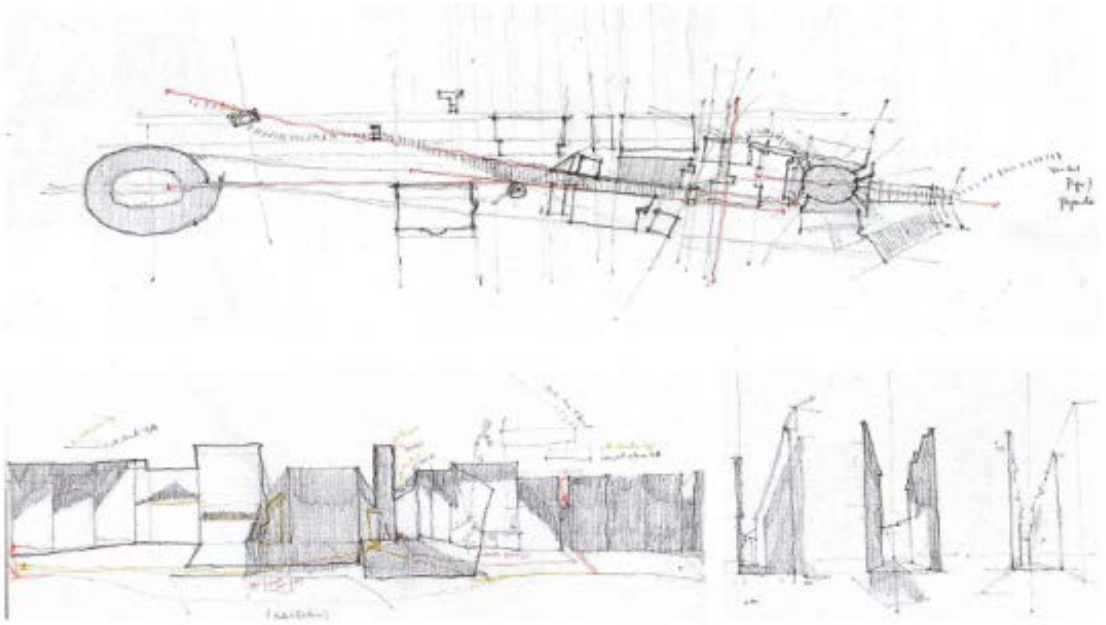
Pre-Design
Ability to prepare a comprehensive program for an architectural project and a comprehensive analysis of site conditions.

Applied Research
Understanding the role of applied research in determining function, form, and systems and their impact on human conditions and behavior.

Collaboration
Ability to work in collaboration with others and in multi-disciplinary teams to successfully complete design projects.

Human Behavior
Understanding the relationship between human behavior, the natural environment and the design of the built environment.

3.1 REPRESENTATION



The use of sketchbook analysis will be a specific feature of this course and of the Rome Semester, a required and fundamental component of the work;
In the attempt to form a strong architectural vocabulary, extensive time will then be devoted to drawings on site;
Hand drawings will be encouraged in studio as well with the clear intent to provide value to the 'crafted' work;

Digital work will also be carried out in studio with the intention of exploring (and demonstrating) the deep relationship between urban and architectural scales in Rome and developing logic space making procedures.

4.1 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Site sketches, analytical drawings, and other graphic or photographic research, will be required during the daily activities of the course.
A sketchbook (minimum size: 81/2"x11" or A4) will be constantly evaluated and considered as an important component of the student's final grade.
Final boards and other media are required for each assigned project. These boards will generate a presentation of combined drawings, which will represent the end of semester final work. In order to achieve this final result, several exercises/projects are assigned during the Rome semester.
The projects will focus on the three different but related levels of investigation, these three study phases will be approached at different scales, related to the assigned projects.
Reading assignments and research work will be a fundamental part of this course. Individual consistency and rigor will be emphasized as an important component for the general progress of the class.

4.2 CO-REQUISITE: Architecture of the City

The course of Architecture of the City is a co-requisite for the course of Architectural Design.
The aim of the Architecture of the City course is to accompany students through the layering that composes Rome's urban form and to offer you a necessary basis of the historical and theoretical information, in order to take full advantage of your experience as students at the Rome Center. Weekly drawing sessions will be held on designated sites. With Rome and its environs as our laboratory, you will use drawing and observation as your primary methods of investigation and you will investigate the deep relationship between drawing and concept in design.

5 PROJECTS AND SCHEDULE

The FALL 2014 edition of Architectural Design is articulated on two projects which will share the same underlying methodology and approach even if on two different areas of the city of Rome.

PROJECT I: AN ENBANKMENT TO BE RE-INVENTED

The project area covers the right bank of the Tiber in the stretch between Lungotevere della Vittoria and the bridge of Corso Francia. The area is characterized by the presence of several relevant building complexes: the Foro Italico sports complex (1934, architects Del Debbio and

Moretti) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1937, architects Debbio, Foschini and Morpurgo). Vegetation of the embankment is made up of native and wild plants (reeds, daffodils, etc.); along the river are grass and wild shrubs on the slopes and a row of pine trees (pinus pinea) aligned to the Tiber. A pedestrian street marks the longitudinal axis parallel to the river: there's a bicycle path and a small market every Sunday. This axis passes under three major urban nodes: the bridge of Music, bridge Duca d'Aosta and Ponte Milvio. The opposite side is mainly residential with a much higher urban density.

This first project aims to identify / study possible solutions regarding the following issues:

● Relationship with the urban context, today ruled out mainly for traffic reasons

● Improvement in functional activities mainly related to sports, to the market and to understand educationally the natural place;

● Relations with the management of the water level of the river Tiber which, in this section, are subjected to rise up about 10 m during the winter floods (torrential);

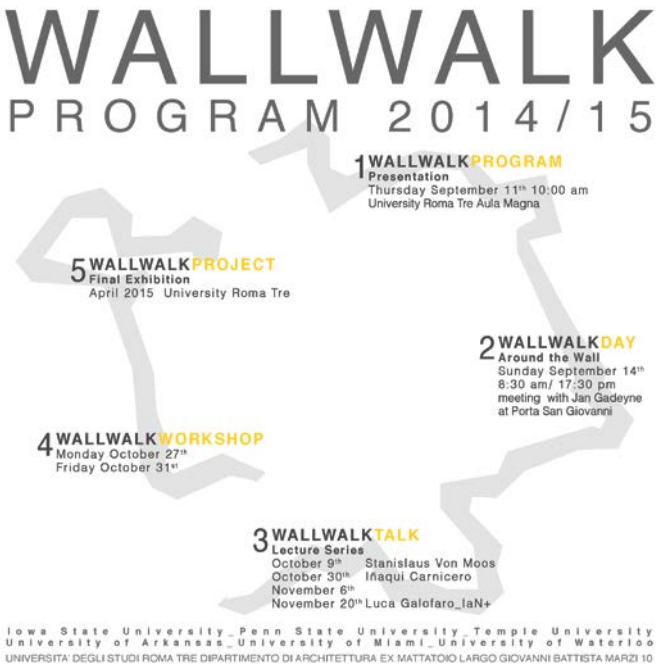
● Possible exploitation of the current (240 cubic meters/second) for renewable electrical energy production.

Design process for the first project will be short, intense and individual; it will require an analytic and diagrammatic survey of the area, and a subsequent schematic design proposal to be developed during intensive on-site sessions.

Each student will be required to present a complete schematic design proposal on 1 (one) A2 board (59.4x42cm) together with copies of the sketchbook used during on-site sessions.

Project 1 due date: Thursday, Sept. 18 @ 2:00pm

PROJECT II: WALLWALK – Design Proposals for the Roman Walls System



The Aurelian Walls (Italian: *Mura aureliane*) is a system of city walls built between 270 AC and 275 AC in Rome, during the reign of the Roman Emperors Aureliano and Probo.
The walls enclosed all the seven hills of Rome plus the Campus Martius and, on the right bank of the Tiber, the Trastevere district. The river banks within the city limits were left unfortified, with exception of the Campus Martius. With over 18 km (approximately 11 miles) of length, they are the longest and best preserved ancient city walls in the world.

The second project of this semester will be developed along the Aurelian Walls, following an international program called WallWalk. WallWalk is organized by the University of Roma Tre and the Association of American College and University Programs in Italy (AACUPI) and it is a multidisciplinary project using the Aurelian Walls of Rome as a paradigm of the entire city, an underused and marginal urban infrastructure.

This initiative aims at giving the Aurelian Walls the importance that they should have for the city of Rome, through the proposal of a continuous pedestrian and cycle path, sustainable and secure - WallWalk - that would allow visitors to enjoy one of the biggest and most important monuments of the city unique in its scale.

The WallWalk Project is:
- A proposal aiming to sensitize governments and agencies to enhance the Aurelian Walls, so as to make them a heroic monument of the city;
- A proposal that promotes sustainable pedestrian and cycle mobility around the historic center of Rome and involves urban areas that are now a bit defiladed;
- A proposal which relates the cycle/pedestrian mobility with major interchanges with the public and private transport (metro stations, urban metro rail, parking lots, etc.);
- A proposal that will integrate with the existing network of bicycle and pedestrian paths (for example, along the Tiber) and with the extensive green areas crossed by the Aurelian Walls (Villa Borghese , Villa Ada);
- A proposal that would allow tourists to visit Rome by bicycle through new perspectives, making them comfortably reach the main archaeological, architectural and artistic sites of the city;

Design process for this second project will be articulated in three different phases and developed by small teams of students.

<u>Phase I – Palimpsest and Place</u>

The project will engage the study of urban analysis, interpretation, documentation, and synthesis through observation and sketching within different urban conditions edging the historic center of Rome and distinguishing the former “Abitato” and “Disabitato”.
Students will explore the entire extension of the Walls and divided in groups will focus on a specific assigned area. Each team will analyze and survey the actual situation, record the transformations which occurred throughout the centuries, and will provide a critical interpretation of the assigned area through sketches, drawings, and collage and multi-media techniques.
The final work will synthesize this first phase, exploring means for representing the city, capturing its palimpsest, its dynamic quality and spatial characteristics, its logic organization.

Project II – phase I due date:	Thursday, Oct 16 @ 7:00pm
Project II – phase I review:	Thursday, Oct 23 @ 2:00pm

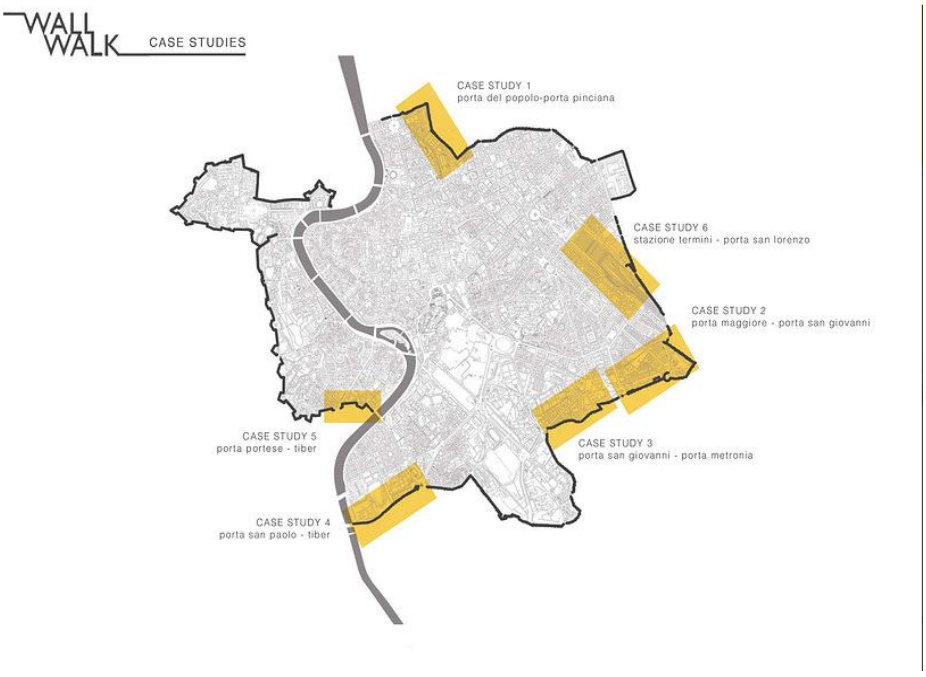
Phase II – WallWalk Roma Tre – AACUPI workshop

This phase will be characterized by the participation to the workshop organized and promoted by Roma Tre University and AACUPI – Association of American University Programs in Italy.
The workshop will be held at the Roma Tre University between Monday Oct. 25th and Friday Oct. 31st .
Details about the workshop will be provided as soon as possible.

Phase III – Design Development of proposals around the Walls

The third and final phase of Project II will depart from the outcomes of the WallWalk workshop; some specific areas along the Aurelian Walls will be identified and student's groups will be required to develop complete design proposals. Some of the areas can be:

1. Porta del Popolo-porta Pinciana;
2. Porta Maggiore - San Giovanni;
3. Porta San Giovanni - Porta Metronia;
4. Porta San Paolo - Tiber;
5. Portas Portese - Tiber;
6. Stazione Termini - Porta san Lorenzo;



It will be possible to add other areas along the Walls; these additional sites will emerge from the studies carried out during phase I and they may present opportunities for resolving abandoned areas as well as unfinished projects within the City.

All project proposals will have to address their own urban and environmental role within the city prior to resolving their formal articulation. Particular attention will be devoted to the role of those important historical areas within the broader context of the city. The project proposals will aim at providing design solutions to the following topics:

- Understand and reveal the site's historical transformations;
- Address the role of the site at urban scale through the proposals of a sustainable pattern of circulation;
- Give accessibility and continuity to the immediate urban context, providing accesses and means of circulation within the site;
- Assign specific programmatic roles to the different areas within and around the site;
- Research and analyze projects which may represent significant precedents, and more specifically precedents on Architecture and Archaeology;
- Identify possible and structural and technological solutions for building on archaeological sites;
- Generate schematic design proposals for the area, developed in two-dimensional and three dimensional drawings and models;

Phase III will involve the design development of the context and the intervention and will require the production of a complete set of drawings (plans, sections, elevations, and three-dimensional drawings) in addition to a model. The complete list of requirements will be distributed during the specific project introduction.

Project II – phase III interim review:	Tuesday, Nov 25 @2:00pm
Project II – phase III final project due date:	Saturday, Dec 13 @7:30pm

6 PROTOCOLS

Several formal deadlines (one for Project 1, and two for Project 2) and related reviews with external guest critics will be organized during this semester. Each review ends and finalizes a complete phase of work within an assigned project. The final review, will include the whole semester work as a final synthesis of the Rome experience and it is scheduled at the end of semester. A grade is assigned to each phase and, together with attendance and studio behavior, will generate the final grade.
As the working schedule at the UA Rome Center and, generally, of the semester abroad experience is different from the traditional working frame at the home base institution, a timely response to the different assignments and the related due dates is essential for successful completion of the work.

7 GRADING

Grading will be determined according to:

- Project 1	30%
- Project 2 and workshop	50%
- Sketchbook	10%
- Attendance and participation	10%

Standards:

A - excellent, enlightened invention. Superlative or exemplary work, initiative and passion beyond the description of the problem. Significant understanding of the problem. Conceptual clarity. Attended by an attitude of self-motivated exploration, open-mindedness, and a willingness to benefit from criticism.

B - good, convincing development and comprehensive resolution. Very good, some exemplary work, a thorough understanding of the problem. Project displays conceptual foundation, well crafted. Competence and mastery of skills. Open, inquisitive attitude.

C - satisfactory, exploration of alternatives in the resolution of the project. Satisfactory or adequate work which meets the minimum requirements of the problem and course. Shows understanding of the problem, with some deficiencies. Reasonable mastery of skill and concepts. This grade represents the average solution.

D - passing, consideration of factual knowledge and complete presentation. Work which is complete, but demonstrates deficient skills and does not show an understanding of the problem, process, or expectations. Work often attended with closed-minded attitude with respect to criticism and self-motivation. Although technically passing, this work is unacceptable in a professional program.

F - Failing. Work which is unsatisfactory, which does not meet the requirements of the problem or course, and shows a serious deficiency in skills or is incomplete. Raises questions with respect to the future success within the program.

Plus/Minus Grading System

For students attending the School of Architecture, the UARC utilizes a plus/minus grading system that assigns numerical values to 12 different grades. These values are used for architecture or landscape architecture courses when grade-point averages are calculated. The 12-step grading system with assigned values is as follows:

A 4.00	A– 3.67	B+ 3.33	B 3.00	B– 2.67	C+ 2.33
C 2.00	C– 1.67	D+ 1.33	D 1.00	D– 0.67	F 0.00

8 Attendance and Class Participation

In accordance with the general regulations of the UA Rome Center, attendance is mandatory.

A semester in Rome is, in some way, a very special experience of your academic curriculum. The time will be shared between classes, site visits and travels (if well used, a very educational part of your experience).

Attendance is required in all classes at the University of Arkansas Rome Center and attendance records are maintained. Any unexcused absence from this course will have a negative effect on your grade. Three unexcused absences
will generate automatic failure.

9 Academic Honesty

Students must understand what academic integrity is and what the most common violations are. With that understanding they must commit themselves to the highest standards for their own, as well as for their peers', academic behavior. Academic dishonesty involves acts that may subvert or compromise the integrity of the educational process at the University of Arkansas Rome Center. Included is an act by which a student gains or attempts to gain an academic advantage for himself or herself or another by misrepresenting his or her or another's work or by interfering with the completion, submission, or evaluation.