



McGill

Peter Guo-hua Fu School of Architecture

All of the following courses can be used as complementary courses for M.Arch and M.Sc. (Arch.) programs.

Fall 2025	Winter 2026
ARCH 517 Sustainable Residential Developments W 14:35–17:25 Avi Friedman	ARCH 515 Sustainable Design T 08:30–20:30 Michael Jemtrud
ARCH 520 Urban Morphology Reading the City: Montreal and its Neighbourhoods W 08:35–11:25 Nancy Dunton	ARCH 536 Introduction to Heritage Conservation T 09:05–11:55 Julia Gersovitz
ARCH 523 Significant Texts and Buildings F 10:35–12:25 Annmarie Adams	ARCH 562 Innovative Homes and Communities W 14:35–17:25 Avi Friedman
ARCH 531 Architectural Intentions from Vitruvius to the Present F 08:35–10:25 am Gregory Caicco	ARCH 641 Energy and Environments 1 M 11:35–14:25 Naomi Keena
ARCH 535 History of Architecture in Canada W 11:35–14:25 Julia Gersovitz	ARCH 642 Energy and Environments 2 W 14:35–17:25 Naomi Keena
ARCH 542 Selected Topics in Architecture Advanced Drawing M 14:35 –17:25 David Covo	ARCH 652 Architectural History and Theory Seminar 2 TBD W 09:05 am-11:55 Samia Henni
ARCH 627* Research Methods Th 08:35-10:25 Michael Jemtrud *Open to M.Arch. students with permission of instructor.	ARCH 654 Architectural History and Theory Seminar 4 Th 09:05 am-11:55 Ipek Türeli
	ARCH 685 Contemporary Theory 2 The Black Box F 11:35–14:25 Theodora Vardouli



McGill

**Peter Guo-hua Fu
School of Architecture**

**Complementary Courses Fall 2025
Add/Drop deadline: Tuesday, September 9**

Fall 2025



McGill

Peter Guo-hua Fu
School of Architecture

Complementary Courses Fall 2025
Add/Drop deadline: Tuesday, September 9

ARCH 517 **Sustainable Residential Developments**

W 14:35–17:25

Avi Friedman

General: Recent years have brought to the forefront issues which critically affected design of homes and communities. Climate change, dwindling natural resources, aging population, diversity of household types, high cost of housing and lifestyle shifts have combined to create a “perfect storm” of circumstances that merit new thinking and retooling of old ideas concerning the residential environment. A much talked about and often less understood term that casts a framework for new design thinking is sustainability. The fundamental trust is a thought about future consequences of present action. Considering environmental, economic, social and cultural aspects in parallel is the underpinning approach at the base of the idea. Designing new homes and communities and retooling old ones while recognizing those four aspects is also the thrust of this course.

Topics: Sustainable principles, sustainable cities, high density neighbourhoods, recycling and composting, new building materials, alternative energy sources, green roofs, net-zero homes, walkable and healthy communities, sustainable urban and dwelling renewal, notable international projects.

Assessment: Papers and class presentation



McGill

Peter Guo-hua Fu
School of Architecture

Complementary Courses Fall 2025
Add/Drop deadline: Tuesday, September 9

ARCH 520
Urban Morphology
Reading the City:
Montreal and its Neighbourhoods
W 08:35–11:25
Nancy Dunton

Background

To intervene in the city, an architect has to understand how to read it. This course is intended to develop both that capacity to read and an understanding of the architecture of Montreal and its context at the level of the neighbourhood.

Lectures and walking tours of 14 different neighbourhoods reveal the evolution of Montreal architecture both in class and from the sidewalk. Maps from every era serve as the thread that binds – they demonstrate the successive layers of construction of the city. Images help the student understand the form, volume and materials used in each period as well as changes to the character and nature of neighbourhoods. Readings give a broader view of a particular time.

The second half of the course places particular emphasis on buildings of the last thirty years stressing how contemporary Montreal architects have intervened in the city.

Topics

Each session looks at a different neighbourhood - seven are walking tours starting at a designated metro station or intersection. Starting with the city's oldest neighbourhood and working towards the present day, the emphasis is on observation, research, analysis and communication of how buildings and their uses have changed. The impact of particular buildings or public spaces and their influence on the character of the neighbourhood are at the core of three evaluations: a sidewalk reading, a joint presentation and a term paper.



McGill

Peter Guo-hua Fu
School of Architecture

Complementary Courses Fall 2025
Add/Drop deadline: Tuesday, September 9

ARCH 523
Significant Texts and Buildings
Feminism + Architecture
F 10:35–12:25
Annmarie Adams

Intentions

This course explores the relationship of feminism and architecture in theory, practice, and history. For each class we read key texts which we link to buildings and cities. Sessions include mini-lectures, discussions, and field trips. Students will become familiar with feminist concepts and will learn how to analyze any built environment from a feminist and/or queer perspective. No special knowledge of feminism or architectural history is necessary or expected.

Topics

Topics include feminist theory, sexuality and space, women architects, queer architects, queer space, the rise of the interior, feminist urban planning, women and landscapes, institutions for women, and intersectionality.

Assessment

The assignment is a sole-authored or co-authored research paper, submitted in stages (proposal, outline, bibliography, presentation, paper).



McGill

Peter Guo-hua Fu
School of Architecture

Complementary Courses Fall 2025
Add/Drop deadline: Tuesday, September 9

ARCH 531

Architectural Intentions from Vitruvius to the Present

F 08:35–10:25 am

Gregory Caicco

Background:

This course will explore the philosophy of architecture across world cultures from the beginning of human habitation to 1600. We will utilize critical methodologies to investigate the historical sources, symbols and rituals that inspired key innovations in architectural making within their given socio-economic, religious, and political contexts.

Topics:

Interaction with the ideas and sources of architectural theory before 1600 will take place through lecture participation, asynchronous online discussions (9 discussions worth 65% of course grade), as well as a course project which has both a written and a design component (35% of course grade with three submissions: Proposal, Draft and Final). Topics include: Approaches to the Architectural Imagination; Architectural Thought in Prehistory, Egypt, and the Ancient Near East; Ancient Greek and Roman Architectural Thinking; Architectural Theory in Early India, China, and Japan; Hebrew, Early Christian and Islamic Architectural Vision; Romanesque, Gothic and Mendicant Architectural Approaches; Medieval and Islamic Architectural Theories; Alberti and the Origins of Renaissance Theory; Ideal Buildings, Ideal Bodies: 16th c. Renaissance Thought; Architectural Theory in the Americas before 1492; Northern European Renaissance Thinking; and World Synchronicities to 1600.



McGill

Peter Guo-hua Fu
School of Architecture

Complementary Courses Fall 2025
Add/Drop deadline: Tuesday, September 9

ARCH 535
History of Architecture in Canada
W 11:35–14:25
Julia Gersovitz

COURSE OBJECTIVE

The objective of this course is to expose students to influences on the development of architecture in Canada, from the beginning of European settlement, to 1939, with a particular focus on the regions of Quebec, Ontario and the Maritimes. The course material is taught through lectures and field trips.

EVALUATION

5%	Participation
25%	Take home exam
40%	Final Paper: 3000 words
30%	20 th c. PPT Presentation

The take-home exam will be composed of several questions, which require the student to demonstrate mastery of the information provided during the first half of the course. It will not focus on a repetition of facts, but of their analysis and interpretation, with specific reference to the buildings visited.

The final paper will be 3000 words in length. The subject matter may focus on the history of an individual building or site or be broad enough to encompass a cultural landscape or a building typology. The limitations are only that the subject matter must be Canadian, built before 1970 and that the subject be approved by the professor. This approval process is generally to guide the student in her/his choice and ensure that the subject matter is appropriate to the paper length.

The PPT presentation focuses on a building or site or landscape that the student chooses to answer the following question: *“What would you describe as a quintessentially Canadian example of post 1960 architecture?”*

All student work is individual; there are no group projects.



McGill

Peter Guo-hua Fu
School of Architecture

Complementary Courses Fall 2025
Add/Drop deadline: Tuesday, September 9

ARCH 542

Selected Topics in Architecture

Why Architects Draw

Exploring the role of hand drawing in a digital working environment

M 14:35 –17:25

David Covo

When we work with a stylus on a pressure-sensitive tablet screen using an application like Procreate, are we drawing by hand or have we crossed into a digital environment? When we are working on a conceptual level at any stage of a project, does the requirement for instantaneous response in a group discussion (or in a moment of private reflection) call for forms of diagramming and modelling that blur obsolete distinctions between what used to be regarded as different ways of thinking about design media - traditional vs digital? We will explore three distinct but related modes of representation over the semester: observational sketching (sometimes referred to as plein-air sketching or site sketching), architectural drawing (in diverse media), and digital modeling, all in relation to your design studio.



McGill

Peter Guo-hua Fu
School of Architecture

Complementary Courses Fall 2025
Add/Drop deadline: Tuesday, September 9

ARCH 627*
Research Methods

Th 08:35-10:25

Michael Jemtrud

***Open to M1 students with permission of instructor.**

Survey of research methods relevant to architecture. Introduction to research ethics; differentiating between primary and secondary methods; contrasting macro- and micro-social approaches; setting research questions; undertaking literature scans; reviewing empirical findings by others; designing instruments and tools for primary research; conducting field research; presenting findings.



McGill

Peter Guo-hua Fu
School of Architecture

Complementary Courses Winter 2026
Add/Drop deadline: Tuesday, January 20

Winter 2026



McGill

Peter Guo-hua Fu
School of Architecture

Complementary Courses Winter 2026
Add/Drop deadline: Tuesday, January 20

ARCH 515
Sustainable Design

Tu 08:30-10:30

Michael Jemtrud

Architecture: This course will address sustainable design theory and applications in the built environment with students from a variety of fields (architecture, urban planning, engineering, sociology, environmental studies, economics, international studies). Architecture will provide the focus for environmental, socio-cultural and economic issues.



McGill

Peter Guo-hua Fu
School of Architecture

Complementary Courses Winter 2026
Add/Drop deadline: Tuesday, January 20

ARCH 536 Introduction to Heritage Conservation

T 09:05–11:55

Julia Gersovitz

Objectives

The objective of this course is to expose students to the discipline of heritage conservation – or the “conservation of the built environment”. The course is designed primarily for architectural students, but will be accessible to many others, including, but not limited to, students in history, architectural history, geography, urban planning, engineering and design. By the end of this course, students will be familiar with the terminologies, standard reference documents, history and theory of the discipline and its intersections with sustainability principles. The students will also have an introduction to the materials and construction methodologies of 19th and early 20th century architecture and engineering in North America (with particular reference to eastern Canada) and to the techniques for their conservation.

Field trips allow the students to experience the course material hands-on and they are scheduled within the same time slot as the lectures.

Topics

The course is divided into three sections and the information is provided through illustrated lectures.

- The first section seeks to familiarize the student with the philosophy and history of the theory of conservation, focusing on North American practice. Emphasis will be given to the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* (2010), the nationally accepted reference document. Terminologies and an introduction to classical language will provide the class with a common vocabulary.
- The second section deals with the technology of materials conservation, acquainting the student with the standard construction materials of the 19th and early 20th centuries, their uses, technologies, deteriorations and repairs.



McGill

Peter Guo-hua Fu
School of Architecture

Complementary Courses Winter 2026
Add/Drop deadline: Tuesday, January 20

ARCH 562
Innovative Homes and Communities
W 14:35–17:25
Avi Friedman

Aims

Demographic transformation, environmental concerns, and economic pressures introduced a need for “out of the box” thinking in the design and the delivery of North American housing. This course introduces fundamentals of residential planning, design and production and uses them as a springboard to the exploration of innovative paradigms. Although North America will be the course’s geographical focus, international examples will also be discussed.

Objectives

1. Understand the intricacies involved in, and the key stakeholders associated with, the production of North American housing.
2. Explore and discuss recent trends and their potential effect on housing design.
3. Identify area of innovation and change to current methods of housing design and production.
4. Learn about innovative residential projects.

Topics

Innovation, affordable homes, net-zero dwellings, live-work homes, adaptable and micro units, sustainable materials, aging in place, prefabrication and home automation are some of the topics.

Assessment

Paper and class presentation.



McGill

Peter Guo-hua Fu
School of Architecture

Complementary Courses Winter 2026
Add/Drop deadline: Tuesday, January 20

ARCH 641
Energy and Environments 1
Circular Economy

M 11:35–14:25

Naomi Keena

Background and Course: Theme A circular economy envisions a sustainable future where waste is eliminated in the built environment and the lifespan of buildings and construction materials, are kept in use for as long as possible. This course relates circular economy principles to architectural design and construction and highlights how these principles can result in both monetary savings, positive environmental impact, and socio-ecological change. Three key circular economy principles will be explored namely: 1) rethinking the end-of-use phase of a building and the potential of design-for-disassembly; 2) the role of digitization and data standardization in fostering evidence-based circular economy design decision- making; and 3) presenting space as a resource to conserve, via the exploration of the sharing economy and flexibility principles. Students will gain a holistic understanding of the opportunities across the building life cycle that can allow for socio-ecological and affordable building design and construction. Through the course a number of global case studies will be investigated that highlight how theoretical circular frameworks manifest in real-world projects. Students will learn how circular principles can help to reduce wasteful material and energy use in buildings. Through gaining an understanding of life cycle assessment students will explore how circular strategies reduce the environmental impact of building.

Structure: The course will take a seminar format with readings, presentations, and discussions. It will also include a series of hands-on design explorations in order for students to take a deep dive in real-world circular examples.

Assessment: Evaluation will be based on participation and final deliverables. The course will have a group project focusing on implementing circularity in a real-world context. Final deliverables presentation, paper and short video.

Learning Objectives: The goal of the seminar is for students to take a deep dive into circular thinking in architectural design. Students will develop their knowledge on circular economy principles through investigating one or more of these principles in detail. They will gain new circular tools and techniques to apply in their own future work that assist in understanding how to reduce building waste in terms of material and energy consumption. Such tools including an understanding of life cycle thinking and assessment will equip students towards understanding how to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in architectural design.



McGill

Peter Guo-hua Fu
School of Architecture

Complementary Courses Winter 2026
Add/Drop deadline: Tuesday, January 20

ARCH 642
Energy and Environments 2
Sustainability Frameworks

W 14:35–17:25

Naomi Keena

Background and Course Theme: With a growing consciousness of the burden buildings place on the environment, a proliferation of conceptual frameworks for sustainability has emerged. A rigorous knowledge of these frameworks and how to apply them towards socio-ecological design will be vital to 21st century architects. Many of these frameworks view sustainability through the lens of either economy, environment, or society, each with its own conceptual and philosophical underpinning. This seminar will take a deep dive into examining existing sustainability frameworks, from ‘life cycle thinking’ to ‘energy hierarchies’ with a particular focus on the built environment process. Students will study the scope of these frameworks and their evaluation methods. They will investigate their key objectives with a view to understanding why they account (or fail to account) for specific direct and indirect energy, material, monetary, and/or information flows as well as human activity. Students will question and investigate if these methods prompt us to rethink the scope of an architectural project. Do architects need to expand their project scope and ultimately engage in the socio-ecological factors within the design that spread from the work of the biosphere to the end-of-life design of a building? What are the stories of a building life cycle that should be told and how do we tell them?

Structure: The course will take a seminar format with readings, presentations, and discussions but will also include a series of workshops in order for students to take a deep dive in their area of interest.

Assessment: Evaluation will be based on participation and a term project in which students will investigate a key theme that drives particular sustainability frameworks and critically analyze innovative case studies that implement such frameworks. Deliverables include a presentation, final paper, and short video.

Learning Objectives: The goal of the seminar is for students to improve their holistic understanding of the broad scope and terrestrial scale at which the built environment operates through critical analysis of key conceptual frameworks for sustainability and socio- ecological design. As well as broadening their critical understanding, students will also develop the knowledge to apply such frameworks to their own future work.



McGill

Peter Guo-hua Fu
School of Architecture

Complementary Courses Winter 2026
Add/Drop deadline: Tuesday, January 20

ARCH 652

Architectural History and Theory Seminar 2

Imperial Boomerang:

The Transfer of French Colonial Architectural Knowledge

W 09:05 am-11:55

Samia Henni

Objectives

In his 1950 book *Discourse on Colonialism*, Aimé Césaire, French poet, author and politician from Martinique, argued that colonial practices were deployed not only in the colonies, but also domestically, in Europe. Calling it “*un formidable choc en retour*” (translated as “a terrific boomerang”), Césaire exposed the circulation of colonial knowledge from the colonized to the colonizing territory. This seminar examines the circulation of architecture, urban planning, and visual culture from the French Second Empire to France and vice versa between 1789, when Napoleon Bonaparte’s troops invaded Egypt and Syria, to 1962, when Algeria gained its independence from 132 years of French colonial rule. The objective is twofold: to identify specific architectural languages, planning policies, spatial discourses, and visual culture that France created in and about its African and Asian colonies, departments, territories and protectorates; and to study the declared and undeclared transfer and dissemination of that colonial architectural knowledge to France (the Metropole) and among the colonies during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The course is delivered through a series of weekly presentations and discussions of assigned readings, which are centered around key themes and specific territories in Africa, Asia, and France.

Topics

French Empire (including French Indochina, French Syria, French Madagascar, French North Africa, French West and East Africa), public buildings, domestic architecture, spatial segregation, colonial histories, postcolonial and decolonial theories, anticolonial practices, architecture magazines, international and colonial exhibitions.

Assessment

Weekly reading responses, one reading presentation, and a sole-authored paper.



McGill

Peter Guo-hua Fu
School of Architecture

Complementary Courses Winter 2026
Add/Drop deadline: Tuesday, January 20

ARCH 654

Architectural History and Theory Seminar 4

Knowledge Institutions

Th 09:05 am-11:55

Ipek Türeli

Knowledge institutions are those that seek to claim, create and shape knowledge with a mission to disseminate. These include libraries, museums, archives, labs, schools, and colleges. Among these different types of institutions, schools and campuses are those that are most widespread and with seemingly altruistic ends. Yet, organized education was never intended to liberate society. It was always for pragmatic concerns, e.g., for disciplining society, assimilating natives (e.g., Residential Schools in Canada), inculcating ideology (e.g., religion or nation states) or maintaining social distinction.

The course will begin with an introduction to foundational concepts and social theories that have defined the study of knowledge institutions (Foucault, Derrida, Bourdieu, Latour). The second part (two weeks) will focus on the global history of schooling (Gutman, Upton, Fortna, Wallace Adams) and school building design (Dudek, Ogata). The third part (eight weeks) will focus on college campus design with attention to the insights of Postcolonial Theory and Critical Race Theory (Tuck and Yang, Stein, Hampton, Minthorn and Nelson, La Paperson, Mbembe).



McGill

Peter Guo-hua Fu
School of Architecture

Complementary Courses Winter 2026
Add/Drop deadline: Tuesday, January 20

ARCH 685
Contemporary Theory 2
The Black Box
F 11:35–14:25
Theodora Vardouli

Overview

The meteoric rise of machine learning and generative artificial intelligence has given the figure of the “black box” renewed relevance. A long-standing metaphor of obscurity and impenetrability in and beyond computing, the black box moniker rings ominous as large language models and “intelligent agents” seep into everyday life and ostensibly disrupt how we live, learn, work, create, and act in the world. This seminar course offers historical, theoretical, and tactical tools to critically engage the polyvalent concept of the black box in its relationship with design and architecture. The seminar is structured in three main themes: transparencies, opacities, and translucencies. Collections of readings from diverse disciplinary traditions, such as architectural history and theory, the history of computing, and the history and philosophy of science and technology, will help students ground these themes in historical contexts and develop a critical stance toward debates shaped around them.

Structure and Themes

Transparencies will delve into the tasking of mathematics and computing with the laying bare of the hidden structures of architecture. We will discuss the values that propelled these visions and their technological and cultural effects, some of which still present in tools we use today.

Opacities will examine how the figure of the black box emerged in architectural discourse and was used as a metaphor for the minds of designers, of computers, and of the discipline itself. We will also engage technical concepts in neural networks and the techno-social dimensions of machine learning.

Finally, in Translucencies we will discuss tactics for peeking into the black box, ranging from efforts toward explainability to experimental media practices.

Assessment

Students will be expected to lead at least one weekly discussion and submit a 2-page essay summarizing the readings for the week of discussion leadership. The final assignment is a sole-authored or co-authored research paper on any of the themes of the class (5,000 words) or a creative project developing, testing, and reflecting on an experimental protocol probing a black box, construed in the broad ways we will discuss in the class.