

Architectural Studies in Art History Academic Program

Major, Minor, and honors in Architectural Studies

Program information can also be found on the Art History and Architectural Studies (History Track) webpage at <https://www.swarthmore.edu/art-history/academic-program> or by scanning the QR code below:



Beginning with sophomore planning in January 2025, students may select architectural studies as a major, choosing between either a “history” track (within the Art History program) or a “studio” track (within the Art program). Students considering the major in architectural studies in the history track should contact Brian Goldstein, associate professor of art history in the Department of Art and Art History. Students graduating in 2026 or earlier may continue to elect to pursue the Architectural Studies Special Major in Art History, in consultation with their advisor.

The architectural studies major prepares students well for graduate school in architecture, landscape architecture, industrial design, urban planning, historic preservation, and architectural history and theory, as well as for many jobs in those fields open to students with nonprofessional bachelor’s degrees.

The architectural studies history track is ideal for students interested in the multidisciplinary study of the built environment and with a keen interest in the historical development of buildings, cities, and landscapes. Alongside coursework on historical topics taken through

the art history program, an essential component of the curriculum comprises studio coursework in architecture and three-dimensional design. Additionally, students will complete credits toward the major outside the Department of Art and Art History that meet the student's particular interests in the built environment (these could include sociology & anthropology, environmental studies, philosophy, Black studies, theater, and engineering, among many possibilities). Majors will craft their program of study in consultation with their advisor to meet the general distribution requirements and define their trajectory inside architectural studies.

Requirements for Admission to the Major

Overall average of C or better in all courses taken during the two semesters preceding the time of application. Completion of at least 2 of the following courses at Swarthmore with grades of B or better. For a double major, the grade minimum is also B. Students pursuing the architectural studies major in the history track must take at least one ARTH course from this list.

NOTE: Courses listed below will vary based on offerings.

ARTH 001D. First-Year Seminar: Architecture of Philadelphia

ARTH 001N. First-Year Seminar: Indigenous Art, Land, and Environment.

ARTH 072. Global History of Architecture: Prehistory to 1750 CE

ARTH 073. Global History of Architecture: 1800-Present

ARTT 005A. Sculpture I: Form, Material, Process

ARTT 006A. Studio Arch. I: Turning Corners

ARTT 006B. Studio Arch. I: Monuments and Public Space

ARTT 006C. Studio Arch. I: Architectures of Air

ARTT 006F. ARCH Design: Dwelling and Inhabitation (A Room Of One's Own)

ARTT 006G. ARCH Design: Collective Living

ARTT 006H. ARCH: Mapping and GIS (Mapping Infrastructural Movements)

ARTT 006I. ARCH Design: Civic Realm/Public Home

ARTT 006J. ARCH Design: Cities, Territories Infrastructure: (Crum River Futures)

ARTT 006K. ARCH: 2D: Experiments In Drawing

ARTT 023C. 3D Design II: Exploration of Wooden Structures

ARTT 054C. Sculpture and the Environment

ARTT 054D. Sculpture II: Installation

Requirements for Completion of the Major

Architectural studies, course and honors, is a 12-credit major. 6 credits must comprise courses selected from pool A (includes those taken for admission to the major) and 3 credits comprise courses selected from pool B (or on related topics, with advisor's approval). A capstone and preparatory coursework, described further below under pool C, comprises the remaining 3 credits.

Students in the history track must complete at least 4 pool A credits focused in history and 2 pool A credits focused in studio. They must additionally complete a two-credit seminar in their area of interest *and* ARTH 100 as their capstone.

Students are required to take pool A courses with at least three different faculty members, two of whom must be in art history for students in the history track.

NOTE: Courses listed in pools A and B will vary based on course offerings.

Pool A:

ARTT 003. Painting I: Drawing Into Painting
ARTT 005A. Sculpture I: Form, Material, Process
ARTT 006A. Studio Arch. I: Turning Corners
ARTT 006C. Studio Arch. I: Architectures of Air
ARTT 006F. ARCH Design: Dwelling and Inhabitation (A Room Of One's Own)
ARTT 006G. ARCH Design: Collective Living
ARTT 006H. ARCH: Mapping and GIS (Mapping Infrastructural Movements)
ARTT 006I. ARCH Design: Civic Realm/Public Home
ARTT 006J. ARCH Design: Cities, Territories Infrastructure: (Crum River Futures)
ARTT 006K. ARCH: 2D: Experiments In Drawing
ARTT 033. Painting II: Color and Structure
ARTT 054C. Sculpture and the Environment
ARTT 054D. Sculpture II: Installation
ARTT 060B. ARCH 3D: Full Scale Fabrication
ARTT 060C. ARCH 3D: The Analytical Model
ARTH 001D. First-Year Seminar: Architecture of Philadelphia
ARTH 001N. First-Year Seminar: Indigenous Art, Land, and Environment.
ARTH 003. Asian Art: Past and Present
ARTH 010. Art and Climate Change
ARTH 040: Michelangelo to Mussolini
ARTH 046: Social Engaged Art in the Americas
ARTH 051. Art of Florence and Environs
ARTH 060. Building New Worlds: The Arts and Architectures of Liberation
ARTH 061. Art and Culture of Indigenous Philadelphia: From Shackamaxon to the Present
ARTH 062. Land Art, Place, and Environment
ARTH 066. Race, Space, and Architecture
ARTH 067. Building Architecture from Dirt to Dust
ARTH 072. Global History of Architecture: Prehistory to 1750 CE

ARTH 073. Global History of Architecture: 1800-Present
ARTH 076: Art Museums: History, Theory, Controversy
ARTH 098: Interpreting the Classical Tradition: Neoclassicism &
Romanticism
ARTH 152: Modern Histories of Craft
ARTH 153. Modern Architecture and Urbanism: Honors Seminar

Pool B:

The following are examples of the types of courses one might choose and will vary by semester. Please consult with your advisor about options that best fit your interests in architectural studies.

ANTH 122. Urban Ethnographies
ENGR 006. Mechanics
ENGR 007. Art and Engineering of Structures
ENGR 062. Structural Design
ENVS 001. Intro to Environmental Studies
ENVS 013. Our Trash
GSST 035. Critical Disability Theory
HIST 056. Police, Prisons, and Protests
HIST 114. Cities and Social Movements
JPNS 036/ENVS 047. Environment, Cultural Memory, and Social Change in Japan
PHIL 011. Moral Philosophy
PHIL 012. Logic
PHIL 021. Social and Political Philosophy
PHIL 047. Utopias
PHIL 117. Aristotle: Ethics and Politics
POLS 047. Ethics and Economics
PSYC 001. Intro to Psychology
PSYC 035. Social Psychology
SOC 007B. Introduction to Race and Ethnicity in the United States

SOCI 058C. Manufacturing Scarcity: The Housing Crisis in American Cities
THEA 004. Set Design

Pool C:

Students must complete preparatory coursework and, during senior year, a capstone that corresponds to the plan of study inside their chosen track.

Requirements include:

A two-credit seminar on an architecture- or urbanism-oriented topic in or outside (with advisor's guidance) the art history program, such as ARTH 138, ARTH 152, ARTH 153, ANTH 122, or HIST 114, subject to offerings, AND
ARTH 100. Senior Capstone

SENIOR COMPREHENSIVE REQUIREMENT

During senior year, course majors will complete a comprehensive project as part of the required Senior Capstone (ARTH100). Honors majors may alternately satisfy the senior comprehensive requirement through a two-credit thesis (ARTH097). Two-credit thesis writers are not required to take the Senior Capstone.

CR/NC

Except in semesters when CR/NC is required (such as a student's first semester or the spring 2020 semester), students may not take courses toward major requirements as CR/NC.

TRANSFER CREDITS FROM OTHER INSTITUTIONS AND FOREIGN STUDY

A maximum of two transfer credits will count toward the major, either from study abroad or other U.S. institutions. Students transferring into Swarthmore from another institution should consult with the art history chair regarding their specific situation.

OVERLAPPING CREDITS

A maximum of two credits may double count for both the major in architectural studies (history track) and a student's second major. For major and minor credit overlap, the standard overlap rule applies. Because departmental policies vary, please consult with your non-ARTH advisor for questions about counting overlapping credits in your second major.

AP CREDIT

One credit for receiving a 5 in AP Art History will be given upon completion of an art history course in the department. This credit can count only for one of the Pool A requirements.

[Architectural Studies Minor in the History Track](#)

The course minor in architectural studies in the history track will consist of five credits, three of which should be in relevant ARTH courses and one in a relevant ARTT course (all under Pool A above), and one in a course that would fall under Pool B. Four of the five credits must be taken at Swarthmore. The three credits in ARTH must be with at least two different Swarthmore art history faculty members. Courses toward the minor may not be taken CR/NC (excepting those taken in semesters when CR/NC is required, such as a student's first semester).

Art Department Majors and the 20-Course Rule

It is a College requirement that 20 of the 32 credits required for graduation must be outside the major. This means that students can take no more than 12 credits in the major unless they graduate with more than 32 credits, in which case the surplus can also be in the major.

Off-Campus Study

We strongly encourage those with an interest in architectural studies to consider incorporating study abroad into their Swarthmore program either during a summer or a regular academic term. Important examples of architecture and art are found throughout the world, and the encounter with works still embedded in their original context is vital to an understanding of their historical and contemporary significance. Past experience has shown, however, that art history and art courses in most study abroad programs fall below the academic standards of comparable courses at Swarthmore. Students who are interested in bettering their chances of gaining a full Swarthmore credit for a course taken abroad are strongly advised to meet with their architectural studies advisor and the art history or art program chair before leaving campus to review course syllabi and determine course credit value. Please note: To receive transfer credits in architectural studies in the history track, you must have taken at least one course at Swarthmore that counts under Pool A above (normally before going abroad).

Honors in Architectural Studies (History Track)

Requirements for admission to honors do not differ from those for admission to the course major. Once admitted to the honors major,

students will be expected to maintain an average of B+ or better in all courses in art history.

HONORS MAJOR

An honors major in architectural studies in the history track requires three two-credit preparations relevant to the major, two of which must relate to topics under Pool A, one of which must relate to a linked field outside of ARTH and ARTT (related to the topics a student has pursued in Pool B). The normal prerequisite for any seminar in art history is two credits of previous art history or relevant architectural studies coursework. Each honors seminar or alternative honors preparation will be evaluated by an outside examiner. (For details on honors preparations and exam formats, see the Honors Handbook.)

An honors major in architectural studies in the history track must also fulfill the requirements for the 12-credit course major. Because an honors major in this field will require careful advance planning, potential honors majors should work closely with their advisor well in advance to map out a curriculum that will meet all necessary requirements. Because of the number of credits that honors majors may find necessary to complete all requirements, they are reminded to be attentive to the 20-course rule.

HONORS MINOR

An honors minor in architectural studies in the history track consists of one two-credit preparation and completion of at least two other courses, all of which should fall under or relate to topics in Pool A. Three of the four credits should be in ARTH coursework and one in a relevant ARTT course. Three of the four credits must be taken at Swarthmore.