

# ISLAMIC ART & ARCHITECTURE (IAA)

## IAA 600 Independent Project Modelling

3 Credits

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This is an advanced-level course promoting practice-based learning and the development of problem-solving techniques, critical thinking skills and innovative practices to serve cultural institutions, governmental organizations or businesses. It offers the students an opportunity to work autonomously on a project of their choosing related to their chosen specialization. Students may choose a topic, art object, or a theme of relevance to cultural issues and societal needs, to be devised with the approval of their supervisor. This may involve engagement with industry or cultural organizations to deliver a small-scale tailored projects to suit their needs; the detailed investigation of a single object at the Museum of Islamic Art, using knowledge acquired in other parts of the program; or the creation of a display based on object replicas or images in the atrium of the College of Islamic Studies with a view to disseminating their knowledge to the broader HBKU community.

## IAA 610 Research and Design Methods

3 Credits

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course offers a comprehensive understanding of basic principles of research techniques and writing in architecture. Emphasis is placed on methodological and presentational aspects of architectural and built environment research. Fundamental aspects of communicating research are introduced, including writing and presenting research findings and concluding statements. It also involves knowledge of differentiating between research, reports, articles and critical essays; an investigation of various methods for descriptive, analytical, explanatory, and critical research. Research projects focus on applying research techniques and tools in visual, social and technical terms. An integral component of the course involves the development of a thesis proposal where students utilize selected research tools and techniques in shaping their research proposals.

## IAA 611 History of Islamic Art and Architecture I (650-1250)

3 Credits

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course is an introduction to the art and architecture of the Islamic world from the emergence of Islam in the 7th century until the Mongol invasion of Iraq and Iran in the mid-13th century. It focuses on major monuments and developments in the arts, such as calligraphy, mosaics and ceramics, under the Umayyad Empire, the Abbasids, and their successor states in the vast regions between North Africa and the Iranian world. In each context, objects and buildings will be studied both in relation to each other and as witnesses of the social life and cultural sensitivities of their time, using insights from textual sources. Issues of interpretation will be critically considered.

## IAA 612 Ahkam al-Bunyan-Building Ordinances

3 Credits

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course delves into influential Islamic texts, exploring works like Kitab al-'I'an bi Ahkam al-Bunyan, fatawa of Ibn Abd al-Rafi, and Al-Wansharisi's al-Mi'yar al-Mughrib. It examines how Islamic jurisprudence intersects with urban planning, analyzing the historical impact of Quranic and Sunnah principles on land use and legal disputes. Students gain a deep understanding of Islamic urbanism, fostering critical thinking and preparing them for challenges in architecture and urban development by bridging theoretical knowledge with practical application.

## IAA 613 Interpreting Environments: Habitat Values and Sustainable

3 Credits

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course explores how Islamic teachings relate to contemporary environmental issues and sustainable practices. It covers sustainability, land use, and Islamic perspectives on natural resource management and environmental ethics. Students gain insights into historical and theological foundations of environmental stewardship in Islam, addressing modern challenges like resource depletion and pollution. The course encourages critical thinking on applying these principles to current environmental problems, fostering responsibility in fields like urban planning and architecture for sustainable development and ethical decision-making.

## IAA 623 History of Islamic Art and Architecture II (1250-1900)

3 Credits

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course is an introduction to the art and architecture of the Islamic world from the Mongol invasion of Iraq and Iran in the mid-13th century until the fall of the Ottoman and Qajar empires in the early 20th century. It investigates such topics as the emergence of a new synthesis under the Ilkhanid and Timurid dynasties in Iran and Central Asia; the art and architecture of the Mamluk Sultanate in Egypt and Syria; and the three early modern empires of the Ottomans in the Mediterranean world, the Safavids in Iran and the Mughals in India. In each context, objects and buildings will be studied both in relation to each other and as witnesses of the social life and cultural sensitivities of their time, using insights from textual sources. Issues of interpretation will be critically considered.

## IAA 625 Survey of Architectural Typologies of the Islamic World

3 Credits

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course aims to instill in the student a broad awareness of the diversity and the main achievements of Islamic architecture and the various typologies developed from the beginnings of Islam. It offers a chronological development of art and architecture in selected notable regions, the wide surveys will highlight the development of architectural designs of the Islamic world from the 7th through the 19th centuries, utilizing a wide spectrum of materials and production. The course examines the built form, functions, and activities relevant to the social, historical and cultural contexts, patterns of use, and evolving meanings attributed to buildings by their communities.

**IAA 631 Islamic Objects and Manuscripts**  
Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

**3 Credits**

This course offers students an opportunity to build up skills specific to key media in Islamic art, such as manuscripts, textiles and carpets, mosaics, woodwork, ceramics, metalwork and glasswork. It will involve hands-on sessions with objects at the Museum of Islamic Arts in Doha. Students will thus gain direct exposure to these different types of object and knowledge of published resources to aid their rigorous analysis.

**IAA 632 Museum and Exhibition Studies**  
Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

**3 Credits**

This course equips students with critical and practical skills to approach the display of Islamic in the context of museums. Issues related to the politics and socio-cultural context of display will be combined with aspects of exhibition planning, management and public interaction. This course provides an academic exposure toward the mechanisms of objects and art display in museums and exhibitions. The aim of the course is to explore and synthesize aspects of exhibition planning, management and public interaction either for physical and virtual museums. The course will cover systems and techniques of critical writing for exhibitions and displays for Islamic arts and objects. Students will gain the methods of organizing galleries and teaching spaces; this will include mounting displays and organization plus techniques and requirements for evaluating museum events and visits.

**IAA 633 Mosque Architecture Design**  
Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

**3 Credits**

This course introduces the architecture of mosques in different regions from the Andalusia, North Africa, Middle East, Far East, and contemporary mosques in western cultures. Different aspects of old and contemporary mosques are introduced highlighting the mosque as a building type that became a symbol that functions as a point of reference, and provides an umbrella under which people of a common belief may unite and interact for legitimate human activities. This course develops design propositions from a close and critical engagement with significant built and un-built architectural and mosques exemplars. Working with changing and enduring values and associated questions of style, longevity and contemporaneity, students design a mosque project that anticipate future needs and respond to existing built fabric. Reflective and analytical drawings of precedents inform the production of projects that engage with cultural and disciplinary histories. Constraints for designing mosques are discussed with supporting cases that address typological issues, detailed design, ornamentation, and the impact on the surrounding community.

**IAA 634 Islamic Architecture and Urbanism in the 20th & 21st Centuries**  
Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

**3 Credits**

Connecting the architecture of the Arab world to various interrelated issues such as Westernization, modernization, and the relationship between the architect and the state. This course discusses the evolution of architecture in the eastern Arab world during the 20th and 21st centuries. Its geographic scope emphasizes Egypt, the Arabian Peninsula, and the Fertile Crescent. The course examines the production of certain works of architecture in the region as creative undertakings that address specific functional programs and physical givens ranging from technological conditions to climatic factors. It also presents the architecture of the region within the context of prevailing social, cultural, economic, and political forces while taking into account the urban transformations that took place in the 19th century worldwide and in many Islamic cities as well as issues of East-West interactions, modernity, tradition and heritage. The course links that architecture to the volatile conditions that have defined the evolution of the region during the period under consideration, and that have given the region considerable (and some would argue disproportionate) weight within the context of international politics.

**IAA 635 Contemporary Cities for Muslim Societies**  
Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

**3 Credits**

This course offers a series of positional interpretations and discussions of contemporary architecture in Muslim communities. It addresses the irony of identity, tradition, and modernity by critically outlining a number of aspects related to the status of architecture in selected Muslim cities including Aleppo, Cairo, Doha, Dubai, and other cities. Through a reading of trends that emerged over the three decades, students will be introduced to the concepts of Pan-Arabism, Mediterraneanism and middle easternism, post traditionalism, post colonialism, globalization, post-globalization, and the space of flows and their implications on the shaping of architectural identity in Muslim communities.

**IAA 636 Globalization, Cities and Urban Policies**  
Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

**3 Credits**

Middle Eastern and Gulf cities currently seem to be heavily under construction and rapidly globalizing. Some Gulf cities have been at the forefront of developing into a postmodern city, and other cities in the region have been presenting themselves as attractive locations and global hubs. While some are considered as Port cities, they are outstanding examples of integration into global networks. Evidently, economic ambitions – from fostering trade and production to stimulating tourism, sports and leisure industries – are important factors behind this. However, this brave new world is not without new ruptures, deepening fractures and increasing inequalities. Thus, this course will deal with manifold dimensions of contemporary urban development in the Middle East, with specific focus on the cities of the Arabian Gulf, including economic aspects and social consequences. To situate and interpret these case studies, the course will also engage in understanding and debating theoretical and conceptual approaches and recent interdisciplinary findings from comparative perspectives.

**IAA 641 Urban Interventions in Historic Islamic Cities**      **3 Credits**  
 Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course provides a comprehensive discussion of the changes in urban land use and the socio-economic structure of urban settings in Muslim countries. Goals, plans and operations of adaptive re-use and regeneration of traditional as well as modern districts are discussed. Case studies from historic Middle Eastern and European cities are analytically presented. The course involves a theoretical basis for the understanding of design in the built environment, and an appreciation of the evolving integration of aspects of design and regeneration in different types of environments. The theoretical material will include consideration of aesthetics, urban morphology, rural settlement, design methods and sustainable development, and will encourage multi-disciplinary and critical perspectives on these aspects.

**IAA 642 Physical Spaces and Spatial Humanities in Digital Societies**      **3 Credits**  
 Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

Since the development of various digital gazetteers, physical environments and spaces have been involved in the digital humanities studies to examine the people's interaction and viability of spaces in digital forms. This module will explore this new phenomenon from a dual standpoint: (1) attention will be paid to the way our perception of physical and digital spaces evolved over the last years following the massive adoption of digital tools and platforms in our daily life and (2) the course will study how digital technologies interact with a spatially enabled database to retrieve and display results, and how they can add map-based interactive elements to various digital platforms. In this course, students will study how geographic information from history, archaeology and Cultural Heritage is organized using the appropriate digital tools in relation to 'place making and consumption'. By using spatial data, students will elucidate people's behavior and interactions toward the physical environments and help in reshaping liable places to suit the societal needs and traditions. In order to reach successful and reliable results, the course will look at the basics of digital imaging, Geographic Information System (GIS), Space Syntax Analysis, and 'Volunteered Geographic Information' which underpins the maps on our tablets and smartphones, and consider how geography features in digital literary and textual analysis.

**IAA 643 Types and Typologies of Domestic Architecture**      **3 Credits**  
 Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course explores the domestic sphere in an Islamic context. It aims to familiarize students with the history, structure, and social use of residential forms in areas that are now a part of Arabia, North Africa and Egypt, Greater Syria, Iran, Iraq, Turkey and the Ottoman Balkans. The course involves an overview of the ways these spaces have been imaged and imagined in art, literature, films, and scholarly texts. This course starts with the development of an aspirational design brief that accurately registers the culture and needs of existing and /or potential users. Skills are developed in the respectful apprehension of cultural and physical diversity and in the effective deployment of domestic architecture. Methods of communication that are accessible to lay audiences and which convey experiential qualities are employed at all stages of the design process in order to know how domestic architecture in Islamic societies contributed to the understanding of typological processes, urban fabric, and organisms.

**IAA 695 Master's Thesis Hours**      **1-6 Credits**  
 Grade Mode: Pass/Non Pass  
 Prerequisite(s): IAA 610

Research Based or Design Project Based Thesis in Islamic Art, Architecture, and Urbanism: - This course counts 6 credit hours and is part of the core requirements. Either thesis students will be asked to consider potential topics for a research based or a project based work, preferably related to the core research themes adopted by the concentration chosen. Thesis will be required to be a substantial research piece, and to meet the normal international standards for this level of academic study. - Students who are eligible for undertaking a design-based project of similar standard and length to the research thesis, although the specific requirements may vary according to the topic chosen. - Notably, students enrolled in a track will be required to select a thesis topic that relates directly to the concentration of such a track. Students will be allocated a supervisor early in the third semester, and will develop their thesis proposals by the end of the semester as part of the research methods class. They are expected to have undertaken significant preliminary research on the topic by the end of the fourth semester.