

Furniture: Theory and Analysis

IARC 444/544



2:00 - 3:20 pm

Tuesday -Thursday

Room: 206

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Prerequisites:

3rd year of undergraduate study in Interior Architecture or Architecture. Track 1 students in their second year or Track 2 students in their first year (ARCH and IARCH). Students from outside these programs who are working toward a Interior Architecture minor or students from other majors may enroll with instructor consent. This course provides an excellent introduction to furniture design for Architecture students who are interested in taking IARC 4/586 Furniture Design Studio

Students utilize contemporary readings and lectures along with active design and analysis exercises to examine a wide variety of built-in and freestanding furnishings, from an historical, theoretical and practical viewpoint.

Moving from small to large-scale issues, we begin by examining how chairs and other furnishings interact with human bodies and the role of designers in creating healthy products and environments. We study logic of furniture elements and systems, including how theories of behavior, organizational management and cultural context have shaped the development of furniture and visa-versa. We look at furnishings as a part of the larger composition of the room and the building, as a built assembly, a physical expression of materials and as a consumer product.

THIS COURSE PROVIDES A WORKING KNOWLEDGE OF

- Human anthropometrics and ergonomics and their influence on furniture design and placement
- How furniture design influences and is influenced by theories of organizational management
- Flexibility Modularity and the logic of systems design
- Furniture types and typology: Historic and contemporary
- Materials and fabrication and how they effect design
- Life-cycle issues and costing
- Furniture as material culture
- Built-in furniture, how it shapes space and helps to mediate between buildings and people

Projects:

Projects change a bit from year to year but always include active learning activities. Past projects include analysis of individual sitting patterns through a sitting time sheet, making a model and analyzing a contemporary chair and working to retrofit and furnish a modular house from the 1960's into a studio. Students enrolled in 544 will complete an additional research project

Exams:

Two Exams (a mid-term and a final) gauge students' understanding of readings and material presented in class. Graduate students answer additional essay questions on exams.

Required Readings:

Given the topical nature of this course readings change on a yearly basis. Readings are drawn from contemporary writings on anthropometrics, ergonomics, cultural connections, materials use, and design intention. These are available on canvas

Grading:

Grades are based on a combination of exams and projects (50% each). In the event of high enrollment (+50 students) this course will have a Graduate Teaching Fellow. The GTF will work under the direct supervision of the instructor, who will set clear grading criteria, monitor all grading for fairness and accuracy and have ultimate responsibility for all grades. graduate students will have the option of having their work evaluated by the faculty member teaching the course.