UNIVERSIDADE LUSÍADA
LISBOA

Course Unit Program
Seminar Architecture Phenomenology

Academic Year 2025/2026

1. Organic Unit

Faculty of Architecture and Arts

2. Course

ARCHITECTURE

3. Cycle

3rd

4. Course Unit

Seminar Architecture Phenomenology (91103)

5. Scientific Area

6. Curricular Year

1st

7. Type of Curricular Unit / Semester

2nd Semester

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8. Class type and workload (work time)

Theoretical classes:
Practical classes:
Theoretical-Practical Classes
Tutorial Guidance:

9. ECTS Credits

15,00

10. Scientific Area Coordinator

11. Regent

Profª Doutora Arqtª MARIA JOÃO DOS REIS MOREIRA SOARES

12. Assistants

13. Teaching Language

Portuguese

14. General Objectives

To contribute to clarifying the following questions: What is phenomenology? What contributions can we find in phenomenology and post-phenomenology for the critical, theoretical, and historical discussion of architecture in and of itself in contemporaneity?
By clarifying these issues, the aim is to foster inter- and transdisciplinary thinking in the study of architectural design and its construction, and to examine the relevance of meta-architecture (the morphogenetics of architecture).

15. Specific Objectives

To understand the place of phenomenology in philosophical disciplines and contemporary architecture.
To understand architecture as a discipline: studies of architectural design, its construction in and of itself.
Directions for a meta-architecturology: a case study.
To understand the value of a morphogenetics of architecture, or meta-architecturology: from the particular to the general and vice versa (rhizomatic view of the path from design to construction, construction to the world, and th

16. Skills to be acquired

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Identification of general themes associated with phenomenology as a discipline, as well as understanding the core aspects of the phenomenological and post-phenomenological debate in relation to architecture; structuring interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary thinking in the configuration of the notion of Architecture as a discipline in contemporaneity, as well as recognising alternative possibilities for understanding and comprehending architecture, thus making it a concrete object of research.

17. Teaching Methodology

The seminar will consist of theoretical classes, using oral and multimedia presentations.
Methodology for presenting the topics will emphasise the value of criticism and debate, encouraging discussion.
Federica Goffi, from the Azrieli School of Architecture & Urbanism at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada, is expected to participate. In line with the programme content, the guest speaker will contribute to an in-depth exploration of issues related to the discipline and enrich critical debat

18. Course Unit Program

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In the text entitled ?Full-relief: An introduction to InterVIEWS?, which serves as an introduction to the 2020 book InterVIEWS: Insights and Introspection on Doctoral Research in Architecture, Federica Goffi, who edited it, writes:

While there is no doubt that architecture is a profession, the boundaries of the discipline are more changeable than we have been able to acknowledge, and what constitutes research in architecture in an academic setting is subject to continuing questioning. Indeed, the how of the contributions often calls into question core assumptions and the research approaches in relations to other disciplines and their research definitions.

This continuous questioning, to which Goffi refers, is, in fact, fundamental to advancing architectural research, especially when questioning the very limits of architecture as a discipline. Phenomenology, which played an important role in critical thinking in architecture at the end of the 20th century, must be questioned and repositioned once again, at a time when the humanities and, consequently, architectural criticism, history, and theory are experiencing greater uncertainty. Hence, the question ?In the specific context of architecture, what is phenomenology as a discipline?? seems pressing to us, as we seek diverse approaches to research in architecture that, in the plural, complement and support the discipline?s needs, as Goffi puts it. It is in this context that another challenge is suggested: ?What contributions can we find in phenomenology and post-phenomenology for the critical, theoretical and historical discussion of architecture in and of itself, in contemporary times??

As in any philosophical field, the search for a possible answer is complex, perhaps even aporetic, but fundamental. It is fundamental at a time of difficult definition, at the beginning of a century that is hesitant to assert its identity. In contemporary times, architecture seems to be weakened by this hesitation. This fragility is an opportunity for reflection and for presenting other methods of investigation. In this context, we propose a meta-architecturology, that is, a process in which post-phenomenology, associated with epistemological processes in architecture, becomes urgent for understanding who we are and what we do as architects.

In this search for tools to propose a new process, the seminar is divided into three moments.

1st moment:

_Philosophical context (from Immanuel Kant to Maurice Merleau-Ponty, via Edmund Husserl; from Michel Foucault to Gilles Deleuze, via Jean-François Lyotard);

_Alberto Pérez-Gómez, Juhani Pallasmaa, Steven Holl and the relationship between phenomenology and architecture: Unlike critics and philosophers, architects must embrace the contradictions between perception and logic, the divergence between intention and architectural realisation, as well as the unpredictability of the future?s judgement of the present, and ?resolve? or incorporate these aporias through their personal imagination.

2nd moment:

_Proposal for studies of the project and the architectural work, in and of itself: Directions towards a meta-architecturology.

_Establishment of a case study: Villa Mairea (1937-1939), in Noormarkku, Finland, designed by Aino and Alvar Aalto. Process of ?dissecting? the architectural design project and its construction. Search for knowledge in and of itself.

3rd moment:

_From the case study to a rhizomatic vision as a reflection of this ?dissection? in the

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understanding of the work in a historical, theoretical, critical, and social context (from the particular to the general and, from the general, to another particular).
From the design and construction, from its creators to the world: the unique cases of Japan; from Japan to filmmaker Yasujiro Ozu; from Ozu to a post-phenomenological view of the relationship between cinema and architecture. Towards a meta-architecturology.

19. Assessment Methods

Due to the nature of the seminar, in addition to participation in classes (20% of the assessment), students will be required to produce a written document/essay (80% of the assessment). The document should be the result of research supported by the seminar programme content and developed by each student.

20. Didactic Resources

A set of national and international bibliographic references, along with a filmography, will support the seminar classes. References on phenomenology will be used, as well as on criticism, theory, and the history of architecture, the visual arts, and cinema. References on Japan and its architectural vocabulary will also be used. During the class period, specific texts will be discussed to accompany the programme content.

21. Sustainability Objectives

The seminar programme is committed to promoting the humanities and culture, with their pluralism, transversality, transparency, and inter- and transdisciplinarity, fostering diversity and inclusion. This commitment incorporates three of the principles that structure the SDGs: the planet, people, and partnerships. In this sense, SDGs 4 (quality education), 5 (gender equality), 10 (reduction of inequalities), and 11 (sustainable cities and communities) are invoked.

22. Keywords

Architecture
Phenomenology
Contemporaneity
Rhizome
Morphogenesis
Meta-architecture

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23. Main Bibliography

Author(s): Federica Goffi
Title: InterVIEWS: Insights and Introspection on Doctoral Research in Architecture
Edition: 1ª Year: 2020
Local: Abingdon
Publisher: Routledge
ISBN Code: 978-0-429-42319-2

Author(s): Maria João Madeira Rodrigues
Title: O que é Arquitectura
Edition: 1ª Year: 2002
Local: Lisboa
Publisher: Quimera
ISBN Code: 9-789725-8907-45

Author(s): Maurice Merleau-Ponty
Title: O olho e o espírito
Edition: 1ª Year: 1992
Local: Lisboa
Publisher: Nova Vega
ISBN Code: 972-699-352-0

24. Complementary Bibliography

Author(s): Alberto Pérez-Gómez
Title: Attunement: Architectural Meaning after the Crisis of Modern Science
Edition: 1ª Year: 2016
Local: Cambridge
Publisher: MIT Press
ISBN Code: 978-0262528641

Author(s): Panayotis Tournikiotis
Title: The Historiography of Modern Architecture
Edition: 1ª Year: 1999
Local: Cambridge
Publisher: MIT Press
ISBN Code: 9-780262-700856

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Autor / Author	Profª Doutora Arqtª MARIA JOÃO DOS REIS MOREIRA SOARES
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