



INTRODUCTION TO CRITICISM IN ARCHITECTURE

Asst. Lecturer Aya Shukri Mohammed

Criticism

Second Semester

Week number 1

Feb 2025

Outline

- **What is Criticism?**
- **Course Objective**
- **Course Outcomes**
- **Course Structure**
- **Assessment**
- **Introduction to Criticism**

Course objective

This course aims to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of criticism as a theoretical and practical discipline, particularly in the fields of art, design, and architecture. By exploring historical perspectives, critical thinking methods, and the role of designers as critics, students will develop the ability to analyze and evaluate creative works with depth and clarity. Through discussions on different types of criticism, theories, and judgment processes, this course fosters a critical mindset essential for academic and professional practice in design and related fields

Course outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Define criticism and its significance in art, design, and architecture.
- Understand and analyze the contributions of ancient philosophers to critical thought.
- Differentiate between various types of art criticism, including literary, interior design, and architectural criticism.
- Apply theories of literary and art criticism to evaluate artistic and design works.
- Develop critical thinking skills to assess and interpret creative expressions effectively.
- Understand the role of judgment in criticism and how to form well-supported critiques.
- Examine the role of criticism in design studios, including its impact on the creative process and project development.
- Identify and distinguish different types of criticism in design, such as positive, negative, subjective, and objective criticism.

Course Structure

Lecture 1 : Course overview (Introduction to Criticism)

Lecture 2: Ancient Philosophers

Lecture 3: Designer as a critic

Lecture 4: Types of Art Criticism

Lecture 5: Theories of Literary and Art Criticism

Lecture 6: Critical Thinking

Lecture 7: Judgment in Criticism

Lecture 8: Criticism in Design Studios

Lecture 9: Types of Criticism

Assessment

Type	Number	Marks
Assignments	5	3
Quiz	2	5
Midterm	1	20
Final	1	40
Presentation	1	15

What does Criticism mean?

Etymology of Criticism

- **French**, from Greek **kritike**, **the art of criticism**, from kritikos, critical
- **Latin**, crtiticus, from an adjective, **“decisive”**, **able to discern**
- **Greek** kriterion, **a means for judging**, standard from krites (Grolier, 1986:314)

Etymology of Criticism

Criticize, Criticize

1. To judge (something)
2. To evaluate or analyze (something)
3. To judge the merits and faults of; analyze and evaluate.

Etymology of Criticism

◦ General Definitions of Criticism

Criticism

- The act of expressing **disapproval** and of noting the **problems or faults** of a person or thing : the act of criticizing someone or something.
- A remark or **comment** that expresses disapproval of someone or something.
- The activity of making **careful judgments** about the good and bad qualities of books, movies, etc.

merriam-webster

Etymology of Criticism

Criticism

Crit 'Crit' is short for 'critique'

Critique

Critic

The difference between Criticism, Crit, Critique and Critic

Term	Definition	Context/Usage	Tone
Criticism	Evaluation or judgement, often negative	Informal or formal	Often Negative
Crit	Informal term for Critique	Creative/academic settings	Neutral
Critique	Detailed, balanced analysis	Formal, academic, or professional	Neutral
Critic	A person who evaluate or judge	Professional or general context	Neutral

Criticism Vs. Critique

The Difference between Critique and Criticism

- Criticism looks for what's lacking/Critique finds what's working
- Criticism condemns what it doesn't understand/Critique asks for clarification
- Criticism is general/Critique is concrete and specific
- Criticism has no sense of humor/Critique insists on laughter, too
- Criticism looks for flaws in the writer as well as the writing/Critique addresses only what is on the page.

Definition of Literary and Art Criticism

- The practice of **describing, interpreting, and evaluating** literature (Morner and Rausch, 1998:121)
- An informed **analysis and evaluation** of a **piece of literature**". "A written study, evaluation and interpretation of a work of literature"

Steps of literary criticism

- Reading literary work
- Writing impressionistic comment
- Writing analytical review
- Writing judicial inference

Definition of literary & Art criticism

- Art criticism is the **discussion or evaluation** of visual art.
- Art criticism is responding to, **interpreting meaning**, and making critical judgments about specific works of art
- Art criticism is the act of **analyzing and evaluating** any type of art

Art criticism



Monkey before skeleton
1900
Romanticism, Symbolism

Gabriel von Max
Monkeys as Judges of Art, 1889
Romanticism, Symbolism



What do you think?

Steps of Art Criticism

1. **Description** (What Do you See?)
2. **Analysis** (How are elements used?)

Elements of Design

Composition

Symbolism

3. **Interpretation** (What is deeper meaning?)
4. **Judgement** (is it a successful art work? Why?)

Criticism

Analysis

Improvement

Evaluation

Interpretation

Feedback

Judgment

Intellectual Discourse

Positive

Constructive

Negative

Do you have any questions?

References

1. Eagleton, T. (1996). *Literary theory: An introduction* (2nd ed.). University of Minnesota Press.
2. Habib, M. A. R. (2005). *A history of literary criticism: From Plato to the present*. Blackwell Publishing.
3. Richter, D. H. (2017). *The critical tradition: Classic texts and contemporary trends* (3rd ed.). Bedford/St. Martin's
4. Wimsatt, W. K., & Beardsley, M. C. (1954). *The verbal icon: Studies in the meaning of poetry*. University Press of Kentucky.
5. Abrams, M. H. (1999). *A glossary of literary terms* (7th ed.). Harcourt Brace College Publishers.