INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Anthony Alofsin
TIME AND PLACE: Wednesday 9:00am-12:00 Location: WMB 3.116
Unique Numbers: 359,489,1434,1887,1275

Prerequisites. None. Preference is given to graduate students and motivated undergraduates, but all disciplines are invited including interior design, historic preservation, planning, and landscape architecture.

Course Format/Overview
This research oriented seminar will look at the means by which American housing is conceived, developed, and marketed, and the relationships between home buyers and builders. The specific issues of how most Americans obtain their homes are much neglected both in academia and the profession. Rather than look askance at the building industry, this course will put that industry and its components, from its designers to marketers and realtors, under close scrutiny in an objective manner. In addition we will look at the mechanisms by which people identity with their homes and at the potential meanings of those identities as well as changing concepts of style. This course will concentrate on research that includes field work at sites through the Austin region. The course meets for three hours per week and requires travel for field work.
A series of lectures provides the topics around which research will be pursued; some investigations involve group projects and group presentations. Because of the fluid nature of the availability of sites and special events (e.g. Parade of Homes), the syllabus assignments and lecture content may be adjusted as the course proceeds through the semester. In other words, flexibility is required.

Communication about research, site visits, and ongoing dialogue, between class members, the instructor, and consumers out in the world, will take place via CANVAS.

Educational Objectives
The course intends to provide students with an extensive study of the American housing industry, its products, and its consumers. Field work and short projects complement the ongoing investigation. This course emphasizes instruction in history through the lens of architecture. It intends to train students in fundamental skills of critical thinking, writing, and speaking.

Evaluation/Grades
PARTICIPATION: this class requires full participation in meetings and full attendance including all site visits. If you have any hesitancy or feel uncomfortable talking and presenting in class, please arrange to discuss this with the instructor. If you do not participate fully or fail to attend class, your grade will suffer accordingly. If you don’t want to go on field trips or do not want to talk in class, this course is not for you.
Attendance at all class meetings is mandatory. Grades will be based on attendance, class participation, short projects, and quizzes (20%); Assignments, including presentation in class and written format, (80%). In the case of group projects, students should discuss any particular concerns about credit for their work with the instructor during the semester. Pluses and minus will be used with letter grades as permitted by University rules. Because this course is a small enrollment seminar, your full verbal participation is required during class and on our site visits. If you do not join and contribute to the discussions, you may not get an optimal grade. If you want to speak in class but are having difficulties doing so, please arrange a private meeting with the instructor to discuss your situation.

EVALUATION CRITERIA:
Student work will be evaluated according to its rigor and evolution over the semester. Grades are subject to deductions for absences, late work, and late arrivals at the discretion of the instructor.

A student must earn a grade of C or better in order for the course to count toward the degree, and to progress to the next studio.

A grade of C- will not satisfy degree requirements or prerequisites for the design studios that follow.

GRADE DESCRIPTIONS
A/A-
Excellent
Project surpasses expectations in terms of inventiveness, appropriateness, visual language, conceptual rigor, craft, and personal development. Student pursues concepts and techniques above and beyond what is discussed in class. Project is complete on all levels.

B+/B/B-
Above Average
Project is thorough, well presented, diligently pursued, and successfully completed. Student pursues ideas and suggestions presented in class and puts in effort to resolve required projects. Project is complete on all levels and demonstrates potential for excellence.

C+/C
Average
Project meets the minimum requirements. Suggestions made in class and not pursued with dedication and rigor. Project is incomplete in one or more areas.

C-/D+/D/D-
Poor
Project is incomplete. Basic grasp of skill is lacking, visual clarity or logic of presentation are not level-appropriate. Student does not demonstrate the required competence and knowledge base.

F
Fail
Project is unresolved. Minimum objectives are not met. Performance is not acceptable. Note that this grade will be assigned when you have excessive unexcused absences.

X
Excused Incomplete
Can be given only for legitimate reasons of illness or family emergency. Simply not completing work on time is not an adequate cause for assigning this evaluation. It may only be used after consultation with the Associate Deans’ offices and with an agreement as to a new completion date. Work must be completed before the second week of the next semester in which you are enrolling, according to the School of Architecture policy.

**Assignments and Papers**

All assignments must be submitted on or before due dates. Any late assignment will be reduced one letter grade per day of delay. **No late final papers or projects accepted. The only excuse for a late assignment is illness confirmed by a physician’s letter.** Additional instructions on the format of assignments papers will be discussed in class. If a class quiz is missed, no make-ups are available. Any student taking the course credit/no-credit will receive a failing grade if he or she does not complete the course requirements by the assigned dates. Pay special attention to instructions on the medium for submitting your work. If hard copy print outs are required, then a digital submission is not acceptable; sometimes both are required. Submit papers as double-spaced single sided text with page numbers.

**Lecture etiquette**

We meet early in the morning so not drinking coffee, tea, or water would be inhuman, but please **no food or eating in class.** Classes start promptly at the designated hour; do not arrive late as often important announcements occur at the beginning of class.

**COMPUTER USEAGE IN CLASS:**

Computers are a tremendous tool, but they can be distracting during lectures and discussions. We may use laptops for particular assignments, but **unless otherwise indicated by the instructor, USE OF COMPUTERS OR SIMILAR DEVICES ARE NOT ALLOWED DURING CLASS.** Texting, work on other courses, email, or anything else except careful listening, note taking, and discussing the subject at hand is not a good use of your time and suggests that you may not only be failing to take advantage of course content, but you may also be distracting other students. Please respect this course requirement.

**Special accommodations**

At the beginning of the semester, students with disabilities who need special accommodations should notify the instructor by presenting a letter prepared by the Services for Students with Disabilities Office. To ensure that the most appropriate accommodations can be provided, students should contact the SSD Office at 471-6259 or 471-4641 TTY, [http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/](http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/)

**Religious holidays**

By UT Austin policy, you must notify the instructor of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be
given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Honor code and plagiarism
The core values of the University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the University is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community. Academic dishonesty, which includes plagiarism, is a serious offense at the University and subject to disciplinary action. For the university’s definitions and policies about academic dishonesty, see the Registrar’s rules Sec. 11-802, http://registrar.utexas.edu/catalogs/gi09-10/app/gi09.appc03.html. If you have any questions about citations or the appropriate use of materials, please contact your instructor.

Emergency situations
For information regarding emergency evacuation contact the Office of Campus Safety and Security, call 512-471-5767 or visit, http://registrar.utexas.edu/catalogs/gi09-10/ch01/index.html.

Texts:  Books on library reserve in Architecture and Planning Library, Battle Hall. Bibliography, articles, and documents will be the listed on the course website on Canvas.

Required for purchase:
Anthony Alofsin, Dream Home: What You Need to Know Before You Buy (InnerformsLtd.com, April 2013). Available in three editions, purchased on line, full color, black/white, and digital format. See www.dreamhomethenbook.com. Some color copies may be available from the local AIA Office.

Bibliography:
See our Canvas site for course bibliography.
SCHEDULE OF LECTURES  

American Home  

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Anthony Alofsin  
OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday, 1:00-2:00 and by appointment, tel. 471-7803 or Email: alofsin@austin.utexas.edu  

READINGS FOR THE COURSE ARE POSTED BY WEEK ON OUR CANVAS SITE. READ THE ASSIGNED MATERIAL BEFORE OUR CLASS MEETINGS.  

WEEKLY LECTURE AND MEETING SCHEDULE  

1. Course overview.  
ASSIGNMENT 1 issued. Digital submission.  
1/18  

2. The Austin Housing Scene: Survey Results of Assignment 1.  
Digital submission in class.  
1/25  

3. Overview: Dream Home I; site visit planning  
Assignment 2 issued.  
2/1  

4. SITE VISIT 1.  
2/8  

5. Review of site visit; Dream Home, II  
2/15  

6. Literature of the Field.  
Assignment 2 presented in Class. Written submission.  
2/22  

7. SITE VISIT 2  
3/1  

8. Review of site visit; Dream Home III.  
Assignment 3 issued.  
3/8
9. SPRING BREAK
3/15

10. Guest Speaker
3/22

11. Site visit;
3/29

4/5

13. Site visit or Guest Lecture TBA
4/13

14. Guest Lecture
4/19

15. LAST CLASS
4/26
Summary and Synopsis. Final class. Assignment 4 due in class. NO LATE PAPERS.

16. Design review week—no class.