This methods seminar encourages close reading of a selection of foundational texts that have constructed art and architectural history as a discipline. It equips students with the basic skills of writing different formats of texts about architecture, including book proposals and reviews, surveys, scholarly articles, journalistic essays, exhibition catalogues and wall texts, conference presentations, and tweets.

The course foregrounds the methodology of each text, where methodology is understood as a way of being in the world, and the ethic in choosing what to study and how. The course asks students to think more consciously about the epistemology and axiology of architecture. How do we know what we know about architecture, and how do we construct values such as beautiful, good, or just while discussing buildings and urban spaces? Students will explore different ideas that historians have constructed about architecture’s relation to time and space, and to the individual, the society, the world and the earth. The selected readings demonstrate historical and contemporary trajectories of critical theory, feminist, postcolonial, critical race and indigenous studies, global and environmental history, structuralism and formalism, ethnography and oral history, psychoanalysis and public history, as well as the overlaps between these intellectual and methodological trajectories.

This is the required methodology course for doctoral students, and open to all graduate and advanced undergraduate students who are interested in writing about architecture.