ARCH 410 - Ancient Egyptian and Greek Architecture

The rise of high civilizations in the ancient world brought about truly monumental expressions that gave shape to rituals and beliefs, earthly and divine power, the emerging idea of the city, and conceptions of universal order and humanity’s place within it. Culminating in the expressions that later ages would come to recognize as “classical,” ancient architecture set a standard for the art of building that the Western tradition has repeatedly aspired to, and the enduring legacy of ancient architecture has remained a living force in many spheres of cultural production. This course will explore the history of ancient Greek architecture and its background in the architecture of ancient Egypt. The sophistication of Greek architecture in particular has never been surpassed, and its subtle complexity is such that our research into the works of this culture continues to uncover fascinating elements right up to the present moment. We will consider the roles of ancient architecture in shaping and reflecting the cultures that produced it. Furthermore, we will address how architecture relates to meaning; the relationship between structure, materials, and form; the importance of construction with respect to design; the relationship between nature and architecture; architectural theory and practice; and the role of ancient Greek architects. Special attention will be devoted to the interconnections of sculpture, painting, and building, as well as the centrality of the human body to each of these arts.