

Graduation Plan

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences



Graduation Plan: All tracks

Submit your Graduation Plan to the Board of Examiners (Examencommissie-BK@tudelft.nl), Mentors and Delegate of the Board of Examiners one week before P2 at the latest.

The graduation plan consists of at least the following data/segments:

Personal information	
Name	Elin Lohe
Student number	Redacted

Studio		
Name / Theme	Complex Projects Graduation Studio Bodies and Building, Berlin	
Main mentor	Marija Mateljan	Architectural Design
Second mentor	Arie Bergsma	Building Technology
Third mentor	Yağiz Söylev	Architectural Research
Argumentation of choice of the studio	<p>Even before I was aware of the assignments of the different chairs, it was my intention to design a courthouse in my graduation studio, that would focus on the relationship between the body and the building and its perception. When the studio of Complex Projects "Bodies and Building Berlin" was presented, it was the ideal fit with my vision.</p> <p>The fair exercise of law and the German legal system have fascinated me for a long time. Therefore, it is very intriguing for me to explore an architectural design that enables a court to fulfill its purpose, which is to reach a reasonable verdict.</p>	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	A new experience of trials. The Berlin Regional Criminal Court
Goal	
Location:	Marx-Engels-Forum, Berlin Mitte, Germany
The posed problem,	<p>At the present, the criminal justice system of Berlin is facing a variety of challenges involving capacity issues and outdated, unfavorable spatial qualities.</p> <p>All criminal proceedings of the Berlin Local Courts and the Regional Court are currently conducted at the Criminal Court in Berlin's district Moabit.</p>

	<p>The court is confronted with a disproportionate amount of cases compared to its workforce, while the number of hearings are continuously rising as the city expands. Since the areas on the Moabit campus are already unable to meet the great demand, the City of Berlin is presently leasing a premises at Kirchstraße 6-7, 10557 Berlin with additional 23.700 square meters. However, paying rent on a regular basis is uneconomical for Berlin, therefore, the city requires a new building that is adequate for the function of a Regional Court for criminal offences.</p> <p>This offers the opportunity to improve spatial conditions since by modern standards, the Criminal Court has numerous deficiencies in terms of building physics, security, dimensions, technology and spatial qualities.</p> <p>In view of the needed square meters and the architectural requirements, it is sensible to separate the Regional Court from the Local Courts and relocate it to a different site.</p>
<p>research questions and</p>	<p>Main research question:</p> <p>What spatial qualities influence the user's experience in a manner that improves the efficiency of processes in a courthouse?</p> <p>Sub-questions:</p> <p>What are the security requirements of a contemporary Regional Criminal Court building?</p> <p>Which architectural measures can be implemented to reduce conflicts, lower the stress level of process participants and strengthen concentration during hearings?</p>

design assignment in which these result.

A court building can be described as a machine, whose architecture must facilitate fluid, efficient operations to ensure the fair and flawless practice of justice. These processes are greatly impacted by the arrangements and characteristics of spaces and their perception by the users.

A significant factor in a court building is stress, which is either eased or intensified by the conditions of the rooms and in turn significantly affects the procedures. It is vital that the spaces allow the participants to focus on their duties with full concentration over a long period of time to avoid legal errors.

The atypical approach of designing a courthouse exclusively for criminal cases of the Regional Court offers the possibility to focus entirely on the specific features and space requirements. This includes, for example, the increased size of the courtrooms, which must be connected to holding cells. Since particularly serious, socially relevant cases are being tried in which public and media interest is very high, the architecture must respond to this. In addition, the project must incorporate contemporary technological advances, as the German judiciary is to operate exclusively with digital files from 2026. Instead of traditional, manual storage of evidence, new storage units can be automated. The court building of the future requires a rethink, as it poses entirely new demands.

Likewise, the security measures must be adequate for today's standards of a Regional Criminal Court, which includes increased security at the entrance and the protection of judges through separate corridors.

Also, the project seeks to investigate how the different needs of the various users can be promoted through architectural measures so that each trial participant can effectively serve their role.

The research question not only concerns the relation between space and the individual but is also a social-psychological issue. When exploring spatial experience and the efficiencies of procedures, social dynamics and interactions are of significant importance. Therefore, public spaces must follow modern strategies that reduce conflict and stress, for example, by separating groups spatially.

Additionally, as the project site covers approximately 39.470 square meters and is located in the historic center of Berlin, the design of the outdoor space and its relationship to the surrounding area is of great importance.

[This should be formulated in such a way that the graduation project can answer these questions.

The definition of the problem has to be significant to a clearly defined area of research and design.]

Process

Method description

The framing of the spatial program can be accomplished through a variety of different approaches, such as case studies, theoretical literature, research on historical developments of German courthouses, visits to several courthouses and interviews with stakeholders. With these methods, it will become visible, how requirements have changed over time and what the demands of a state-of-the-art courthouse are. Based on these conclusions, the program, size, and dimensions of spaces can be defined.

In addition, I will continue the exchange with employees of the German judiciary and the city administration to understand today's and future demands of courthouse user, the city of Berlin and its citizens and to react to these current challenges in the design of a courthouse.

The site of the project will be studied through mapping, fieldwork and investigation of the meaning and history of the surrounding area.

Literature and general practical preference

Reference projects:

- Amsterdam Courthouse, Netherlands (2016-2020) by Kaan Kaan Architecten
- Antwerp Law Courts, Belgium (1998-2005) by RSHP
- Bordeaux Law Courts, France (1992-1998) by RSHP
- European Court of Human Rights Strasbourg, France (1989-1995) by RSHP
- International Criminal Court Den Haag, Netherlands (2010-2015) by Schmidt, Hammer, Lassen Architects
- Kriminalgericht Moabit, Germany (1902-1906) by Rudolf Mönnich and Carl Vöhl
- Land- und Amtsgericht Düsseldorf, Germany (2006-2010) by agn Niederberghaus & Partner GmbH
- Nantes Courthouse, France (1993-2000) by Ateliers Jean Nouvel
- Strafjustizzentrum München, Germany (2013-) by Frick Krüger Nusser Plan2 GmbH
- Supreme Court of the Netherlands, Netherlands (2016) by Kaan Architecten

Literature and sources:

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- Joeken, T. (2022, October 20). Interview. (E. Lohe, Interviewer)

- Junker, V. (2006). Arbeiten im Kriminalgericht Moabit. In A. Wosnitzka (Ed.), Das Neue Kriminalgericht in Moabit: Festschrift zum 100. Geburtstag am 17. April 2006 (pp. 159-167). Berlin: Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag.
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Reflection

1. What is the relation between your graduation (project) topic, the studio topic (if applicable), your master track (A,U,BT,LA,MBE), and your master programme (MSc AUBS)?

The project focuses on the requirements of a contemporary partly public building that demands very high security standards and must manage various groups of people with different needs and roles. Although a courthouse is a very specific function, many of the key aspects are applicable to other building types, such as political

buildings. Furthermore, the study of the influence of architectural tools on users is transferable to the design of the built environment in general.

2. What is the relevance of your graduation work in the larger social, professional and scientific framework.

The judiciary is one of the three forces of democracy, and in order to preserve it, the proper execution of law is of central importance for society. The investigation of how architecture can support the correct conduct of the justice system is not limited to Berlin but can be applied globally.