HSLU Hochschule Luzern

Keynote Lectures

Master Architektur / TA.MAA_KEYLEC.H2601

Paradeplatz looking towards Credit Suisse building. Source: Schweizerisches Nationalmuseum / ASL, LM-117897.1

Veranstaltungen

Full-day sessions – input, seminar and coaching

Fridays (see dates below)
9:00–15:00, F-Nische or as announced

25.9.; 9.10.; 23.10.; 6.11.; 20.11.; 4.12.; 11.12.2026

Modulverantwortung: Prof. Dr. Torsten Lange
Lehrteam: Torsten Lange, Heike Biechteler

Designed Conditions: Architecture in The Political Economy of Production — Capital

Architecture and the production of the built environment more broadly are shaped by economic forces: land prices, labor markets, capital flows, and professional enterprise. Frequently rendered invisible, these forces profoundly impact what gets built, where, and for whom. Furthermore, these forces are typically understood as fixed constraints or external realities—unchangeable "givens" in the design process. This module challenges such naturalizations. Instead, it posits that these key factors of production are neither neutral nor inevitable, but designed conditions: socially and politically constructed, maintained, and contestable. Through critical investigation and speculation, the module equips students with tools to both understand and visualize how these dynamics operate—and to imagine alternative futures for architectural production.

Following last year's investigation into land and labour, this semester turns to capital as a defining condition of contemporary architectural production. While architecture has always depended on funding, today real estate has become one of the principal mediums through which finance capitalism operates. Rather than merely responding to financial markets, architecture increasingly constitutes them. Through case studies of recent large-scale developments in Lucerne, the semester examines how investment strategies, debt, speculation and different development models shape the form, function and atmosphere of the built environment. Combining historical and economic perspectives, critical theory and creative practice, students will investigate the specific aesthetics and material effects of financialized architecture, exploring how capital becomes visible in buildings, urban space and everyday life, and how these dynamics might be narrated and challenged.