Mid-Century Modern Architecture Survey Training
Modernism

- Begins in Europe in early 20th century
- Break from traditional precedents
- Clean lines and surfaces, simplicity, lack of ornamentation
- New materials, building techniques
Mid-Century Architectural Styles
International Style
(1950s - 1960s)

- Rectangular forms
- Flat roofs
- Lack of ornamentation/details
- Curtain walls of glass
- Ribbon windows (bands of windows)
- Cantilevered projections
- Smooth wall surfaces
- Visible structural elements on exterior
International Style
International Style
Populuxe/Googie (1950s - 1960s)

- Futuristic forms
- Influenced by car culture, jets, Atomic Age
- Often used for restaurants, motels, gas stations
- Upswept roofs, curving lines, bold uses of glass
- Space age designs of motion (boomerangs, flying saucers, atoms)
- Often elaborate signage/neon
New/Neo-Formalism (mid 1950s – 1960s)

- Reaction to the strict confines of modernism
- Reference to the past but adaptation of new technologies
- Embraces scale, proportion, and columns of Classical architecture
- Usually monumental in scale
- Symmetry
- Smooth walls
- Flat projecting rooflines
- Use of concrete
- Often on raised podium or base
New/Neo-Formalism
Neo-Expressionism
(1960s - 1970s)

- Also a reaction to the strict ideals of earlier modernism
- Sculpture-like, theatrical
- Distortion of form
- Unconventional roof designs
- Use of concrete
- Often found in religious and public buildings
Neo-Expressionism
Brutalism
(1960s - 1970s)

• Massive, fortress-like buildings
• Rough exposed concrete
• Blocky shapes
• Recessed windows
• Often used for college buildings
Brutalism
Mid-Century Architectural Elements
Clean Lines and Simple Construction
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Clean Lines and Simple Construction
Distilled Forms
Distilled Forms
Distilled Forms
Distilled Forms
Distilled Forms
Minimal Ornamentation
Minimal Ornamentation
Minimal Ornamentation
Rooflines
Rooflines
Rooflines
Rooflines

- Flat
- Folded plate
Rooflines
Vertically Oriented Plate Glass Windows
Vertically Oriented Plate Glass Windows
Ribbon & Clerestory Windows
Ribbon & Clerestory Windows
Ribbon & Clerestory Windows
Ribbon & Clerestory Windows
Curtain Wall Construction
Curtain Wall Construction
Structural Transparency
Modular Construction
Porte Cocheres
Porticos & Entrances
Porticos & Entrances
Porticos & Entrances
Porticos & Entrances
Decorative Screens & Accent Walls
Decorative Screens & Accent Walls
Decorative Screens & Accent Walls
Decorative Screens & Accent Walls
Decorative Screens & Accent Walls
Decorative Screens & Accent Walls
Decorative Screens & Accent Walls
Decorative Screens & Accent Walls
Colonnades
Arcades
Arcades
“Floating” foundation
“Floating” foundation
Wing Walls
Wing Walls
Pylon Signage
Signage
Mid-Century Modern Survey