

AR-692

Autonomy and Abstraction

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Cursus	Sem.	Type
Architecture and Sciences of the City		Opt.

Language of teaching	English
Credits	1
Session	
Exam	Oral presentation
Workload	30h
Hours	16
Courses	16
Number of positions	

Frequency

Only this year

Remark

Les Rencontres de l'EDAR is the annual meeting of the doctoral programme, aimed at sharing the advancement of the ongoing PhD dissertations with the entire EDAR community.

Summary

The 10th edition of Les Rencontres de l'EDAR invites doctoral students to turn their attention to how doctoral research engages with "autonomy" and "abstraction" as two foundational dimensions of scholarly inquiry.

Content**Topic**

"The act of understanding consists in grasping the universal apart from the particulars in which it is embodied."
Aristotle, Posterior Analytics, II.19.

"The intellect abstracts the universal form from the particular conditions of material things."
Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, I, q.85, a.1.

Les Rencontres de l'EDAR is the annual meeting of the doctoral programme EDAR, aimed at sharing the advancement of the ongoing PhD dissertations with the entire EDAR community. Its 10th edition, organized in collaboration with the Institute of Architecture, will be entitled Autonomy and Abstraction. Over two days, the programme will turn its attention to how doctoral research engages with two foundational dimensions of scholarly inquiry. Abstraction will be understood in the classical philosophical sense as the mental act of drawing a subject out of its contingent conditions in order to apprehend the universal principles that structure it. Autonomy will be introduced as the possibility for a discipline to examine itself according to its own internal laws, suspending external correlations. Once distinguished, these two perspectives will be addressed dialectically, opening a wide field of reflection. Their plurality of meanings will guide the 2026 Rencontres de l'EDAR, inviting doctoral students to articulate and present the essential internal logics that underpin their research subjects.

Format

Les Rencontres de l'EDAR is the annual meeting of the EDAR doctoral program, aimed at allowing each PhD Student to discuss her/his advancement with a varied range of EDAR's supervisors and peers. Whereas students will take part with an oral presentation based on their work over the last 12 months, EDAR Supervisors and Co-supervisors will contribute as discussants. The dialogue will be structured in the form of sub-thematic sessions alternating with keynotes and round tables. Both days will be open to the public.

PhD students' registration

The course is open to all doctoral students.

It is mandatory for all doctoral students in their 2nd and 3rd years, optional for doctoral students in their 4th years.

1st year doctoral students are strongly encouraged to be present and participate in the debates.

Students must register to the course **by February 27th, 2026**, and submit the title of their contribution to elena.cogatolanza@epfl.ch with a 300-word abstract. The presentation can be held in English or in French.

Resources

Moodle Link

- <https://go.epfl.ch/AR-692>