

LARC 251/550 SPRING 2015

251. Landscape Architectural Design. II. 3 hr. PR: LARC 250 or equivalent. Investigation and application of various factors which play a role in the design of natural and man-made environments. 1 hr. lec., Two 2-hr. studios.

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Teaching Assts.	Joe D’Avello MacKenzie O’Rourke
Schedule	Lecture: Wednesday 9:00-9:50 Section 1: Wed/Fri 10:00-11:50
Location(s)	Lecture: Ag Sci Annex 116 Studio: Ag Sci Annex 116

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Landscape is an expression of culture. Design is a process of giving form and expression to ideas. In landscape design we express ideas and make statements in built form in the outdoor environment. Landscape architects use the attributes/qualities of space—form, light, surface, color, texture, material, sound, climate, and time— as well as personal and cultural meanings embedded in places to satisfy needs and to convey messages. Our designs are an interplay of art (aesthetics and poetics), science (ecology and human behavior), and functionality (social programming reflecting needs, values, ethics). Our challenge in each project is to consciously identify these three components and express them in form, integrate them in our designs.

In this preliminary studio we will focus on several important aspects of landscape architecture: creating, ordering and experiencing *spaces*, *mapping* landscapes, probing the *local and regional landscape* (the context), investigating *landscape narrative* and *community memory*.

Projects will be at the pedestrian (human) scale and will range from a half-acre up to ten acres. Our projects will engage real spaces, people and local concerns. The places and people of the design projects will serve as *context* and *stakeholders* for our designs. The design process will integrate contextual concerns and inspiration from our experience of place and people. This integration will be recognizable as a component on the final designs.

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Upon completion of the course students should be able to...

► **Use and understand landscape design as a process that begins with a site problem or an opportunity and evolves through a series of visual/physical (two and three dimensional) explorations.**

The design process is about investigating the multiple ways of solving problems or conceiving opportunities performing inventory and analysis and using imagination and creativity. The design process involves making hypotheses and projections and then testing, changing, and retesting them through graphic and material representations. *Design is an iterative or cyclical process.*

► **Explore giving conceptual ideas, experiences, and programs (functions, uses) order, form, and space.**

This studio will focus on the organization, articulation, and expression of small, human-scale, outdoor spaces. The elements that define and enclose spaces—the floor, walls, and roof—their form, quality, material, function, and meaning—as well as the supporting elements, which make such spaces viable will be explored. The relationships of one space to another and the organization of a series of spaces will also be studied.

► **Articulate relationships between form/space and experience/emotion.**

Designers imbue designed spaces with expressive forms and amplify sensorial attributes, which influence what people choose to do and how they feel in a space. We will sharpen the sensitivity of our senses and learn to design with and for the senses. Observing and reflecting on existing spaces through field trips, slide lectures, and other media will help us in this investigation.

► **Develop skills in mapping and analyzing landscapes.**

One important way designers understand landscapes is through mapping. A map is a drawing or a mode of representation that shows the parts of a certain locale and their relative positions in a chosen scale. It involves a process of abstraction and projection. We will learn various methods and techniques to record, analyze, and communicate landscapes using traditional and inventive, objective (quantitative) and subjective (qualitative), visual and sensory mapping techniques.

► **Understand and use contextual influences on design.**

The context (local and regional, physical and cultural, and present and historical contexts) of a site is an important source of inspiration and determinant of form. We will learn to access, identify, and refer to contextual associations during the design process. The Appalachian rural/urban landscape and contemporary American culture will set the general context for the projects.

► **Consider the complexity of topographic articulation and manipulation**

The movement of earth is a key way landscape architects shape space and experience. We will explore the 3-dimensional possibilities of topographical manipulation using sectional analysis and models as design tools.

► **Consider the uses of plants in creating space (in coordination with LARC 261)**

Plants are another key tool landscape architects use in creating space. We will investigate the formal qualities of plants as individuals and en masse and their role in the landscape.

► **Develop skills in articulating a landscape narrative and interpreting landscapes.**

Whether designed intentionally or not, landscapes are a telling and significant expression of a culture. Inspirational or deeply moving landscapes often operate in a "poetic" realm. We will learn ways to read past and present narratives in a place and to infuse spaces with poetic/narrative intentions. Just as words are used in narratives and poems (to formulate a concentrated awareness of experience in meaning, sound, and rhythm), so can landscape elements be used to inscribe prose and poetry in spaces through variety, scale, emphasis, repetition, balance, symmetry, etc.

SOME COURSE VOCABULARY:

<i>Creativity</i>	The ability to see, create, and conceive relationships and ideas in an imaginative way.
<i>Critical dialogue</i>	A conversation of constructive criticism of working concepts—can be internal (with yourself), with another person, or with a group
<i>Design inquiry</i>	A systematic investigation of a question, idea, or concept through making and designing.
<i>Design intervention</i>	A design decision that physically affects a site. Interventions are made at points on the site where conceptual and physical attributes converge to cause change or impact.
<i>Elements of Space</i>	The elements with which spaces are constructed and enclosed—floor (or base plane), wall (vertical plane), roof (overhead plane)
<i>Narrative</i>	The representation or telling of an event, process, or story.
<i>Ordering principles</i>	organizational principles of forms and spaces—axis, symmetry, repetition, rhythm, hierarchy, datum, transformation, etc.
<i>Precedent study</i>	A “case-study” or a project (built/unbuilt), which acts as a reference for a project currently under investigation.
<i>Program</i>	A set of parameters set up by the design team/client that guide design decisions and overall concept with respect to needs and uses and the spaces. These parameters are determined by inventorying the physical, social, ecological, and other characteristics of site and context, and balancing these findings with user goals and needs.
<i>Site phenomenology</i>	Perception of a site through its phenomena. We will look for unique and endemic characteristics of the locations of our projects for inspiration. (Phenomenology is defined as “the study of the development of human consciousness and self-awareness as a preface to a philosophy.” Webster’s Ninth ed.)
<i>Spatial Archetypes</i>	Designed landscape spaces with certain traits and functions that are repeatedly found in the cultural landscape. These include (but are not limited to) the forest, grove/orchard, bosque, single tree, allee, clearing, mount, terrace, amphitheater, belvedere, front/back yards, etc.

Each project description will include additional recurring terms and themes.

TEXTBOOK

The **required** textbook for this course is Catherine Dee’s “Form and Fabric in Landscape Architecture: A Visual Introduction”. This book has been ordered and should be available at the bookstore. Other readings will be required for specific projects and will be provided via ecampus.

PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS:

Project #1 Smithton WV. Doddridge Community Space (7 weeks)

Project #2 Monongah Community Memorial Park(s) (9 weeks): a public park(s) in Monongah at the site of a historic mine disaster to serve as a destination, community resource, and place of local expression and memory. The project may include the development of public event space, public art space, intimate gathering spaces, recreation spaces, trails, river access, and environmental interpretation. We will be taking field trips to the site.

Making/Exploring/Writing

Each project will include a making/exploring/writing component. Building on the experience of previous coursework new strategies and approaches in the design process will be introduced. Projects will introduce a variety of media and experimental drawing techniques, to be used in developing design concepts. Traditional and nontraditional uses of materials will be explored. Each making/exploring/writing component will be directly tied to the site design process. Craftsmanship and skill developed in the method, and its relevancy to/use in your design process and design concept, will be part of your final grade for each project.

CLASS FORMAT:

Studio Culture

The atmosphere in the studio is informal and interactive. The studio is a place to learn, question, discuss, observe, think, draw, etc. Interaction between students and instructors is important, but interaction between students is equally important. Your challenge is to translate these friendships into **productive working relationships** that feed your mind and projects. If this is the case, if everyone is open to presenting, sharing, and evaluating each other's work with a critical eye, you will learn significantly more in this studio. Design is rarely an individual, solo, or hermetically sealed activity. You are therefore strongly encouraged to do the bulk of your design work in the studio.

Typical Lecture/Studio Sessions

Lectures will include project related content and readings that will be applied to studio projects. Projects will be introduced, hand-outs passed out, and agenda for the day delivered during this time. Slide lectures and discussions of readings follow. Studios will begin with a general studio meeting. Following these activities, we will adjourn to desk-crits, field trips, group assignments, workshops, pin-ups, etc.

Desk Crits

Because design is an iterative process, developing drawings, models, or texts for review by your instructor/TA will be a critical part of each desk crit. Ideas are not design proposals until they are out of your head and in a physical form, on paper, in model, or in text. You are expected to have new representations and transformations of your projects each and every time you meet with an instructor/TA. **Instructor/TA may choose not speak with you if you have not prepared new drawings, models or text for that day's critique.** Your ability to produce new materials as part of the design process will be a significant part of each project's evaluation. Because of the size of the class, I may not always get through everyone at each session.

Readings:

There will be readings assigned as a part of each project statement. Some of these will be in your textbook, some from elsewhere. Copies of readings will be provided in each studio, or digitally on eCampus. Readings should be completed prior to their being addressed in class, as they will be

integral to your understanding the studio assignment. **Be prepared to discuss readings. You will be quizzed on each reading.** Readings assigned to you in other classes will also serve as references and sources for your design work in studio. We will be collaborating with other course instructors to integrate content for each course into the studio projects.

Field Trips:

There will be short trips to sites to Smithburg and to Monongah, WV during studio time, and you will be required to return to these sites (in Morgantown and Osage) on your own. Be prepared to spend hours outside regardless of the weather: **wear WARM CLOTHES, rain gear and appropriate footwear!** There will be one, possibly two, organized field trips to the second project site; these will require time outside of studio, possibly on a Saturday. One trip will occur at the beginning of the project, potentially one at the middle, and one at the end for presentations to clients. I will give you advance warning of these longer field trips.

We will use a variety of analog and digital media to represent landscapes. Materials may include vellum, Mylar, clay, cardboard, wood, Plexiglas, plaster, wax, (among others) and a variety of drawing tools. Software may include Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, SketchUp, AutoCAD, etc. You are expected to keep all your drawings and drafts/sketches for each project, so determine a filing or collection system early in the semester.

Course Policies:

Attendance and Participation

You are required to attend all class meetings, desk crits, workshops, and site visits. Active participation in all studio activities from deskwork to critiques is essential and is factored into your final grade.

Grading

Grading will be based on attendance, class participation, on-going design process and iterations, final products and completeness of all assignments. Notify the instructor in advance of any absence. **Unexcused absences or incomplete work will result in a lower grade (half a grade [5%] after three unexcused absences and a whole grade [10%] at the fifth absence). Over six unexcused absences will result in course failure.** This is a studio course; the expectation is for high quality work production.

Notes of your progress and production at each desk crit, class assignments, and pin-up, as well as quiz grades will be taken into account for the overall grade of each project:

Project 1.....	35%
Project 2.....	55%
Quizzes, participation, process...	10%

Grades will be given on completion of each project and at intervals during the projects.

The following are the GRADE INTERPRETATIONS for letter grades (and their numerical equivalents):

A (100-90)=excellent work; exemplary; greatly exceeds satisfactory standards. Student is a self-starter and routinely takes initiative, does outside research, develops work through multiple and complex iterations, generates thoughtful and innovative solutions, and carries work to a high level of finish – going well beyond assigned elements.

B (89-80)= very good; exceeds satisfactory standards. Student shows consistent progress in studio, does some outside research, develops work through multiple iterations, generates good workable solutions, and always carries work to full completion, going beyond requirements and assigned elements.

C (79-70)=acceptable work; meets satisfactory standards. Student shows inconsistent progress and occasional initiative, does little outside research, does some iterations, completes all assigned work, but with little evidence of taking initiative or going beyond minimum requirements and assignments.

D (69-60)=marginal work; somewhat below satisfactory standards. Student does not complete all work, shows little initiative, does not do outside research, does minimal iterations, and lacks consistency in meeting minimum requirements and including assigned elements.

F (<60)=unacceptable work; does not meet satisfactory standards. Work shows serious deficiency in meeting satisfactory standards. Student shows no initiative, does not do outside research, does not develop evidence of iteration, generates inappropriate solutions, shows little or no care in finished work, and is missing assigned elements.

In addition to the quality of your work, your course grade includes other qualitative factors, such as attitude and improvement.

Midterm grades will provide you an opportunity to assess your progress and your attentiveness in studio.

"West Virginia University is committed to social justice. I concur with that commitment and expect to maintain a positive learning environment based upon open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. Our University does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veterans status, religion, sexual orientation, color or national origin. Any suggestions as to how to further such a positive and open environment in this class will be appreciated and given serious consideration.

If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me and make appropriate arrangements with the Office of Disability Services (293-6700)."

Course Expenses

Individual costs for modeling materials, paper, media/tools, prints etc. will amount to approximately \$200 for the semester. (You can save money by using reused/recycled/found materials and objects).

Tentative Schedules Included in Project Statements

REFERENCES/BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Useful books for projects and topics are listed below and are available in the library. See project statements for assigned readings and additional books and resources.

Project 1

Ching, Francis. *Architecture: Form, Space, Order*
Thiis-Evensen, Thomas. *Archetypes in Architecture*
Arnheim, Rudolph. *The Dynamics of Architectural Form*
Whyte, William. *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces*
Southworth and Southworth. *Maps: A visual survey and design guide.*

Project 2

Bachelard, Gaston. *The Poetics of Space*
Heschong, Lisa. *Thermal Delight in Architecture*
Lynch, Kevin. *Site Planning*
Morrish, William. *Civilizing Terrains: Mountains, Mounds, and Mesas*
Moore, Thomas. *The Re-enchantment of Everyday Life.*
Stilgoe, John. *Outside Lies Magic*
Untermann, Richard. *Grade Easy*
Wilkinson, Elizabeth and Henderson, Margaret. *House of Boughs*
Potteiger, Matthew. *Landscape Narratives: Design strategies for telling stories*

On Drawing:

Ching, Francis. *Drawing: A Creative Process.*
Lin, Mike. *Drawing and Designing with Confidence*
Sullivan, Chip. *Drawing the Landscape.*
Wang, Tommy. *Plan and Section Drawing.*

Art and the Landscape

Beardsley, John. *Earthworks and Beyond*
Oakes, Baile. *Sculpting with the Environment*

Design and Designers

Alexander, Christopher and Sara Ishikawa, Murray Silverstein. *A Pattern Language*
Berrizbeita, Anita and Carol Burns. *Inside/Outside: Between Landscape & Architecture*
Fleming, Ronald. *Place Makers*
Landecker, Heidi, editor. *Martha Schwartz: Transfiguration of the Commonplace.*

Landscape and Culture

Hester, Randolph and Mark Francis, editors. *The Meaning of Gardens*
Mitchell, William. *The Poetics of Gardens.*