

What is a path?

- . . . a mirror?
- . . . a tangent?
- . . . a divider?
- . . . a labyrinth?
- . . . a mythic quest?
- . . . a leisurely stroll?
- . . . a cultural critique?
- . . . a power paradigm?
- . . . a path to progress?
- . . . a migration route?
- . . . a lyrical adventure?
- . . . a normative emblem?
- . . . a scientific odyssey?
- . . . a conflict mediator?
- . . . a personal revelation?
- . . . a sequence of events?
- . . . a negotiated settlement?
- . . . a revolutionary paradigm?
- . . . a simulacrum of ideology?
- . . . a statement of activism?
- . . . a territorial boundary?
- . . . a political expediency?
- . . . a mental obstruction?
- . . . a future abandoned?
- . . . a logistical network?
- . . . a sensory indulgence?
- . . . a scientific protocol?
- . . . a historical marker?
- . . . a material object?
- . . . a temporal shift?
- . . . a disease vector?
- . . . a past reclaimed?
- . . . a natural system?
- . . . a chaotic flow?
- . . . a tree of life?
- . . . a retreat?
- . . . a fallacy?

Statement of Design Intent:

We live in a goal oriented period in a goal oriented society, engaged in a goal oriented practice that deploys goal oriented science, technology, and design activism to achieve goal oriented aims and desires. Our academic training abets these actions by teaching us to value the benefits of our methods, which, in turn, leads to institutionalized exceptionalism and the belief that our thoughts and actions can, indeed, make the world better.

What would happen if we abandon goal oriented behavior and instead use the time allotted in this studio to deploy a basic design element in landscape architecture, the path, as a heuristic device to explore the impact of our ideas, beliefs, behaviors, and professional activism on the world around us? Where will this lead us? How will we materialize what we discover? Will our discoveries alter the way we deploy technology, science, sociology, and ideology in our methods of practice? Will they impact the way we approach and rationalize problem solving, and, in particular, the competitive belief in a singular, best answer to the dilemmas we encounter? Will they challenge, and change, our definitions of home, neighborhood, and community? And, perhaps, most important can our collective discoveries be combined into a multi-voiced landscape bricolage that honors difference?

To explore these questions, this studio begins with a journey backward in time to mark specific moments in history and their material expression and representation. Students will select an aspect of this history to critically interrogate the form and meaning of a path. Design methods and outcomes will be specific to the historical event and the questions it poses, but in all cases they must react to a perceived harm, be it social or physical. The critical question concerns connectivity and division, and the function of a path in a world of pandemics, social injustice, economic inequality, polemical politics, mass extinctions, disruptive climate change, and sea level rise. In other words, what thoughts, actions, and operations does a path prompt, and, once materialized, what exactly do these thoughts, actions, and operations achieve? Students are welcomed to explore both utopian and dystopian outcomes.

The Delaware River from Camden to Easton, and its riparian system of waterways, will serve, physically and metaphorically, as the site(s) of exploration. Final products will represent the discoveries unearthed as both a place(s) and a narrative(s) of habitation.

GRADUATE CORE DESIGN STUDIO THREE

16:550:535: LANDSCAPE AND ARCHITECTURE

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GENERAL COURSE INTRODUCTION:

Investigating the ways people respond to and shape the physical and social environment is a central challenge facing designers today. This core studio responds to the challenge through a combination of fieldwork, reading, class discussion, critical and creative writing, mapping, and spatial design. The intent is to provide a platform for students in the graduate program to combine their interests in landscape design, land planning, the humanities, and the natural sciences, as they work together to shape their thoughts and discoveries, and employ the technical skills and modes of expression of landscape architecture to creatively envision future possibilities.

Each year a different site, and different design topic are posed. This inquiry, as might be expected, is motivated by the instructor's interests and experience with research, design, and design implementation; however, in all cases, student work is required to integrate built form — buildings, structures, and their associated physical and social infrastructures — with the physical morphology of the land — climate, topography, hydrology, soil, plants, and animals.

COURSE STRUCTURE:

The beginning of the semester is dedicated to developing a deeper understanding of the physical and social geography of a selected landscape. This task necessitates research and the gathering of information from multiple resources that include, but are not limited to GIS databases, journal articles, archival resources, government reports, art, literature, movies, and articles and books on the discourse and practice of landscape architecture and architecture.

The second half of the semester is dedicated to synthesis and the production of reactions to the conditions observed and documented. This phase of the design process requires an iterative, multi-scalar method of inquiry that incorporates fact-based evidence while also testing the initial research findings, challenging conventional design thinking, and accounting for the intangible, and thus difficult to quantify qualities of the environment that shape understanding and action.

SKILLS:

Training in various practices of landscape architecture are developed through a process of discovery that incorporates data, science, multi-media, historical research, mapping, critical observation, and creative writing. Working in groups and individually, students will devise proposals that respond to the environment in question, inclusive of the surrounding landscapes and people. Group work will inspire conversation and collaborative peer learning. Individual work will enable the development of personal research interests and modes of representation.

This is a core design studio, therefore, students are required to demonstrate a knowledge of, and technical facility with, concepts and skills presented in the first year curriculum and concurrent courses, including the compilation of a base map using on-site observation, aerial photography, and GIS databases; the construction techniques of grading, material tectonics and detailing; the ability to visualize the landscape in plan, section, perspective, 3-D rendering, and models; referencing the history and theory of the profession and the site to situate their thoughts and ideas.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- **Understand** the interplay of the natural environment and socio-economic conditions in design
- **Recognize** design as an inclusive process that encompasses diverse needs and interests
- **Demonstrate** an understanding of the relationship of data collection, critical thinking, and verbal and visual representation
- **Re-envision** environmental perceptions and actions
- **Integrate** time and interactive relationships into the formal aspects of design thinking
- **Refine** the ability to move seamlessly between collaborative peer learning and individual design expression
- **Express** a knowledge of construction techniques and their deployment in design
- **Communicate** physical and social relationships that creatively incorporate research, writing, mapping, photography, collage, plan, section, models, and perspective

COURSE STANDARDS:

GRADING PROCEDURES & ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICIES:

Grades are based on attention to the design statement; course learning objectives; clarity of visual, written and verbal arguments; development of ideas over the course of the project. **Steady and continued progress will be rewarded, as will risk-taking and creativity.**

Course grades will be given as letters. When an assignment is a number out of 100 it corresponds to:

A	90 and above	C	70 to 76
B+	87 to 89	D	60 to 69
B	80 to 86	F	59 or less
C+	77 to 79		

Grades and feedback for assignments will be provided to the student on a timely basis. Students should be aware of their current course average. It is up to you to speak with the Instructor if there are any discrepancies or concerns about your course performance.

If any personal circumstances inhibit your ability to fulfill the requirements of this course, contact the instructor immediately. Any student with a special need, circumstance, or disability, should make an appointment with the instructor during the first week of classes.

THE SYLLABUS & COURSE ASSIGNMENTS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE: Changes to the syllabus and schedule will be announced in the lecture and studio periods. It is your responsibility to stay informed!

VIOLATIONS OF THE UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY:

Avoid plagiarism, which is defined as the representation of the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic work. For further information see:

Rutgers Academic Integrity Policy: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml>.

ATTENDANCE:

The Department of Landscape Architecture requires attendance in all of its classes.

Development as a landscape architect is largely dependent upon two aspects of education: exposure to and assimilation of a body of information pertinent to the field and the application of this knowledge through projects, exercises, critiques, reviews, and group interactions. Attendance and participation in all lectures, studios, reviews and critiques are, therefore, essential if students are to achieve their maximum potential. More than three unexcused absences in a term will result in a full step reduction in your semester grade (i.e. A to B). Each additional absence will result in another step reduction.

A minimum level of participation is defined as being in attendance for the entire duration of a class session. Late arrivals greater than ten minutes will be marked as absent. It is the student's responsibility to be in attendance for the entire class session, and to catch up on material for missed classes. Students on academic probation have **NO ALLOWABLE UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**.