INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN I COURSE SYLLABUS

11:550:231  5 credits
Blake Hall, room 246

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Studio and lecture activities have been developed to accommodate the following objectives:

- Students will develop a basic understanding of core concepts and practices fundamental to Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning (interpretation of site; human scale and use of the landscape; form-making)
- Students will be able to express design intentions through drawing, modeling, recording, and presentation.
- Vocabularies capable of describing frameworks to assess formal aspects of the built environment.
- Two- and three dimensional representation skills that support the practices of environmental design will be developed.
- Students will engage the practice of design as an iterative process and foster experimentation in the making of form towards an understanding of special relationships.
- Familiarize students with landscape architecture and planning standards for site design of public spaces.

Overview:  Introduction to Environmental Design I is the foundation studio for our two majors: Landscape Architecture, and Environmental Planning &.  The studio investigates how landscape design and planning can shape the built environment purposefully, productively, and provocatively. An introduction to the rigor and language of the environmental design process, as well as the tools, techniques, and creative speculation needed to move through the various stages of that process, it touches upon: aspects of human use of the landscape, plant material in the landscape, and landform (using topographic plans, sections, and contour models).

The course is composed of weekly lectures and twice-weekly studios. Lectures emphasize the practices of Landscape Architecture, Landscape Industry, GeoDesign, Urban Forestry and Landscape Planning. Studio facilitates students in the expression of their design/planning intentions, providing guidance and opportunity to develop critical thinking and creative skills. Studio activities include site visits and analysis, design exercises, individual desk critiques, group pin-ups, and project reviews. Students will draw, craft models, and “make things” each day. In almost all cases, students will leave a given studio with an assignment due at the start of the next studio when it will be discussed with the instructor and among groups of classmates. Each student is expected not only to present thoughts on his/her own designs, but to contribute to conversations about the work of others.

Five projects of increasing complexity introduce students to design as a process wherein a concept is refined and developed through iterative exploration and revision. Projects and associated assignments are intended to engage students in an investigation of graphic language and representation; the human body and its activities in the landscape; the generation of purposeful form; exercises in material articulation; and the communication of design intent and 3-dimensional form through both physical modeling and drawing techniques. A design journal kept by the student complements the learning process and becomes a record of progress and studio learning.
PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS:

[Project 1]
CRAFTING A 3D OBJECT: Doing it right honors precision in the process of “making”. These skills transfer to other aspects of design and work. Craftsmanship is doing your work and doing it right—a discipline more than a destination.

[Project 2]
TRAVERSING THE SITE introduces students to the site visit and seeing the landscape through observation, recording, analysis and representation. As a group, students will visit a series of landscapes with varying natural conditions. Qualities of the site will be discussed as will methods of recording observations, including sketching, photography, measurement, and writing. Three programmatic words characteristic of each of the four sites will be identified and used by the students as focal points for creating 2-dimensional representations of the particular landscape[s] quality. These original diagrams will evolve into 3-dimensional abstract structures embodying the defining characteristics of one of the four sites and, eventually, into a final abstract model that combines site attributes, forms, materials and meaning. A coordinated set of architectural drawings will be prepared including: Plan, Elevations, and Sections. The project introduces students to the importance of learning to “see” in the landscape, as well as to the level of model craft and drafting technique expected of them within the class and the curriculum beyond.

[Project 3]
MAPPING THE FOREST is the first step in the preparation of a restoration plan for an area of the School of Conservation (SOC) within Stokes State Forest. A Red Pine (,) planted approximately fifty years, was severely damaged during super storm Sandy. After an inventory and mapping exercise, you will be asked to develop a restoration concept and planting plan. Your proposal will “knit together” the site with surrounding landscape. Questions to consider include: what species would be appropriate for what purpose? How would the planting plan facilitate the interpretive/educational purpose? What will the trajectory of the site be in 10, 20 and fifty years and how will its use be altered? These questions will be answered in both plan and section diagrams.

[Project 4]
PEOPLE & PLACE asks students to consider and explore the relationship between the body and landscape. The project progresses through a series of design problems: first, a thorough graphic analysis whereby students become cognizant of the form and proportion of their own body. This initial series of freehand drawings integrates concepts of measure, scale, and proportion as the students pay close attention to posture and/or body language in order to articulate meaning through form—in this case the body. Your work at the site will begin by mapping social behavior. Then you will create site sections from a topographic map. Knowing what you have already discovered about how people behave you will propose three landscape interventions to improve people’s experience of the landscape.

[Project 5]
COURTYARD DESIGN is a multi-phased project that [re]emphasizes the translation of an abstract idea and graphic language into an organizational framework through analysis, conceptual and measured drawings, and three-dimensional models. The project advances the development of representational skills in two and three-dimension and the conceptualization and abstraction of drawing as a means of generating landscape design strategies. Phase I begins with the critical analysis and abstraction of a selected outdoor courtyard through a series of graphic drawings and three-dimensional study models. Your studies of movement through the site will encompass concepts of time, spatial qualities, and representation techniques explored in the previous projects. Phase II integrates the Section drawing as a powerful tool in the site design process, revealing moments of transformation. Your 2-dimensional drawings seek to capture the site information contained within the topographic models. The project introduces students to the speculative design process while utilizing key tools for exploring and representing design intent: the study model, the section drawing, and the grading plan. The project demands an increasing level of technical skill in draftsmanship and craftsmanship and an understanding of the iterative process of design. Particular attention will be paid to the relationship between representation, form, and meaning; standards for site design of public spaces; and the effective communication of design intent.
Materials and Supplies

A list of drafting and model making equipment was distributed. Additional material will be required throughout the semester. It is imperative that each student be prepared with the necessary equipment and materials for each studio period. It is not acceptable for students to take time from studio to purchase materials.

Attendance and Grading

- All studio assignments and exercises are due at the beginning of the studio period unless otherwise specified. Late projects will be accepted up to a maximum of one week after due date with a loss of one full letter grade. No credit will be given for work more than one week late.
- Course grading is based upon each student’s personal performance and improvement on studio projects and exercises throughout the semester. Attendance, attitude, participation and overall contribution to the studio environment will also be considered.

GRADING  Individual breakdown of your cumulative semester grade (see p. 7 for due dates):

- Project 1: Crafting a 3D Object  5%
- Project 2: Traversing the Site  20%
- Project 3: Mapping the Forest  15%
- Project 4: People and Place  20%
- Project 5: Courtyard Design  30%
- Design Journal (60 pages min.)  10%

Note: Project grades include readings and answering questions.

Final Letter grades will be assigned using the following scale:

- x > 90  A
- 90 > x >= 87  B+
- 87 > x >= 80  B
- 80 > x >= 77  C+
- 77 > x >= 70  C
- 70 > x >= 60  D
- x < 60  F

The Department of Landscape Architecture uses the following guidelines for understanding appropriate grading in its courses:

A – Outstanding – This not only means fulfilling the requirements, but impressing and going beyond the initial expectations and assigned elements of the project. The student has demonstrated a superior grasp of the subject matter coupled with a high degree of creative or logical expression, individual initiative, and a strong ability to present these ideas in an organized and analytical manner.

B – Very Good – The student has demonstrated a solid grasp of the material with an ability to organize and examine the material in an organized, critical, and constructive manner. The projects and in-class performance reveal a solid understanding of the techniques, issues and related theories, with some additional work completed.

C – Acceptable – The student has shown a moderate ability to grasp concepts and theories for the class, producing work that, while basically adequate, is not in any way exceptional. The performance in class displays a basic familiarity with the relevant literature and techniques.

D – Unacceptable – The work demonstrates a minimal understanding of the fundamental nature of the material or the assignment with a performance that does not adequately examine the course material critically or constructively. Students cannot graduate from the Landscape Architecture program with 2 D’s in required 550 classes.

F – Failure – The student has demonstrated a lack of understanding or familiarity with course concepts and materials. Their performance has been inadequate. Failure is often the result of limited effort and poor attendance which may indicate that the student is not in the proper field of study.

It will be the responsibility of each student to track their own academic process throughout the semester. Interim grades will be available to students on an individual basis. Students should make an appointment with the instructor to review interim grades. Appointments must be made at least one week in advance of any meeting.
PROJECTS  For each “major” project you will receive three or four sub-grades: design concept and development [how well did you develop your design ideas over the duration of the assignment to meet the stated project goals and provide a creative expression]; drawing craft [the quality of your final drawings]; and model craft [the quality of your final model]; readings and written assignments. Unless otherwise specified in the project description statement, each of the components will be weighted equally.

HOMEWORK  Homework will be assigned at the end of each studio meeting. Typical assignments ask you to make drawings or models. Failing to complete any assignment [for example, developing three alternative designs when four were assigned] or not demonstrating progress in design development [for example, simply re-drawing what was discussed the day before rather than applying the critique to a revised design] will negatively affect your project grades. Specifically, you risk failing the design concept and development component of your grade, and further, the lost opportunity to develop representational skills may contribute to poor drawing and model craft skills.


Tufte, Edward R. Envisioning Information. (Graphics PR, 1990)

+ Selected readings as pertain to assignments

JOURNAL  Design development (i.e. PROCESS) should be recorded in a design journal that will be evaluated occasionally by the instructors. The journal should engage the processes of site observation and representation as well as lecture notes (including common lecture), your discoveries about design, and the design process. Design development for your assignments should be recorded in the design journal

Remember: you will need to pace yourself and keep up with your journal entries. They will be checked on a regular basis. You are expected to produce, over the semester, a minimum of 60 pages of thoughtful notes, sketches, diagrams, etc. You may print out photographs and glue them into your journal but photographs must be annotated so that we understand what you are seeing with them—so that they communicate!

ATTENDANCE  Attendance at scheduled Studio and Lecture sessions is mandatory. If a circumstance arises which prohibits your attendance at any class session, please notify the instructor 24 hours prior to the class and an alternative arrangement may be made.

There will be no opportunity to make up a missed jury, in-class exercise or lecture.

Grading is based upon the individual’s performance and improvement on studio projects and exercises throughout the semester. Attendance, attitude, participation and overall contribution to the studio environment will also be considered. Beyond the above recommendations, this course utilizes the Department’s policy on attendance which reads:

The Department of Landscape Architecture requires attendance in all of its classes. All course meetings including Lecture, Studio and Common Lecture. The individual student’s development as a landscape architect is largely dependent upon two aspects of education. First, is the exposure to and assimilation of a body of information which relates to the field. Second, is the application of this knowledge through studio projects and problem-solving skills developed through critiques, reviews and interactions during each project. The Rutgers Landscape Architecture curriculum is designed to develop both areas. Attendance and participation in all lectures and studios are essential if the student is to achieve his/her maximum potential. It is the policy of the Department that more than three unexcused absences will result in a step reduction of the final course grade [for example, a B down to a C]. Each additional three absences will result in another step reduction.

Attendance will be taken at the start of each class and late arrivals of more than ten [10] minutes will
PORTFOLIO REVIEW
One teaching goal of this studio is to present to the student the richness of academic careers within the numerous educational options that this department offers:

- BS Landscape Architecture
- BS Environmental Planning and Design
  Options: Landscape Planning, Environmental Geomatics, Landscape Industry, & Urban Forestry

At the end of this class each student decides which path to take. The department will support your decision through a strong advising suggestion, based on your studio work and your overall performance in 550 and 573 classes. This will include the consideration of grades earned in departmental courses and a portfolio review of studio work made during the fall semester. Additional detail of the portfolio requirements will be distributed later in the semester; however, you should expect that the minimum submission requirements will include:

1) All drawings submitted for each of the major project reviews;
2) Two photographs of each model;
3) Design journal.

Other items related to the design process will be added. It is highly recommended that students keep and store all of the work produced during the semester [including drawing exercises, design development sketches, and study models] in a safe place. A folder made of two large sheets of foam core, taped along one edge will provide an inexpensive and effective means to protect your work.

STUDENT WORK
Submitted drawings, models, photographs, or written papers for any project assigned in Landscape Architecture courses are considered the property of the Department and may be retained in its archives for exhibition and accreditation purposes. All projects will be graded and returned to the student at a location designated by the instructor. Should your drawings be retained by the Department for its professional accreditation or for purposes of exhibition, you will be given the opportunity to obtain a print, scan, or photographic record of your work. **Department files are OFF LIMITS to students.**

Please remember to keep your own records (photographs, etc.) of your projects as you go along.

FACILITIES
Studio cannot be taught without reliable facilities. The student is expected to use the facilities responsibly with particular regard to the clearly established rules about their use as specified in the student handbook which can be accessed at department’s website, [http://landarch.rutgers.edu/current_students/policies_st.html](http://landarch.rutgers.edu/current_students/policies_st.html).

These rules cover access to the building, vandalism, personalization of working spaces, smoking and drinking, use of lockers, use of department equipment, access to the reference collection, and basic rules governing the use of the studios.

Our studio is shared space. Please strive to maintain a clean workspace by keeping all desks and floors clean and undamaged. **All spraying of adhesives or paint must take place outside the building.** The drafting tables are covered with a vinyl board covers (Bordco) that provides a smooth drawing surface. They can be easily damaged by cutting and paint/adhesive residue. Anyone who damages a drafting surface – by cutting into it, marking it with ink, ruining the surface with adhesive, glue or paint, etc. will be held responsible for the replacement cost of $150.00.

Students may use any one of the lockers located within Blake Hall to store their supplies and equipment; you must supply your own combination lock. Thefts occur, please secure all you valuables.

PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES
If you encounter any personal circumstances that inhibit your ability to fulfill the requirements of this course, you should contact the Instructor immediately. Likewise, any student with a special need, circumstance or disability should make an appointment with the Instructor during the first week of class.
ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
The intentional copying of another student’s work or a portion of a work and representation of the work as your own work is in direct violation of the University Integrity Policy:

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the representation of the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic work.

Facilitating Violations of Academic Integrity:
It is a violation of academic integrity for a student to aid others in violating academic integrity. A student who knowingly or negligently facilitates a violation of academic integrity is as culpable as the student who receives the impermissible aid, even if the former student does not benefit from the violation.

As a result, any copying and/or “sharing” of exercises, homework assignments, and projects will be treated as Level 2 violations and subject to the sanctions as outline in the Integrity Policy:

1. A failing grade on the assignment.
2. A failing grade for the course.
3. Disciplinary warning or probation.

Repeat violations will be treated as separable Level Three violations and referred to the AIF of the school for adjudication. Please refer to the complete Integrity Policy at:
http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml.
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*Weeks with double digits represent multiple events in one week.*