Introduction to Environmental Design II (11:550:232)  5 Credits

What is a site, and how do we design it?

Spring 2020
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Teaching Assistant:  Mark Robison

Lecture:  Tuesday 12:35 – 1:55
Studio:  Tuesday and Thursday 2:15 – 5:15
Common Lecture:  Wednesday 3:55 to 5:15

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Course Description
Developed as a continuation of LA 11:550:231, this introductory environmental design studio explores the idea of site as a terrain of action that encompasses environmental and social processes; and it achieves this objective through the examination of the different forms of representation and measurement used by designers and planners to study existing conditions, assemble relationships, strategize processes, and reconfigure design elements. During the semester students will visualize systems, manipulate terrain and water flow, interrogate temporal flux, develop a social program, and use topography, plants, and built form to shape space and define function. The intent is to create visually imaginative spatial configurations that enhance social interaction and promote ecological resilience.

Questions of interest include: What inspires your design? How can this inspiration be developed and represented through form and activities? How will the resulting space change over time, and seasonally? How might your initial inspiration change and evolve during the course of your design exploration?

Each of the above questions is answerable, but there is no singular answer. Instead, the best solutions are reached using a blend of hard work, critical assessment, and intelligent creativity; and this requires both the ability to listen, analyze, research, and a willingness to adapt, change, and modify thinking.

Learning Objectives
1.  Students will learn to collect, analyze and synthesize a range of physical and social information.
2.  Students will acquire professional design skills using landforms, water, plants, structures, and circulation.
3.  Students will learn to critically assess and revise design proposals.
4.  Students will develop graphic, written and oral skills to express their ideas and designs in a technically correct, visually expressive and succinct manner.
5.  Students will develop an understanding of the importance of professionalism in the design studio, including the value of teamwork, respectful interaction with others, completing assignments on time, and maintaining clean facilities.
Course Format

- Design studio
- Readings
- Lectures/Presentations (Note: Attendance at Common Lecture is mandatory)
- In-studio exercises and project reviews
- Homework
- Studio Professionalism
- Mid-Term and Final Design Presentations

Instructors will assign studio desk locations.

Design Studio: Much of your learning will occur in the studio. Therefore, active engagement in the studio – both during class and while working at your studio desk during non-class time – is essential. Students are expected to participate in all studio activities, including site visits and analysis, design exercises, individual desk crits, group pin-ups, and project reviews. Project development will occur over a series of weeks, but continued development of the design is expected on a daily basis.

Readings: You are expected to read selected materials prior to class. Required readings will be assigned in studio, posted on the class Sakai website, and discussed during class.

Lectures/Presentations: The studio lectures are project-specific, topic-based and geared toward the general knowledge and technical skills needed for the problem in question. You are expected to take notes during lectures and to explore topics independently as suggested by the readings, lectures, and studio discussions, and design critiques. This also applies to information provided during the Common Lecture and the spring Cekada lecture.

In-Studio Exercises and Project Reviews: Studio exercises and project reviews are opportunities to explore issues, present work, respond to questions, consider other interpretations, and gather feedback. You are expected to complete all in-studio exercises and attend all reviews, and remain for the entire period. Depending on the exercise in question, exercises and project reviews will assess Learning Objectives 1 through 4.

Homework: Daily design progress is part of your studio grade. Design development is required homework for the studio. In addition, studio instructors will suggest personalized design approaches during desk critiques, which students are expected to research and incorporate into their thinking prior to the beginning of the next studio. Depending on the problem in question, homework assignments will assess Learning Objectives 1 through 4.

Studio Professionalism: Reflects the care taken in maintaining the workspace and projects. This includes the respect each student takes in their workspace and projects, and in the workspace and projects of others in the studio. Studio Professionalism will be graded weekly and assesses Learning Objective 5.

Mid-Term and Final Projects: Mid-term and final reviews reflect the totality of work completed to fulfill the stated aims of assigned projects. The reviews illustrate your understanding of the site, its context, and the way the proposed physical form and materials reflect intended social use. The reviews also gauge the student’s ability to effectively communicate complex ideas and thoughts to others. Mid-Term and Finals will be graded immediately following presentation and will inclusively assess Learning Objectives 1-5.

Studio Grading / Evaluation
Grades reflect the student’s development of design ideas over the course of the semester, their participation in studio and lecturediscussions, their completion of in-studio and homework assignments, studio professionalism, the representation library, and the mid-term and final representations and presentations. **Steady progress in the studio will be rewarded, as will risk-taking and creativity.**

- **Mid-Term**  40 %
- **Final**  40 %
- **Readings, In-Studio Exercises, Homework, & Progress Reviews**  15 %
- **Studio professionalism**  5%

**Mid-Term (Project 1) and Final (Project 2) Review:** The grade includes required and self-directed homework, sub-assignments, and presentations. It also reflects the student’s ability to develop design ideas over the duration of the project; the neatness, legibility, and expressive quality of progress and final drawings; and the logical clarity of the written text and oral presentation as outlined in Learning Objectives 1, 2, 3 & 4.

**Readings, In-Studio Exercises and Project Reviews:** The grade includes required and self-directed work and reflects the student’s ability to follow directions, creatively explore technical issues, and complete projects in a timely manner as outlined in Learning Objectives 1, 2 & 3.

**Representation Library:** The Representation Library will assessed four [4] times during the semester. The grade includes self-directed work and reflects the student’s ability to develop technically correct drawings as outlined in Learning Objective 4.

**Studio Professionalism:** Studio Professionalism will be assessed weekly. This grade includes self-directed work and peer interaction, and reflects the student’s ability to complete assignments in a timely manner and maintain a safe and collegial work space as outlined in Learning Objective 5.

The following scale applies:

- **A**  > 93%  Outstanding
- **B**  > 83%  Very Good
- **C**  > 70%  Acceptable
- **D**  > 60%  Unacceptable
- **F**  < 60%  Failure
### Students Obligations and Expectations

1. Come to class on time and be in attendance the entire class session. **Late arrivals greater than ten [10] minutes will be marked as a full absence.**
2. Complete all studio and homework assignments on time, as directed, and on the designated due dates. **Late homework will be marked down one full grade for each day they are past due.**
3. Be open to the ideas and design challenges that unfold. Contribute to the learning of your peers through conversations and critiques during and outside of studio time. You should plan a minimum of 10 hours per week outside of class to read, develop designs, prepare for desk crits, and finalize presentations. Above all, each student is expected to be self-directed and able to pace himself/herself to complete project deliverables in the allotted timeframe.
4. Ask questions. Read the syllabus in order to become aware of required readings, upcoming lectures, and due dates.
5. Take notes during class presentations to help retain knowledge. The instructor will not repeat any content that was missed due to a student’s absence or tardiness. **Therefore, your attendance will be directly related to your success in class.**
6. Computers are to be used for class assignments only. **Students are NOT allowed to access the internet to work on non-course related topics during class time.**
7. **Turn OFF all mobile devices during class time.** Mobile devices are not to be used during class time. This includes cell phone calls and texting. Offenses will be noted in the Studio Professionalism grade.
8. Most updates and information will occur during class lectures, but the instructors will also rely on Sakai announcements via email to the students. You are expected to check your Rutgers email regularly.

### Ownership of Student Work

It is the intent of this course to return as much work as possible to each student; however, it is also the case that examples of work must be kept by the Department for its professional accreditation and for purposes of exhibition. **Should the Department retain your drawings, you will be given the opportunity to obtain a print, scan, or photographic record of your work.** Department files are OFF LIMITS to students.

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#### Departmental Grading Guidelines

While the assignment of grades is ultimately the purview of the instructor, the department uses the following guideline for understanding appropriate grading in its courses:

**A – Outstanding** – This not only means fulfilling the requirements, but impressing and going beyond the initial expectations of the project. The student has demonstrated a superior grasp of the subject matter coupled with a high degree of creative or logical expression, and 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 issues and related theories or literature.

**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. This performance in class display 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.
Use of Facilities and Equipment
Studio cannot be taught without reliable facilities. We expect you to use the facilities and equipment (projection equipment, department cameras, drafting equipment) responsibly with particular regard to the clearly established rules about their use as specified in the student handbook: [http://landarch.rutgers.edu/current_students/policies_st.html](http://landarch.rutgers.edu/current_students/policies_st.html) These rules cover access to studio, vandalism, table assignments, personalization of workspace, smoking and drinking, use of the lockers, access to the reference collection, and basic rules governing the use of the computer lab. Failure to observe rules may result in loss of access.

Attendance
The Department of Landscape Architecture requires attendance in all of its classes. The individual student’s development as a landscape architect is largely dependent upon two aspects of education. The first aspect is the exposure to and assimilation of a body of information that relates to the field. The second aspect is the application of this knowledge through studio projects and problem-solving skills developed through critiques, reviews, and interactions.

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. **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. Attendance and participation in critiques and reviews is mandatory for the entire term. **Students on academic probation have NO ALLOWABLE UNEXCUSED ABSENCES.**

Creation of a Studio Community: Studio Space and the Use of Shared Facilities
The design studio environment should reinforce and deepen the design theories and methods taught by the instructors. Following the professional standards of practice established by the America Society of Landscape Architects, it is expected that students will work together, learn from one another, respect each other’s work, and respect the studio space held in common by all. One of the most important ways of ensuring a culture of civility is to maintain a clean workspace, keeping desks and floors clean and property undamaged. For purposes of safety, **the use of power tools is prohibited in the building,** and **all spraying of adhesive or paint materials must occur outdoors.** For purposes of safety, the use of power tools is prohibited in the building. The drafting tables are covered with a vinyl board covers (the trademark name is Borco) that provide a smooth drawing surface. **Anyone who damages a surface—by cutting into it, marking it with ink, ruining the surface with adhesive glue, etc.—will be held responsible for the replacement cost of $150.**