11:550:331 | Intermediate Landscape Architecture I – Syllabus
Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey
School of Environmental and Biological Sciences
Fall 2014

General Information:
Studio Space: Room 149, Blake Hall
Meeting Times: Tuesday, 12:35 p.m. - 1:55 p.m. (Blake 128)
               Tuesday, 2:15 p.m. - 5:15 p.m. (Studio)
               Wednesday, 3:55 p.m. – 5:15 p.m. (CDL 110)
               Thursday, 2:15 p.m. - 5:15 p.m. (Studio)

Credits: 5

Instructors: Dave Smith
             Office: Room 127, Environmental and Natural Resources Building
             Email: dave.c.smith@rutgers.edu
             Office Hours: Wednesdays 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

             Jean Marie Hartman
             Office: Room 119, Blake Hall
             Email: jhartman@rci.rutgers.edu
             Office Hours: Wednesday 2:00 PM – 4:00PM or by appointment

Course Website: https://sakai.rutgers.edu -- course site is listed as "INTERMEDIATE LA STUDIO F14"

This course is REQUIRED for all Landscape Architecture majors. It is expected that Landscape Architecture majors take this course in their junior year as a part of the standard degree sequence.

Course Description:
The place of landscape architecture in shaping the urban experience in America is as old as the country itself. Even before Olmsted’s work on Central Park and the Emerald Necklace, William Penn planned the city of Philadelphia with the idea in mind of a “green country town” centered on five park squares, four of which still stand 300 years later as vibrant social centers. As the art and science of landscape architecture has developed, its influence has moved beyond the simple design and placement of green space, to an encompassing set of tools for urban and regional design.

In this course we will continue in this tradition. Throughout the semester, you will apply a landscape approach to inventorying, analyzing, and proposing design interventions that enhance the urban experience of Jersey City, New Jersey.

Prerequisites:
This is the third in the studio sequence of six studio courses required for the Landscape Architecture major. It is expected that students will have completed the two previous studio courses with a grade of C or better. In addition, students are expected to have taken Fundamentals of Environmental Planning,
as well as the Fundamentals of Environmental Geomatics lecture course and lab. The listings for these courses are:

372:231 Fundamentals of Environmental Planning
550:231 Intro to Environmental Design I
550:232 Intro to Environmental Design II
372:232 Fundamentals of Environmental Geomatics
372:232 Fundamentals of Environmental Geomatics Lab

It is possible that some students may not have completed all of these courses. In this case, these students will need to work harder to meet expectations. If you have missed any of these courses (or feel that there is an area that needs improvement) contact one of the instructors as soon as possible to discuss how to get up to speed.

Those students who are not Landscape Architecture majors should also contact one of the instructors to make sure that you are prepared for the course.

**Required Readings:**
There is no required textbook for this course, however selected readings will be provided. *These readings will be required.*

**Recommended Readings:**
The Image of the City by Kevin Lynch (ISBN: 978-0-262-62001-7)

**Required Materials:**
- **Laptop Computer:** All students in the Department of Landscape Architecture are expected to have a laptop capable of running Windows 7 or Windows 8.1 operating system. The operating system requirement is to ensure compatibility with core software used in the LA curriculum. For more information, see the department’s laptop requirement policy: [http://landarch.rutgers.edu/current_students/laptoprequire.html](http://landarch.rutgers.edu/current_students/laptoprequire.html)
- **Sketchbook or Journal:** This does not need to be an expensive hardbound sketchbook. A paper bound sketchbook or even a standard marble memo book will do.
- **Trace Paper:** Students should keep a roll of 12” or larger trace at their studio station.
- **Drawing Implements:** Students should have standard drawing tools in the studio at all times, including pencils, drafting pens, colored markers or colored pencils.

**Learning objectives:**
This course is designed to develop a range of skills from the very technical to the relatively abstract. Some of the core skills we expect students to develop include:

1. Analyzing a large complex site in terms of interacting natural and cultural systems
2. Collaborating with stakeholders and experts in specific systems
3. Using site analysis to find opportunities for design interventions
4. Developing designs that enhance the landscape function and form of a region as a whole
5. Assessing potential design interventions based on their impact on associated systems
6. Considering how design interventions might be implemented in the real world
7. Continued development of expertise with standard tools and methods for design and planning

In addition, this course will focus on your written, oral and graphic communication skills. Because the course emphasizes the use of many kinds of data and analytic approaches, it is essential that you communicate them as the basis for design goals and interventions.

Course Structure:
The course will consist of three broad phases:
   - Phase I: Understanding the study area
   - Phase II: Developing a design question
   - Phase III: Proposing a design intervention

Phase I: Understanding the study Area
During this phase, students will develop an Environmental Resource Inventory (ERI) for Jersey City. An ERI is a collection of data describing the natural and cultural (i.e. human-made) resources within the city, along with its surrounding area. The ERI provides a summary description of these resources and an objective assessment of their condition.

Working in teams, students will contribute to a single in-depth ERI document, along with a centralized GIS database. Students will also present their findings at the midterm review.

Phase II: Developing a design question
Based on the ERI produced in Phase I, along with conversations with stakeholders and some guidance from us, students will work—again in groups—to identify potential opportunities to improve the environmental condition of the city through design interventions. Each group will propose a design question that they would like to investigate. Proposals should include a justification of the need for intervention and/or the value that improvements may provide.

Phase III: Proposing a design intervention
Finally, groups will develop design interventions that address the questions proposed in Phase II. Designs should be based on analysis of the ERI, associated data, and additional research. Students will be expected to evaluate their designs for their anticipated impacts—both direct and indirect—and to make adjustments accordingly. Again, designs should provide a benefit to the city as a whole. As a part of the design proposal, students will also be expected to address a plan for implementation.

Additional Assignments:
Labs and Mini-Projects:
During Phase I of the course, there will also be several GIS labs and design mini-projects. These will help develop the skills you will need to perform site analysis and design at this scale.
**Readings and Response Papers:**
During the first half of the semester, specific readings will be assigned on a regular basis. For each of these readings, or sets of readings, students will be expected to write a **2-3 page paper** summarizing the author’s main points and responding to them based on your own impressions and background.

**Case Study Analysis:**
During the second half of the semester, students will be expected to find a case study that is relevant to the concepts of urban and regional design we deal with in the course. Each student will give a short presentation of the questions, methods, and solutions presented in the case study, along with a critical analysis of the project.

**Design Journal:**
Keeping a sketchbook or journal is an important tool for working through design and analysis questions. They serve as a permanent record of your analysis and design process. They also get you away from the computer, allowing you to focus on your ideas without the limitations of software interfaces. Students will be expected to maintain, and regularly update, a sketchbook or journal for the course. At minimum, **students will be expected to add one substantial entry per week.** This will be collected and graded at the Midterm and Final Reviews.

**General Course Schedule:**
The following is a tentative schedule of key dates for the semester. It is important to bear in mind that, because of the unique nature, of studio unforeseen opportunities and problems may arise. For this reason, the schedule may be subject to change.

- **Tuesday, September 2:** First day of class
- **Tuesday, September 9:** Site visit
- **Tuesday, September 16:** Phase I Set-up
- **Tuesday, October 14:** Phase I Review
- **Thursday, October 16:** Phase II Set-up
- **Tuesday, October 28:** Phase II Review
- **Thursday, October 30:** Phase III Set-up
- **Tuesday, November 25:** Thursday schedule (no lecture)
- **Thursday, November 27:** Thanksgiving (no class)
- **Tuesday, December 9:** Phase III Preliminary Review
- **Week of December 15:** Final Review

**Grading:**
Grading for this course is designed to assess many facets of your process as well as your final products. Tentatively, the approximate weighting of individual assignments will be:

- Phase I: Environmental Resource Inventory ........ 20%
- Phase II: Design question proposal .................. 10%
- Phase III: Final design intervention proposals ..... 25%
Lab exercises and mini-projects ......................... 10%
Design Journal .................................................. 5%
Response Papers .................................................. 10%
Case Study Presentation ................................. 10%
Attendance and participation ......................... 10%
Total ................................................................. 100%

Again, it is important to remember that, in a studio setting, new opportunities and problems often arise. The weightings of grades may change as a result. You will be informed as quickly as possible if and when such a change occurs.

The expectations for each grade level, as recommended by the department, are described below.

**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. 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.

**Studio Community:**

Studio is a uniquely social environment. You and your classmates will form a community. This can make for great collaboration and creative energy. However, there will also be times where maintaining a positive working environment will be a challenge. In order create the most positive and productive environment for everyone, it is important to be respectful of your classmates and their individual perspectives, as well as their space and their property. It is especially important to keep this in mind, as you will find yourself working in the studio and the lab outside of class time. Responsibility for your personal behavior will be entirely your own.
**Attendance Policy:**
The Department of Landscape Architecture’s policy on attendance, as outlined in the student handbook, states:

*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. More than three unexcused absences will result in a step reduction in your semester grade. Each additional three absences will result in another step reduction.*

*Students on academic probation have NO ALLOWABLE CUTS.*

*Your attendance at juries or special seminars scheduled in your design course is mandatory for the entire duration of the session.*

An additional key aspect of your education in this field is practice in developing the ability to communicate clearly and discuss your design process intelligently. For this course, expectations for participation include regularly communicating with other members of your working group, as well as actively taking part in weekly desk critiques and juried reviews.

**Note:** The above attendance policy does include *Common Lecture*.

**Ownership of Design Work:**
The Rutgers Department of Landscape Architecture maintains a permanent archive of student work. While you will retain authorship and intellectual property rights, all completed and submitted assignments belong to the department with full permission for the department to publish and publicize the work.

**Academic Integrity Policy:**
Students will be held to the University's Policy on Academic Integrity, which can be found at: [http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/policy-on-academic-integrity](http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/policy-on-academic-integrity)