

Rutgers—The State University of New Jersey,  
School of Environmental and Biological Sciences  
Department of Landscape Architecture

**STUDIO ONE: DESIGN FUNDAMENTALS--SYLLABUS** 16:550:531 5 credits

Tuesday & Thursday 2:15- 5:15 & Thursday, 5:35-6:55

& Common Lecture 3:55-5:15 pm( CDL101)

Blake Hall, room 228

**Instructor:** Holly Nelson, Assistant Professor of Practice  
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**Office Hours:** by appointment



## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Studio and lecture activities have been developed to accommodate these objectives:

- To understand the spatial nature of landscape design, thereby providing a conceptual framework to be used as a foundation in future landscape design explorations.
- To understand the implications of applying this framework to the design of small scale public space.

## Overview:

- I. **Course Description:** Explore the fundamentals of landscape space; Apply this understanding to real sites in the design of small public spaces.

Studio One investigates how landscape design and planning can shape the built environment purposefully, productively, and provocatively. Achieving fluency of expression in the fundamentals of landscape design is essential in all landscape design from the smallest back yard to the largest, most complex regional landscape problem. But what is involved in the decisions we as designers make which influence our perception of being within 'something' while still out of doors? What determines the making of landscape, of garden, of community place? How do you start?

Weekly lectures and twice-weekly studios facilitate students in the expression of their design intentions, providing guidance and an 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 are given an assignment due at the start of the next studio when it will be discussed with the instructor and amongst 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.

Space is the essence of landscape architecture. It is not only governed by physical processes but is also determined by political, cultural, and spiritual will. Landscape is human habitat. It can be urban, suburban, rural or a wilderness environment. Consider the human need for private, intimate enclosures and for open community experience in environments that can range from supportive to hostile. Consider form itself as a generator of landscape space, modified by shape, pattern, texture, tone and color. Consider each basic element of the landscape as a medium that can be manipulated by humans to shape our daily outdoor experiences (i.e. identified, selected, shaped, arranged, and composed) to serve mundane needs and sublime desires.

But the purpose of these spaces is to be occupied and enjoyed by **people**. The highest accomplishment in landscape design engages human experience and purpose; beyond a functional narrative, a spatial analogy, or/and an environmental metaphor, the design is a discreet event, a sagacious space, based upon profound engagement of the landscape.

**We Design To Enhance The Human Experience Of Landscape Space.**

## PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS:

Four 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. A design journal kept by the student complements the learning process and becomes a record of progress and studio learning.

### [Project 1] **PROJECT CURATION**

Analyze/ deconstruct an award-winning student design. Familiarize yourself with esteemed projects. How do you communicate design ideas? How do you explain a design process?

### [Project 2] **SITE DESIGN AS COMPOSITION**

Transform compositional principles from a two-dimensional painting to three-dimensional landscape design. Students will understand the nature of entry and arrival at a small public space.

What happens when abstract design thinking and form-giving must accommodate a real place?

### [Project 3] **SMALL SCALE DESIGN**

Apply design fundamentals to a real project for a real client at human scale.

Understand Site Analysis- documentation and analysis of existing specific and particular physical site conditions and their application to creative landscape design.

### [Project 4] **NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN**

How does one understand a neighborhood so that the proposed design reflects an awareness of its physical, historical and cultural character? How do you lead people through a sequence of outdoor spaces?

What is the nature of the designer-client relationship?

## JOURNAL

*Design development (i.e. PROCESS) should be recorded in a design journal that will be evaluated occasionally and at the end of the semester. Your 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. Expect to produce about 60 pages of thoughtful notes, sketches, diagrams, and design development over the course of the semester.*

## 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 last page for due dates):

Project 1: Project Curation	10%
Project 2: Site Design as Composition	20%
Project 3: Small Scale Design	25%
Project 4: Neighborhood Design	35%
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 design project you will receive 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** Typical assignments ask you to make drawings or models or to read an assigned text and answer questions. 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.

## **READINGS**

Readings will be posted on Sakai with response questions.

## **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 be marked as an absence.**

## **STUDENT WORK**

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 and to make digital copies. **Please remember to keep your own records (photographs, etc.) of your projects as you go along.**

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.**

## **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 department website. 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 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.

## **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 file [work] or a portion of a file [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>.

**531 SCHEDULE [DRAFT: subject to weather & unforeseen circumstances]**

	LECTURE	STUDIO	ASSIGNMENT	LEARNING OBJECTIVES
WEEK 1 9.1	What is design? Diagrams	<b>T: Intro's &amp; Syllabus; PR 1 Th: PR 1 presentations</b>	ASLA Project Analysis Diagram Analysis	Project exemplars Diagramming
WEEK 2 9.8		<b>NONE: LABOR DAY SWITCH</b>		
9.10	Student Presentations	<b>PR 2 Case Study Analysis Presentation</b>	Research paper + presentation	Research
WEEK 3 9.15	WH Whyte video	<b>Research Presentations</b>	Analysis Diagrams	Composition; Analysis
		Pinup	Site Visit; 3 Design Diagrams	Compositional Diagrams
WEEK 4 9.22		Pinup	2 designs	Design Concept
	Gehry model movie	Pinup	Revise design; Study Model; sketches	3d to 2d (Models to drawings)
WEEK 5 9.29		Pinup	Revise Design	Design is iterative
10.1	Rendering Workshop	Pinup	Revise Design	Design is iterative
WEEK 6 10.6	Working session	Working Session	Finalize Presentation	Communicate Design
		Pinup Final Drawings for revision	Finalize	Communicate Design
WEEK 7 10.13		<b>10.13 PR2 REVIEW</b>	<b>Reflection; Case Study</b>	
	Site Visit	Site Visit	Group Site Analysis & Documentation	Analysis & Character of a Place
WEEK 8 10.20		Pinup	Design: 3 schemes	Design Concept
		Case Study Visit		
WEEK 9 10.27	Muzi Li: NJ Sharing	Develop 1 scheme	Study Model	2d to 3d
		Pinup; Revise Model	Revise Model	Design is iterative
WEEK 10	TBA	11.3 Drawings	Drawings	Communicate Design
		Final Drawings & Final Model	Presentation Drawings	Communicate Design
WEEK 11 11.10	Review	<b>PR 3 REVIEW @ client office</b>	<b>Case studies</b>	<b>Research</b>
	Site Visit	Site Visit—Analysis & Documentation	Analysis & Character: Inventory & Analysis Diagrams	Site observation & inventory
WEEK 12	Maya Lin	10.17 Neighborhood model	Neighborhood model	Site Documentation
		Site Visit: Observe People, Develop Site Analysis Drawings	Continue Inventory Drawings	Site Documentation
WEEK 13	Portland video?	11.24 Presentations; 2 schemes	Design	Understand & communicate existing conditions
11.26		11.26 THANKSGIVING	Models: Develop design	Study design in 3d
	Goldsworthy	12.3 Pinup: Model*	Final Model	Finalize design
WEEK 15	Working Session	12.8 Working Session	Final Drawings	Communicate Design
12.10	Working Session	LAST CLASS: Working Session	Presentation Drawings	Communicate Design
		<b>PR4 REVIEW 12.17?</b>		