Landscape History: 1850 to the Present

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Office Hours: Monday 4:00-5:00 and Wednesday 1:00-2:00
Course Description:
This research seminar engages the historical and theoretical underpinnings of landscape architecture from 1850 to present. Class lectures, readings and discussions relate the history of the profession to concepts of nature, landscape, science, art, and social justice as conceived by the leading protagonists in the field. Representation of ideas, both visually and verbally, is another key concern. The intent of both explorations is not to trace current practice back to a singular source, but to instead indicate how ideas are amended and changed in response to social, scientific and technological change.

Questions of interest include the following:
How does landscape history relate to issues of resource use and anthropogenic climate disruption? How does it relate to issues of equity, social justice, and pluralism? Can economic growth and equity co-exist with resource conservation and landscape preservation? How does the discourse of past inflect current discourse? Is it possible to envision a post-humanist future in an era of dramatic anthropogenic change?

To address these complex issues, weekly lectures and discussions will begin with case studies and, then, move outward to engage broader historical and geographic perspectives that situate these projects within a larger disciplinary discourse. Although emphasis is paid to important design figures and their built work, alternative visions and critiques are also explored. To facilitate the understanding of the wide-ranging issues enumerated above, New York City serves as the course textbook.

The class meets twice weekly. Material will be presented in the following formats: class lectures, assigned readings and student-led discussions.

Course Field Trips:
The course also includes an all-day field trip to New York City to observe landscape design in situ.

Course Learning Objectives:
• To familiarize students with landscape designs and designers from the mid-19th century to the present, and the ideas that have contributed to the contemporary practice of landscape architecture.
• To prepare students to discuss space, form, scale, and programming in terms of its cultural, social and political context, and its connection to historical precedence.
• To foster an appreciation of the complexities and contradictions implicit within the practice of landscape architecture and their relationship to the belief systems, normative practices and mythologies that shape this
understanding of the land.

- To enable students to become adept at synthesizing multiple points of view and presenting this often conflicting historical discourse in verbal and written formats.

**Course Requirements:**
Students will be expected to attend all classes. Assignments include:

- **Class Presentations:**
  Each week one student will preside over the presentation of the assigned readings (20% of grade).

- **Written assignments:**
  Five short essays (2-3 pages) based on the weekly readings (50% of grade). Students will select the week and readings of interest. These assignments are due every other week beginning with week 2. The syllabus indicates the first assignment, but all others are due at the discretion of the student and they can include the readings from any week in the syllabus.

- **Research Paper:**
  This assignment extends one of the homework essays and requires students to research a specific designer, design, or design topic derived from the readings (30% of grade, divided as follows: 15% 7-page draft due week 10. The draft will include a clearly articulated introduction along with figures, figure citations, and bibliography; and 15% final 15-page manuscript due week 15. The final manuscript will be formatted with 1” margins, Times New Roman font, and 12 pt., double-spaced. Word/page count does not including figures, figure citations, bibliography, endnotes and images.

  Bibliography citation format to follow Chicago Manual of Style (17th edition sections 14.19-14.42), or Harvard Citation Format (APA and MLA): https://www.mendeley.com/guides/harvard-citation-guide. The following are examples of Chicago Style citations:

  **Text:**

  **Journal:**

  **Additional information on citations:**
  1. Entries must appear in alphabetical order.
  2. “Ibid.” The abbreviation *ibid* (from *ibidem*, “in the same place”) refers to a single work cited in the immediately preceding note.
  3. Web page citations must include author, title, URL and date of access.
Grades will be based upon the quality of the research, descriptive analysis, and clarity of the writing.

**Course Introduction**

**Week 1: (September 4)**

Introduction to the course, class schedule, field trips, and a preliminary discussion of landscape history.

Home Work assignment. Please provide a concise, 2-3 page description of “Romanticism, American Scenery, and Landscape” as presented in the week 2 readings.

**The Picturesque Genius loci: Cemeteries, Urban Parks, and Picturesque Suburbs**

**Week 2: (September 9 & 11)**

Lecture: Greenwood Cemetery and Central Park

Thomas Church _ Andrew Jackson Downing _ Frederick Law Olmsted _ Calvert Vaux

**Assigned Reading:**


**Supplemental Material:**


**The Life of the Street**

**Week 3: (September 16 & 18)**

Colonial Streets _ The Commissioners’ Plan of 1811 _ Eastern & Ocean Parkways Brooklyn _ Bronx River Parkway _ Brooklyn Heights Promenade _ Highline _ Lowline

Frederick Law Olmsted _ Robert Moses _ Jane Jacobs _ William H. Whyte _ Bernard Rudofsky _ James Corner _ James Ramsey & Dan Barasch

**Assigned Reading:**


Supplemental Material:

Playgrounds Past and Present
Week 4: (September 23 & 25)
Heckscher Playground_ Adventure Playgrounds_ Play Mountain_ Adele Rosenwald Levy Memorial Playground_ Riis House_ Teardrop Park
Aldo Van Eyck_ Louis Kahn_ Isamu Noguchi _ Richard Dattner _ Paul Friedberg _ Michael Van Valkenburgh

Assigned Reading:

Supplemental Material:

Civic Design & Urban Renewal
Week 5: (September 30 & October 2)
Rockefeller Center_ Lincoln Center_ Highways_ New York – New Haven - Bulldozers
Lewis Mumford_ Ada Louise Huxtable – Vincent Scully _ Raymond Hood _ Wallace Harrison

Assigned Reading:


**Supplemental Material:**


**Sculpture Gardens & Visionary Dreams**

**Week 6: (October 7 & 9)**

Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) Sculpture Garden _PS 1_ _MoMA Roof Garden_ Socrates Sculpture Park _Watts Tower Philip Johnson _ Ken Smith _Mark di Suvero _ Simon Rodia _Opus 40 _ Magic Garden

**Assigned Reading:**


**Supplemental Material:**


**Place Making and Meaning**

**Week 7: (October 14 & 16)**

Bryant Park _ Jacobs Javits Plaza Laurie Olin _ Richard Serra _ Martha Schwartz _ Michael Van Valkenburgh

**Assigned Reading:**


Supplemental Material:


The Technological Fantastic

Week 8: (October 21 & 23)
World’s Columbian Exposition _ Flushing Meadows & the 1939 & 1954-65 New York World’s Fairs _ Coney Island
Frederick Law Olmsted _ Daniel Burnham _ Robert Moses _ Norman Belle Geddes _ Kevin Roche _ Charles Eames

Assigned Reading:


Supplemental Material:


Art Nature Science

Week 9: (October 28 & 29)
Potomac River Basin Study _ The Sea Ranch _ The Ford Foundation
Ian McHarg _ Lawrence Halprin _ Buckminster Fuller _ Kevin Roche _ Dan Kiley

Assigned Reading:


Supplemental Material:


The Subdivision and The Garden Plot
Week 10: (November 4 & 6)

Riverside Park _ Llewelyn Park _ Broadacre City _ Sunnyside Gardens _ Radburn _ Levittown _ Freedom Land _ Ebenezer Howard _ Le Corbusier _ Lewis Mumford _ Clarence Stein & Henry Wright _ Marjorie Sewell Cautley

Assigned Reading:

• Krumwiede, Keith. “[A] Typical Plan[s]” Perspecta 43 Taboo (2010), 54-60.


Supplemental Material:


Earth Art: Picturesque, Monumental, Dialectical and Sexy
Week 11: (November 11 & 13)

Spiral Jetty _ Roden Crater _ Lightning Field _ Double Negative _ Cadillac Ranch _ Splitting _ Time Landscape _ Robert Smithson _ Gordon Matta-Clark _ Alan Sonfist _ Richard Serra _ Christo and Jeanne Claude _ Ant Farm
Assigned Reading:

Supplemental Material:
- Noever, Peter. James Turrell: the other horizon (Germany: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2002).

Deconstructing The Post-Modern Fragment
Week 12: (November 18 & 19)
Manhattan Transcripts _ Parc de la Villette _ Downsview Park
Bernard Tschumi _ Rem Koolhaas _ James Corner and Stan Allen

Assigned Reading:

Supplemental Material:

Memorials, Monuments, Memory & Nostalgia
Week 13: (November 25, no class Wednesday)
Vietnam Veteran’s Memorial _ Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial _ Washington Monument _ World Trade Center National September 11 (9/11) Memorial  
Maya Lin _ Lawrence Halprin _ Laurie Olin _ Peter Walker  

**Assigned Reading:**


**Supplemental Material:**


**Water & the Evolution of Ecology & Urbanism**  
**Week 14: (December 2 & 4)**  
Fresh Kills Park _ Oyster Beds _ Sponge Park _ Governor’s Island _ An Energetic Odyssey  
James Corner & Stan Allen _ Kate Orff _ Susannah Drake _ Anu Mather & Dilip Da Cunha _ Adriaan Geuze _ Dirk Sijmons  

**Assigned Reading:**


**Supplemental Material:**

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**Land, Place, Palimpsest and Post Humanist Speculation**

**Week 15: (December 9 & 11)**

**Assigned Reading Monday December 9:**

**Supplemental Material:**

**Wednesday December 11: Final Papers & Short Class Presentations:**
A short discussion of each paper voting and presentation of the awards for best title, first sentence, and first paragraph.
Grading Procedures and Academic Integrity Policies:

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

- A  90 and above
- B+ 85 to 89
- B  80 to 84
- C+ 75 to 79
- C  70 to 74
- D  60 to 69
- F  59 or less

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, immediately contact the instructor. Any student with a special need, circumstance, or disability, should make an appointment to see the instructor during the first week of classes. The syllabus and course schedule are subject to change. Any changes to the syllabus or schedule will be announced in the scheduled lecture periods. It is your responsibility to stay informed!

Violations of the University Academic Integrity Policy:

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the representation of the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic work. Note: Proper paper citations avoid plagiarism. See Academic Integrity Policies: http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml.