

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

## **Praxis Design/Build Studio Spring 2017:**

Transforming Blighted Housing into Valued Community Environmental Amenities

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Office Hours: Mondays 12-1pm, Thursdays 1-2pm and by appointment

Project Assistant: Ryan Martens

Guest Lecturer: Dr. Christina Kaunzinger

Guest Lecturer: Dr. Jean Marie Hartman

Class Meeting times:

Tuesdays: 2:15pm – 6:55pm

Thursdays: 2:15pm – 5:15pm

Site: 53 Lake Shore Drive, Lake Hiawatha, Parsippany-Troy Hills, NJ

Background: With economic, demographic and environmental changes many townships and cities are seeing an increase in abandoned housing (such as in flood prone neighborhoods). Blight is typically removed through demolition and lawn replanting, which while alleviating the site specific problem, creates significant environmental impacts from air pollution in heavy machinery and dust, to greenhouse gas emissions in landfilling to noise and community disturbance during the project. Deconstruction, on the other hand, utilizes primarily hand labor, often incorporating workforce training to dismantle structures for maximum value recapture in reuse, resale, donation and recycling. The studio will practice and demonstrate environmentally sensitive deconstruction practices, and then build green infrastructure and demonstrate a restoration of riparian habitat– showing that blight can be carefully removed and transformed into valued community assets. The cost of demolition is reinvested in workforce training and in green infrastructure building that helps the community manage stormwater

and potential flooding. The socio-environmental and economic benefits of skill-building, cleaner water, reduced flooding, and vegetated gathering spaces have been shown to improve perception of neighborhoods, townships and even increase property values.

Project: The Landscape Architecture Design/Build studio will guide the transformation of a vacant house and lot into a park featuring green infrastructure, community amenities and ecological restoration. The studio will demonstrate deconstruction practices, led by a professional Deconstruction Specialist – showing that taking apart structures for reuse and increased recycling can be preferable to landfilling demolition wastes. Material salvaged in deconstruction will be used to build stormwater management features such as rain gardens, bioswales and planters – and potentially in educational signage and access structures, community amenities (if desired) such as raised beds, seating, fencing, paths, walls. Choice of features and their design will be a collaborative process between Rutgers Landscape Architecture students and community members. Built structures may be temporary or permanent, as desired by the community/administration. The cleared site will manage stormwater on the upland side and feature habitat restoration on the riparian (or flood-prone) edge – green infrastructure and restoration meet on the site in a beautiful garden park that would serve as a model of practice and a valued community meeting place. Future maintenance burdens will be coordinated between Rutgers Cooperative Extension and community partners, ensuring that the project continues as a cared-for community space.

### **Course Objectives**

1. Analyze found conditions of structures, site and community for undervalued characteristics
2. Practice design that develops value from existing assets in material, site and process
3. Integrate green infrastructure design and construction with plant community based ecological design and restoration
4. Synthesize site specific environmental design with social use of space

### **Readings**

Readings will be provided in the Coursework Folder

### **Journal**

The journal should be the repository for all work in this class. The journal may take the form of a sketchbook with supplemental materials pasted in, or be arranged in the format of a folio of loose pages collected together in a binder or folder. The journal shall contain all notes from readings, drawings, selections of photography, research, design and written explorations of the themes of this studio.

**Required Gear:**

- Sturdy Work Boots
- Heavy, durable clothing: long-sleeve shirts, long pants

**Transportation:**

The site is approximately 45 minutes by car from Blake Hall. Transportation to the site shall be by carpool - arranged with the Professor, the Project Manager and Classmates.

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**Schedule**

(Subject to change depending on external factors)

**Tuesday, January 17<sup>th</sup>**

Introduction to Course

Review of Syllabus

Work Plan Discussion and Arrangement of Working Research Groups

- Regional Physical Geography (neighborhood scale, watershed, region)
- Deconstruction (practices, history and processes)
- Green Infrastructure (practices, history and processes)
- Ecological Design and Restoration (practices, history and processes)

**Thursday, January 19<sup>th</sup>**

Research Period

**Tuesday, January 24<sup>th</sup> Meet on Site**

Site Visit: Sense of Place

Record sensations, observations

**Thursday, January 26<sup>th</sup>**

Presentation of Preliminary Research

Dr. Kaunzinger Lecture:

Site Analysis for Ecological Restoration Projects

**Tuesday, January 31<sup>th</sup> Meet on Site**

Site Visit: Surveys:

Topography

Existing Features: Roadways, curbs, drainage structures, adjacent structures

Existing Vegetation

Adjacent Site Vegetation

Site Analysis

**Thursday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>**

Green Infrastructure Lecture: Water Resources Program

Conceptual Design: Green Infrastructure and connections to adjacent infrastructures

**Tuesday, February 7<sup>th</sup>**

Conceptual Design: Site

**Thursday, February 9<sup>th</sup>**

Dr. Kaunzinger: Design for Ecological Communities

Conceptual Design: Restoration and connections to adjacent landscapes

**Tuesday, February 14<sup>th</sup>**

Conceptual Design

Individual Sketch Design and Group Synthesis Design

**Thursday, February 16<sup>th</sup>**

Community Meeting (TBD)

**Tuesday, February 21<sup>st</sup>**

Site Design

**Thursday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>**

Design Review

Final Design: Selection, Synthesis and Cooperative Agreement on proposed design

OSHA: Site Safety Training and Personal Protection Equipment

**Tuesday, February 28<sup>th</sup> Meet on Site**

Present Final Design to Township for Approval

Site Preparation and Interior Deconstruction

**Thursday, March 2<sup>nd</sup> Meet on Site**

Site Preparation and Interior Deconstruction

**Tuesday, March 7<sup>th</sup> Meet on Site**

Deconstruction Training with Reuse Consulting

Structural Deconstruction

**Thursday, March 9<sup>th</sup>** Meet on Site

Deconstruction Training with Reuse Consulting

Structural Deconstruction

**Tuesday, March 21<sup>st</sup>** Meet on Site

Site Preparation

**Thursday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>** Meet on Site

Construction Markout (Layout)

**Tuesday, March 28<sup>th</sup>** Meet on Site

Site Clearing

**Thursday, March 30<sup>th</sup>** Meet on Site

Excavation

**Tuesday, April 4<sup>th</sup>** Meet on Site

Grading/Surveying

**Thursday, April 6<sup>th</sup>** Meet on Site

Site work

Construction of Site Furnishings (on site or at Blake Hall)

**Tuesday, April 11<sup>th</sup>** Meet on Site

Site Work

Construction of Site Furnishings (on site or at Blake Hall)

**Thursday, April 13<sup>th</sup>** Meet on Site

Site Work

Installation of Site Furnishings

**Tuesday, April 18<sup>th</sup>** Meet on Site

Site Work

Deconstruction of Garage

**Thursday, April 20<sup>th</sup>** Meet on Site

Planting

**Tuesday, April 25<sup>th</sup>** Meet on Site

Planting

**Thursday, April 27<sup>th</sup>** Meet on Site

Last Day of Classes

Mulching

Ribbon Cutting

**Studio Review Period:**

Present Summary of Course to Landscape Architecture Department

### **Grading Practices**

**20%: Analysis and Presentation**

**30%: Final Site Sketch Design**

**30%: Journal**

**20%: Fieldwork (Quality of work, cooperation and role accomplishment)**

The final course grades are given as letters A, B+, B, C+, C, D, and F.

See explanation of letter grades below.

**A- Outstanding-** This not only means fulfilling 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 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 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. The student 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. The student's 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.

When an assignment or project is given a number out of 100 it corresponds to these letter grades:

**A 90**

**B+ 85**

**B 80**

**C+ 75**

**C 70**

**D 60**

**F <60**

### **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. 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. Unless a more strict policy is in place by the individual instructor, more than three absences will result in a step reduction in your semester grade. Each additional three absences will result in another step reduction. Since the common lecture is part of the studio, missing that would count as an additional absence.

A minimum level of participation is defined as being in attendance for the entire duration of a class session. It is the student's responsibility to be in attendance at all required classes and all personal plans should be made in accordance with the schedule.

Students on academic probation have **NO ALLOWABLE UNEXCUSED ABSENCES.**

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

### **Absence and Lateness Policy (specific to this course)**

- Students are expected to be in class at the time the class is scheduled to begin. Three instances of lateness of more than five minutes at the beginning of class, will count as one unexcused absence.

- An absence is excused only if it has received prior permission from the instructor. If a note or call is received after the class has met it will still be an unexcused absence. Three unexcused absences will result in the student failing the course.
- In the event of an absence, the student is responsible for making up any missed work, getting assignments, and submitting assigned work on time.

### **Work Becomes Department Property**

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, you will be given the opportunity to obtain a print or photographic record of your work. Department files are **OFF LIMITS** to students.

### **Use of Facilities**

Landscape Architecture courses cannot be taught without reliable facilities. Your use of the facilities is dependent upon responsible use with particular regard to the clearly established rules about their use as specified in the student handbook:

[http://landarch.rutgers.edu/current students/students%20handbook/StudentHandbook web SectI.pdf](http://landarch.rutgers.edu/current%20students/students%20handbook/StudentHandbook%20web%20SectI.pdf)

These rules cover access to the computer lab and vandalism, personalization of work space, smoking and drinking, use of lockers, access to the reference collection, and basic rules governing the use of computer lab. Failure to observe rules may result in loss of access.

### **Equipment**

The student handbook also includes a section governing the use of equipment:

[http://landarch.rutgers.edu/current students/students%20handbook/StudentHandbook web SectII.pdf](http://landarch.rutgers.edu/current%20students/students%20handbook/StudentHandbook%20web%20SectII.pdf)

This section includes rules specifying use of department equipment including projection equipment, department cameras, computers, scanners, printers, and plotters.

### **Academic Integrity Policy**

The intentional copying of another student's file or portion of the file and presenting it 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 exercise, assignments and projects will be treated as Level 2 violations and subject to the sanctions as outlined 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>.