



Representing New Jersey: Exploring the Landscape of the Garden State

Spring 2016: Praxis Studio 11:550:332, 11:550:432 OD, 11:550: 536

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If you were asked to describe New Jersey what would you say?

And how would you say it?

This studio will attempt to answer these questions through cross-disciplinary exercises that incorporate history, theory, literature, and popular culture. Of particular interest, and what distinguishes this examination from the prototypical design studio, is its emphasis upon the recursive relationship between perception and social production. In other words, what does the physical form of the land say about New Jersey and the life of its inhabitants? And conversely, how does the physical form of the land shape the self-perception and life of its inhabitants? As such, this studio links the physical attributes of the New Jersey landscape to the less tangible, but nonetheless important ideas the inhabitants of the state have about themselves, their collective identity, and their place in the nation and the world.

This studio is based upon two propositions. The first proposition is that any answer to the above questions will reinforce and challenge the way we see and interact with the land. The second proposition is that our personal experiences and values influence what we see, and thus what we as individuals, and by extension society in general, deem of value and worthy of protection and remembrance. The corollary to both of these propositions is that even though our experiences may hinder us from fully seeing and appreciating every landscape, if we open our eyes and fully explore what we see, will we discover important insight into the way people relate to each other and their surroundings. As notably put forward by Thoreau at Walden Pond, the intent is to demonstrate that you don't have to travel far to fully experience the world and see deeply.

Working with the above assumptions, students will creatively deploy plan maps, cross-sections, aerial imagery, data diagramming, sketching, collage, perspective and model making as a means to excavate and bring to the surface the social, cultural, political, and environmental histories of the Garden State. Projections into the future and consider what might be lost will be encouraged.

STUDIO GOAL:

Understanding the landscape as an imaginary “place” defined by changing social, political, and economic flows and patterns; as a constructed “space” containing buildings, roads, pathways, parks, trees, pipes and wires; and as a situated “environment” impacted by climate, topography, hydrology, soils, plants and animals.

STUDIO LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

Conceptual:

1. Understand landscape as a palimpsest of past uses that are never fully erased.
2. Understand the historical development as a recursive relationship between perception and social production.
3. Understand design as an iterative, open-ended process of exploration.
4. Understand the relationship between data collection, analysis, critical thinking, and representation.
5. Understand the importance of revision and refinement of ideas.

Social:

1. Recognize the value of teamwork, and how to seamlessly move between individual and group efforts.
2. Recognize design as an inclusive process that encompasses a diverse group of people with different, and often conflicting needs and interests.

Technical:

1. Visualize the site diachronically as change over time.
2. Visualize the site synchronically as a complex social and physical infrastructure.
3. Visualize physical and social relationships through mapping, section, model, perspective, and collage.

THE SITE:

The site for this studio is the landscape of New Jersey, inclusive of its historical development.

SEMESTER OVERVIEW AND STUDIO PRODUCTS:

The studio will proceed in two broad phases. In both phases individual student products will be collated into a series of composite landscapes.

PHASE I: CRITICAL MAPPING

Phase I of the studio will consist of a series of sequential exercises that incorporate multiple scales and methods of representation. It will build upon, and creatively expand the skill sets of landscape architecture the students have learned in previous classes. Conceived as an exploration of two-dimensional materialization of the landscape the exercises will explore the land:

- As topography
- As land cover
- As water
- As sound
- As boundary
- As community
- As found object
- As memory
- As path and place

PHASE II: STITCHING THE PIECES TOGETHER

Phase two of the studio will consist of a series of sequential exercises that incorporate multiple scales and methods of representation. It will build upon, and creatively expand the skill sets of landscape architecture the students have learned in previous classes. Conceived as an exploration of the three-dimensional materialization of the landscape the exercises will explore the land:

- As topography
- As land cover
- As water
- As sound
- As boundary
- As community
- As found object
- As memory
- As path and place

EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENT PARTICIPATION

A minimum level of participation is defined as being in attendance for the entire duration of a class session, and it is the student's responsibility to be in attendance for all lectures and field sessions. More than two unexcused absences will result in a step reduction of the student's semester grade (e. g. a semester grade of a B would be reduced to a C+). Each additional two absences will result in another step reduction. Attendance at juries or special seminars for the course is mandatory. Attendance at all Common Lectures is also required.

ABSENCE +LATENESS POLICY

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

In the event of an absence, the student is responsible for making up any missed studio assignments, and submitting the work on time.

DUE DATES

Except for circumstances beyond the student's control, all assignments are due at the dates and times specified throughout the semester. Projects that are incomplete should still be submitted on that date to receive partial credit. Any work submitted late will be penalized a letter grade for each date past due. Working beyond a due date is both unrealistic in a professional setting and unfair to one's classmates.

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 exhibit and accreditation purposes.

REQUIRED TEST

There is no required text, however, students will be responsible for accessing readings as posted to Sakai.

SUPPLIES

Basic drafting supplies, notebook and laptop computer are required.

USE OF FACILITIES + EQUIPMENT

Student use of 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/documents/StudentHandbook_web.pdf

Failure to observe these rules may result in loss of access.

GRADING + EVALUATION

The final grade will be based upon the following percentages:

Phase 1 (50%)

Phase 2 (50%)

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

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

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!

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

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 are required to avoid plagiarism.** For further information on the Academic Integrity Policies of Rutgers and its standards of conduct please refer to: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml>.

Note: All information in this syllabus is subject to change. Any changes to the syllabus or schedule will be announced in class. It is the student's responsibility to stay informed.