

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY
School of Environmental and Biological Sciences
Department of Landscape Architecture

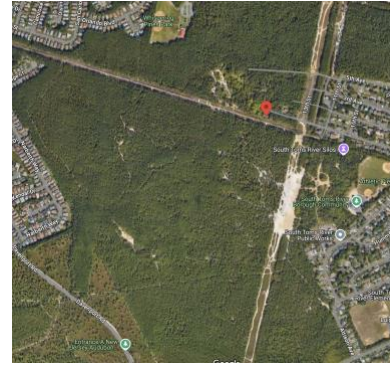
VIBRANT COMMUNITIES/SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPES

16:550:640 | 3 credits | Spring 2026

Pre-requisite: 11:550:340 Planting Design

SPN required: SPNs given to 2-3 Vibrant Communities Project applicants.

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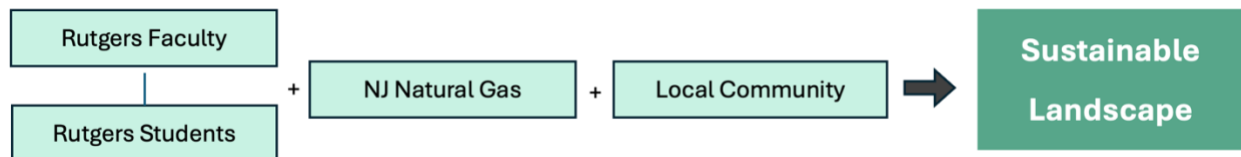


Program Goal

Learning Goal 3: Prepare to be professionals in the spectrum of landscape architectural practice.

Learning Objectives:

1. Partner with NJ Natural Gas (NJNG) employees and their communities to design a sustainable landscape masterplan for an affordable housing project in Tom's River. This entails meetings with NJNG throughout the semester and 2-3 client meetings to develop and refine the design.



Course Description

This 3-hour/ week studio provides a unique opportunity to work with the charitable arm of NJ Natural Gas in a new form of 'externship'/ experiential learning--working with real clients. Students work as a design team but develop individual design solutions with community, developer and corporate input. Gain experience listening to clients, developing the masterplan program, and understanding how their design is impacted by state and town regulations.

In addition to developing their design solutions as part of the course assignments, students should expect to spend hours outside course hours to:

- Visit the site several times
- Meet with client (Zoom/in-person)
- Present to the community (in-person)
- Meet with contractors and local building officials (if necessary)

Students should expect to meet routinely with NJNG throughout the semester and several times/ semester with community representatives to develop and present individual design solutions. Students selected for the Viable Communities & Sustainable Landscapes Project will receive externship funding from NJNG upon receipt of a final passing grade.

Sustainable Landscape Project Assignment

Deliverables: Two small community-scale sustainable projects over the course of the semester that focus upon site-scale design with a focus upon working with community partners. Students are expected to work in studio each week to get faculty feedback to further develop their design. As a capstone project, students curate convincing presentations that should include: context plan, rendered site plan, sections, perspectives, plant schedules and plant palettes that demonstrate

plant-people-ecosystem connections, and research that supports the importance of outdoor living with health and wellbeing. Stewardship of any landscape makes it a sustainable landscape. The design of a landscape management plan may help to deepen connection between the community and their landscape.

Because this is a real project, we will be working in “real time” to figure out which community groups can provide input, which regulations apply to the project, and how to enrich everyone’s expectations for interacting with the landscape

As we move through the project, working with me as a guide, you will design:

Entry Signage and Plantings
First Avenue Pocket Park and Bench/Signage

Assessment

Assignment grading will be based upon creativity, fit to community needs, and professional buildout. Construction documentation must thoroughly and professionally illustrate the project and should include a planting plan and a landscape management plan.

READINGS

Any necessary project research (site history, site ecology, materials, etc.)

EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENT PARTICIPATION, ATTENDANCE AND GRADING

Students are expected to participate fully in the class by being prepared for each class and open to the ideas and challenges that unfold.

ATTENDANCE

The Department of Landscape Architecture requires attendance in all of its classes. Attendance at scheduled Studios, Reviews, Site Visits and Installations 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 *self-* report your absence. <https://sim.s.rutgers.edu/ssra/>
There will be no opportunity to make up a missed Review.

Grading is based upon the individual’s performance and design development and documentation and buildout 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 that reads:

The individual student’s development in studio is largely dependent upon:

- The exposure to and assimilation of a body of information which relates to the field.
- The application of this knowledge through studio projects and problem-solving skills developed through critiques, reviews and interactions during each project.

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 3

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.

Departmental Grading Guidelines

While the assignment of grades is the purview of the instructor, the department uses the following guideline for understanding appropriate grading in its courses:

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 adequate, is not in any way exceptional. This 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 sufficiently 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.

Academic Integrity

The University's policy on Academic Integrity is available at

<http://academicintegrity.rutger.edu/academic-integrity-policy>. The principles of academic integrity require that a student:

- Properly acknowledge and cite all use of the ideas, results, or words of others
- Properly acknowledge all contributors to a given piece of work
- Make sure that all work submitted as his or her own in a course or other academic activity is produced without the aid of impermissible materials or impermissible collaboration
- Obtain all data or results by ethical means and report them accurately without suppressing any results inconsistent with his or her interpretation or conclusions
- Treat all other students in an ethical manner, respecting their integrity and right to pursue their educational goals without interference. This requires that a student neither facilitate academic dishonesty by others nor obstruct their academic progress
- Uphold the canons of the ethical or professional code of the profession for which he or she is preparing

Adherence to these principles is necessary in order to ensure that:

- Everyone is given proper credit for his or her ideas, words, results, and other scholarly accomplishments
- All student work is fairly evaluated, and no student has an inappropriate advantage over other
- The academic and ethical development of all students is fostered

- The reputation of the University for integrity in its teaching, research, and scholarship is maintained and enhanced

Failure to uphold these principles of academic integrity threatens both the reputation of the University and the value of the degrees awarded to its students. Every member of the University community therefore bears a responsibility for ensuring that the highest standards of academic integrity are upheld.

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 or projects will be treated as Level 2 violations and is 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

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Disability Services

(848) 445-6800 / Lucy Stone Hall, Suite A145, Livingston Campus, 54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue, Piscataway, NJ 08854 / <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation:

<https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

STUDENT WELLNESS SERVICES

Just In Case Web App: <http://codu.co/cee05e>

Access helpful mental health information and resources for yourself or a friend in a mental health crisis on your smartphone or tablet and easily contact CAPS or RUPD.

Share A Concern: <http://studentconduct.rutgers.edu/do-something-to-help-share-a-concern/why-share-a-concern/>

There are times when people may observe a behavior and feel concerned. These concerns may be part of a larger story for a student facing challenges. Thus, it is important to **Do Something** and share your concerns so that the student can get assistance as soon as possible before the issues grow too large. If the concern is immediate, call 9-1-1.

Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS)

(848) 932-7884 / 17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901/ www.rhscaps.rutgers.edu/

CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professional within Rutgers Health

services to support students' efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community and consultation and collaboration with campus partners.

Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA)

(848) 932-1181 / 3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 / www.vpva.rutgers.edu/

The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling, and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking to students, staff, and faculty. To reach staff during office hours when the university is open or to reach an advocate after hours, call 848-932-1181.

Scarlet Listeners

(732) 247-5555 / <http://www.scarletlisteners.com/>

Free and confidential peer counseling and referral hotline, providing a comforting and supportive safe space.

SEBS DEI Statement

It is our intention that students of all backgrounds will be well served by this course. We will work to create an environment of inclusion which respects and affirms the inherent dignity, value, and uniqueness of all individuals, communities and perspectives. We are lucky to have a diverse university. Diverse voices and life experiences enhance the learning process and we welcome students to share their personal experiences. We will not tolerate disrespectful language or behavior against any individual or group. If you feel as though you have been disrespected or treated unfairly by the instructors or any other individual please let us know. You may speak with the instructors in person, over email or report anonymously via the Office of Academic Programs. In addition, you may also report bias to the Rutgers Diversity and Inclusion initiative using this link: <http://inclusion.rutgers.edu/report-bias-incident/>.