

LAA-6231  
Theory of Landscape Architecture  
Spring 2016  
Costis Alexakis

Class meeting times: Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> periods, Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> period  
Classroom: ARCH 215  
Office: ARCH 440  
Office hours: Email for appointment – [acostis@ufl.edu](mailto:acostis@ufl.edu)  
Canvas e-learning site: <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/>

### Overview

This course deals with the conceptual foundations of landscape architecture. We will be studying ideas which have become central to the profession of landscape architecture, the context from which each arose and the ways in which they are being appropriated in our days. As this is an introductory course we will be addressing a broad range of concepts, some of immediate practical consequence, others less so. All matters will have stirred controversies, inspired novel approaches or reframed our professional focus within the past century.

### Objectives

To acquire familiarity with ideas and processes that inform the practice of landscape architecture  
and  
To advance the profession of landscape architecture through a critical understanding of current practices and approaches  
and  
To grasp the breadth, complexity and unfulfilled potential of our profession.

### Prerequisite Knowledge and Skills

None

### Requirements

We will accomplish those objectives in a variety of ways:

1. Weekly lectures (Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> period)
2. Student presentations (Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> period)
3. Discussions (Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> period)
4. Weekly readings, chosen to support the lectures and fuel discussions
5. Bi-weekly written responses to each week's classes
6. A term paper
7. A mid-term and final exam

Students should come prepared to lectures having carefully studied each week's readings.

Each student will be assigned one presentation. An outline of the presentation will be expected a week in advance, a final draft on the day of the presentation.

Students should actively participate in class discussions which will raise ideas and issues from readings, lectures and presentations.

Bi-weekly responses will be brief (2-3 pages, double-spaced) and focused on a specific theme.

Term papers will be 6-8 pages, double-spaced, and will expand upon one or more of the bi-weekly reports

More details about presentations, reports, class discussions and the final exam will be given in class.

## Learning Outcomes

Students will become familiar with important ideas and processes that have conditioned our understanding of landscapes, they will acquire an arsenal of references which they can use to interpret abstract concepts and support landscape work.

## Teaching Philosophy

Landscape architecture is a very exciting discipline. Its greatest strength (and perhaps weakness) is its broad scope. It is important for students to grasp the breadth and richness of our profession, to explore ways of framing their interests and formulating their own aspirations. The study of various historical and theoretical perspectives on the practice of landscape architecture offers a great opportunity for this kind of exploration.

## Instructional Methods

This course comprises a mix of lectures, student presentations and class discussions. I ground my teaching on my own professional experience and academic research. When lecturing, I emphasize the ways in which ideas and concepts have been reiterated throughout history and are being appropriated in our day. Presentations and discussions are opportunities for students to associate the material taught to their own experiences, to grasp it on their own terms.

## Resources

No textbook has been assigned for this course, instead, several texts will be distributed each week,

The following titles will be held on reserve at the Architecture and Fine Arts Library for general reference:

John Dixon Hunt, *Greater Perfections: the Practice of Garden Theory* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000)

Simon Swaffield, ed., *Theory in Landscape Architecture: a Reader* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002)

Marc Treib, *Modern Landscape Architecture: a Critical Review* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1993)

James Corner ed., *Recovering Landscape* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999)

Raymond Williams, *Keywords: a Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985)

## Lectures by the Week

0. INTRODUCTION

1. LANDSCAPE AS REPRESENTATION AND REPRESENTATION AS LANDSCAPE

2. LANDSCAPE AS PROCESS

3. VERNACULAR LANDSCAPES

4. WASTE LANDSCAPES

5. LANDSCAPE AS INFRASTRUCTURE

6. SHATTERED PARKS: POCKET, LINER & VERTICAL

7. LANDSCAPE AESTHETICS

8. ECOLOGY

9. THE IDEA OF WILDERNESS
10. MODERNITY
11. REGIONALISM
12. HISTORICAL GROUND

## Grading

Attendance is mandatory. Students who are more than 15 minutes late will be considered absent. Five unexcused absences will result in a failing grade.

Late assignment will be assigned a failing grade.

Grades will be based on the following criteria:

Participation (20%)

Weekly reports (20%)

Presentation (20%)

Mid-term exam (10%)

Final exam (10%)

Term paper (20%)

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

Grade allocation for papers and tests will adhere to the general UF policy:

Numeric Grade	100% - 93%	92% - 90%	89% - 87%	86% - 83%	82% - 80%	79% - 70%	76% - 73%	72% - 70%	69% - 67%	66% - 63%	62% - 60%	59% - 0%
Letter Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F
Quality Points	4	3.67	3.33	3.0	2.67	2.33	2.0	1.67	1.33	1.0	0.67	0.0

## UF POLICIES

### Submission of Student Work

All student work may be retained and used by the Department of Landscape Architecture. Digital copies of student work for this course must be turned in at the completion of each assignment. No grades will be computed into the final course grade until digital submissions have been turned in as requested. Please follow the directions given by the instructor as to how they will be submitted (Sakai, CD, PDF, word file, etc.).

All files must be named as follows:

(Course#Name)(Project+Description)(Student-Lastname).(jpg)

Example: 2360TheoryLARreport01Smith.pdf

4ch 8ch 8ch 6ch (ch = letter characters)

- Use CAPS for Separation
- \*No spaces, hyphens, or underscoring\*
- Drawings submitted incorrectly or in an incorrect file format will be rejected and you will need to resubmit.

### Student Accommodations

Support services for students with disabilities are coordinated by the Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>). To obtain individual support services, each student must meet with a support coordinator in the Disability Resources Program who will work with the individual student and the instructor to

determine appropriate support strategies. There is no requirement for a student to self-identify his/her disability; however, students requesting classroom accommodations must register with the Dean of Students Office. Appropriate documentation regarding the student's disability is necessary to obtain any reasonable accommodation or support service.

## **Academic Honesty**

The University requires all members of its community to be honest in all endeavors. When students enroll at UF they commit themselves to honesty and integrity. Your instructor fully expects you to adhere to the academic honesty guidelines you signed when you were admitted to UF. In completing the registration form at the University of Florida, every student has signed the following statement:

"I understand the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all their academic work. I agree to adhere to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University."

Furthermore, on work submitted for credit by all UF students, the following pledge is either required or implied:

"On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

It is to be assumed that all work will be completed independently unless the assignment is defined as a group project by the professor. This does not mean that students cannot help one another in learning material, but all work that is turned in must be independent work of that individual.

Misrepresentation or plagiarism, such as claiming another's work to be one's own, refers to graphic and design work as well as written work. Submitting work from one course to fulfill the requirements of another (unless expressly allowed by the instructor) is also misrepresentation.

The University Honor Code and the Department of Landscape Architecture Academic Honesty Policy are to be followed to the letter. Any students found to have cheated, plagiarized, or otherwise violated the Honor Code in any assignment will be punished according to the severity of the act and may be referred to the Honor Court. It is each student's responsibility to report any infraction, and it is expected that each faculty will report all infractions as well.

For more information, see <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/> and the Department of Landscape Architecture Academic Honesty Policy.

## **Netiquette: Communication Courtesy**

All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email messages, threaded discussions and chats. For a description of what is expected and what will occur as a result of improper behavior see <http://teach.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/NetiquetteGuideforOnlineCourses.pdf>

## **Religious Holidays**

The university calendar does not include observance of any religious holidays. The Florida Board of Governors and state law govern university policy regarding observance of religious holidays. Students shall be excused from class or other scheduled academic activity to observe a religious holy day of their faith with prior notification to the instructor. Students shall be permitted a reasonable amount of time to make up the material or activities covered in their absence. Students shall not be penalized due to absence from class or other scheduled academic activity because of religious observances.

## **University's Syllabus Policy**

The University's complete Syllabus Policy can be found at:  
[http://www.aa.ufl.edu/Data/Sites/18/media/policies/syllabi\\_policy.pdf](http://www.aa.ufl.edu/Data/Sites/18/media/policies/syllabi_policy.pdf)

### **Evaluation of Faculty**

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>

## **GETTING HELP**

### **Technical Difficulties**

For issues with technical difficulties for E-learning in Canvas, please contact the UF Help Desk at:

- [Learning-support@ufl.edu](mailto:Learning-support@ufl.edu)
- (352) 392-HELP - select option 2
- <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>

Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues MUST be accompanied by the ticket number received from LSS when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You MUST e-mail your instructor within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up.

### **Counseling Resources**

Students experiencing crisis or personal problems that interfere with their general well-being are encouraged to utilize the university's counseling resources. Both the Counseling Center and Student Mental Health provide confidential counseling services at no cost for currently enrolled students. The Counseling Center is located at 301 Peabody Hall (next to Criser Hall). Student Mental Health is located on the second floor of the Student Health Services in the Infirmary. For further information on services and how to make an appointment, call the Counseling Center at 392-1575 or Student Mental Health at 392-1171. See the following web sites for additional resources: Counseling Center:  
<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/>