

Fall 2019
LAA 4357

University of Florida Department of Landscape Architecture
Fifth Year Independent Project Seminar

SYLLABUS

Instructor: Kevin Thompson
Office Hours: By appointment, email at gday@ufl.edu

Class Meetings: T 7-9, Studio #316
Credits: 2

General

This Fall seminar directs students in developing proposals for their Independent Senior (*capstone*) Project.

Students work independently against a rigorous deadline to identify and explore Senior Project ideas. Weekly class meetings (including lectures, group discussions and design critiques) chart the progression of project development through structured benchmarks and culminate in a final project proposal that will serve as an important theoretical foundation for the Senior Project. The proposal is a written technical report including a significant graphic content typical in the discipline.

Expectations upon Entering the Course

1. completion of all required coursework up through the 4th year of the BLA curriculum and,
2. identification of project types and possibilities, including initial precedent projects, case studies, exploration of theories, and description (or even identification) of potential “testing ground” sites.

Note:

Whilst this is a hypothetical design exploration, your project must demonstrate the broad competencies you have developed throughout the course of your studies in the program.

Your project ideas must be tested through the design of an actual site within a real context responding to existing opportunities and constraints.

Your clients and budgets are hypothetical. We want you to be free to explore design ideas without the encumbrances of external influences (clients).

Course Goals and Objectives

This course is designed to serve as a “launching pad” for your Independent Senior Project and to guide you in the process of developing a proposal that will be reviewed for approval by the Department Faculty.

Your project must meet standards and educational objectives, demonstrate the range of

competencies you have developed in your training, be scaled appropriately for the 10 credits of Senior Independent Project course credits distributed between the Fall and Spring semesters and be a project that you can throw yourself into with a high level of enthusiasm and commitment.

A note on the credit distribution for Fall and Spring Semesters: Students who disregard the actual distribution of credits (2 in the Fall, 8 in the Spring) and instead think of the 2 semesters as 5 credits each are much better prepared at the beginning of the Spring semester and find it much easier to finish on time and with a much higher quality of project outcome.

The following are key objectives for the Fall Semester:

- identify and explore project themes and types
- research theories that support these project types and identify case studies that are relevant to the project type, context and implementation
- conduct thorough and complete case studies of multiple precedents, including scaled comparisons, a statement of relevancy and a summary of findings
- identify a site that is appropriate for serving as a “testing ground” of project concepts and final design outcomes/proposals
- complete a thorough and detailed site inventory and analysis leading to a comprehensive synthesis that identifies opportunities and constraints and is summarized in a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities threats) analysis
- craft a highly-refined Design Statement
- produce a detailed Program based on: precedents and case studies. Site analysis and synthesis
- develop iterative Concept Design proposals
- develop a detailed and manageable Critical Path Timeline for the completion of your design project.

Relationship to student outcomes

This course reinforces the following student learning outcomes:

1. integrate concepts from the general body of knowledge of the profession
2. apply core professional landscape architecture skills
3. apply ethical understanding
4. combine and analyze information from multiple sources to support
5. produce professional standard visual, oral and written communications.

Performance

The grading for this course is S/U (satisfactory/unsatisfactory). To receive an S, students must:

- participate in all class activities in a respectful, courteous and professional manner
- complete identified tasks on time
- produce final proposal that is accepted by the Department Faculty

Course Requirements

The seminar meets once a week. Attendance is **mandatory** and students are expected to be in class the entire meeting time. Students are to contact the faculty member ***in advance of the scheduled class meeting time*** if they are unable to attend class in event of sickness or other cause.

Students are expected to work outside of class to support activities undertaken and assigned during class. The University advises students to anticipate 2-3 hours of work outside of class for every hour in class.

Students must maintain open communication through their UF email account.

Students are also required to establish and maintain a working archive and backup system for their work. The University provides cloud-based storage as one such option. We will also have a cloud-based course management site available for your use. Computer problems are no excuse for missed deadlines or lost work.

Resources

There is no required text but a literature review and bibliography *pertinent to the individual topic* are required parts of the individual proposal.

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.

Adhere to the following file naming protocol for all work submitted:
course# name project student name. dwg/pdf/jpg/

Example: 3352PlantDesAssig10Smith

4ch 8ch 8ch 6ch

Use caps for separation

No spaces, hyphens, or underscoring

In cases of models and other 3-D work, digital JPG photographs should be submitted

Reasonable accommodation

If a student has any conditions that might affect meeting the requirements of this course, please notify the instructor. Reasonable accommodation will be provided upon receipt of a letter from the Office of Student Services detailing those accommodations.

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.”

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.

This and all LA courses are aware of the problems of plagiarism in general. HOWEVER, it is the nature of design to not reinvent the wheel unnecessarily, to creatively build upon successful precedents, and to collaborate. To work in a vacuum and demand strictly original ideas from oneself is highly unlikely to occur in any design field. So what is appropriate “building” and what is plagiarism? From the LA policy:

1. Plagiarism/misrepresentation

There shall be no question of what is your work and what is someone else’s. This applies to all aspects of student performance, including but not limited to:

- _CAD drawings and construction details
- _design guidelines (written and graphic)
- _design, planning, and management projects or portions of projects
- _class reports and papers (again, both written and graphic information)
- _any assignment where sole authorship is indicated, such as take-home tests, individual projects, etc.

Examples of inappropriate activities include:

- _copying graphics for a report without crediting the original source
- _representing someone else’s work as your own (using existing CAD construction details, tracing drawings, etc.)
- _allowing someone else to represent your work as his or her own

2. Multiple submissions of the same or similar work without prior approval

If the instructors understand that you are doing a paper associated with your capstone or

senior project topic, then doing similar work for two different classes is acceptable - if the instructors agree to it. If a single paper is submitted for one class, then later is submitted for another, and the instructors expect original work, then the multiple submission is inappropriate.

3. Falsifying information

Examples include:

- _misrepresenting reasons why work cannot be done as requested
- _changing or leaving out data, such as manipulating statistics for a research project, or ignoring/hiding inconvenient but vital site information. (However, for educational purposes only, certain aspects of the “real world” may be jointly agreed upon as not being pertinent to the academic goals of the course, such as not dealing with specific project parameters or budget, changing the program, etc.)
- _altering work after it has been submitted
- _hiding, destroying, or otherwise making materials unavailable (hiding reference materials, not sharing materials with other students, etc.)

For this course, it is important to indicate source(s) for graphics and other information, acknowledge direct quotes and use of information even if it is paraphrased, and indicate if an image or drawing is your work or someone else’s.

Student Accommodations

Support services for students with disabilities are coordinated by the Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office. 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.

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: www.counsel.ufl.edu and Student Mental Health: <http://www.hsc.ufl.edu/shcc/smhs.htm>

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.

Class Organization

Class meetings will consist of lectures, group discussions and design critiques. Your enthusiastic and positive contribution and attitude are critical determinants of your active participation in the course.

Course Evaluation

Students in this class are participating in the pilot evaluation of the new course evaluation system called GatorEvals. The new evaluation system is designed to be more informative to instructors so that teaching effectiveness is enhanced and to be more seamlessly linked to UF's CANVAS learning management system. Students can complete their evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>.

Please note your other classes this semester may be evaluated in the current GatorRater online evaluation system at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>.

Thank you for serving as a partner in this important effort.