

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

Class Meetings: T 7-9, online
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 critical reviews) 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 POLICIES

Class Attendance and Participation

- **Active participation in class is critical.** Attendance is mandatory and students are expected to arrive on time. Unexcused absences are counted as a 5% cumulative penalty. Students must notify instructor of any and all intended absences in advance of the scheduled class meeting or activity.

Please email the instructor if you think you may be absent for any of the following reasons:

- Illness
 - Serious family emergency
 - Special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences)
 - Military obligation
 - Severe weather conditions
 - Religious holidays
 - Participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate.
 - Court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena)
- A doctor’s note (e.g., doctor’s verification of visit form or excuse note) must be provided for an illness to be considered excused. You must schedule a meeting with the instructor to discuss any other excused absence before it will be considered excused. The instructor will not be responsible for

- coordinating the meeting; it is the student's responsibility.
- If necessary, students shall be permitted a reasonable amount of time to make up material or activities covered in their absence; however, absences do not affect project deadline dates unless prior arrangements have been made.
- Studio work time and desk critiques are essential to the learning experience; therefore, attendance is expected for the entire class time. During the studio (desk instruction) portion of the course, it is expected that all students will be in attendance for the entire class and working on LAA4450 assignments. Attendance may be taken more than once during class (e.g., at the beginning and at the end of class). Arriving late to class, leaving during class for extended durations, leaving early from class, or working on assignments from other courses may be considered being absent. The same attendance policies stated above will apply.
- The instructor will not provide the student notifications regarding absences and tardiness. You may email the instructor should you have any questions regarding your attendance.
- Work must be done in the studio and computers must be brought to class; instruction will not be given outside the studio during class times (e.g., in the computer lab).
- 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>.

Class Demeanor

- Please schedule an office hours chat for any discussions regarding attendance, tardiness, and late assignments. Do not discuss these issues with the instructor during the class meeting time.
- Please try to reduce distractions (online or otherwise) during class meetings
- Please be respectful, to both the other students in our class and to your instructor
- Your attendance is expected during our scheduled class meeting times. There will be regular occasions when we will break-out for individual or group work or discussions but we hope to find you when we return.
- Please be mindful of due dates and times

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. Unless otherwise stated, all work for this course is to be submitted as a professional-quality powerpoint (.ppt) file uploaded to the dedicated assignment portal on our Canvas course site. All graphic submissions are expected to be reproduced at the highest quality. Numerous online resources exist for reproducing hardcopy work and hand graphics to ensure high quality resolution, color reproduction, lighting and sheet composition. Please discuss any concerns you might have regarding submission quality with me. I'm always happy to try and find the best workarounds and solutions for committed students and professionals in training!

All files must adhere to the following file naming protocol:

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

Example:

4450DesignImGradPlanSmith.pdf

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

- Use CAPS for Separation
- Save images in PDF format at a maximum 200 resolution
- *No spaces, hyphens, or underscoring*

Texts, Software and Other Resources

There may be required readings; however, there is no required textbook.

The following software is required:

- AutoCAD (current release)
- Sketch-up and/or Rhinoceros (both can be run through UF Apps)
- MS Office (Word, Excel and Powerpoint)
- Adobe Products (Photoshop, Illustrator, In-Design, and Acrobat Reader)

All students are required to have a laptop computer that meets the Department's computer requirement. If a Mac is being used, AutoCAD should be run in a Windows environment such as Boot Camp or Parallels.

Course Materials Made Available to You Online and Communication

The digital course materials provided on a cloud-based share folder (e.g., lectures, assignments, presentations, et cetera) are provided for personal study and are not intended for distribution by electronic or other means. Further distribution or posting on other websites is not permitted. This course uses Canvas as its homebase. UF email is absolutely essential and each student is encouraged and expected to maintain email vigilance throughout the course. Our class meetings may be recorded for your review. Students who participate in online activities associated with this course and with their camera and/or microphone on are agreeing to have their video or image or voice recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image or voice recorded, be sure to keep your camera off and do not use a profile image. If you are not willing to consent to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated and communicate exclusively using the "chat" feature that allows students to type questions and comments live. The chat will not be recorded or shared. As in all courses, unauthorized recording and unauthorized sharing of recorded materials is prohibited.

Students may contact the instructor via email or in-person. Email is the primary communication method to contact the instructor outside of class time and office hours. Please use the email address listed at the top of this document. All communications must be directed through your ufl.edu account. Do not send emails from other accounts such as gmail. Again, please be vigilant in checking and responding to your emails.

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.

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.