

Landscape Architecture Theory

LAA 6231

Class Number: 14069

3 Credit Hours

Spring 2023

Tues 4:05 – 4:55 PM (Period 9) and Thurs 3:00 – 4:55 PM (Period 8-9)

Location: RNK 0230

Instructor: Belinda B. Nettles, Ph.D.

Email: bbnettles@ufl.edu

Teaching Assistant: N/A

Office Hours: By appointment via email or as arranged during class

Course Website: <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/>

Course Communications: Questions regarding this course may be submitted via email or during class sessions.

Course Description: This course explores theories pertinent to the practice and study of landscape architecture. It addresses aesthetics, cultural principles and values along with the methodological, representational, and ecological aspects of the discipline.

Prerequisite Knowledge and Skills: No prerequisite courses are required. Strong verbal and writing skills will be highly valuable, and supplementary reading and writing courses may be advisable for students with English as a second language. Use of the UF reading and writing lab is encouraged for all students.

Purpose of Course: The purpose of this course is to develop an understanding of the theoretical framework of the discipline and practice of landscape architecture through an exploration of key philosophies and concepts that have informed or guided the field. This allows students to develop and articulate their own theoretical framework to guide their planning and design decisions.

Course Goals and/or Objectives: The primary goals of the course are as follows:

- Learn the value of theory in design
- Utilize theory to inform design decisions
- Understand landscape architecture as a discipline
- Articulate diverse cultural, social, and political dimensions of landscape
- Articulate personal priorities within the discipline

Student Learning Outcomes: The course relates in the following ways to the student learning outcomes:

Content:

- Develop an understanding of the discipline's primary themes and debates that inform landscape architects' design decisions
- Develop a knowledge base of the historical development of the various concepts and philosophies that have informed design throughout the late 19th Century to the present within the larger cultural, social, economic, political, and ecological context
- Refine students' understanding of the people and landscape projects that have shaped the discipline

Critical Thinking

- Develop the ability to compare, contrast, and synthesize a variety of concepts related to the practice of landscape architecture

Communication

- Produce visual and oral presentations that critically review readings and designed landscapes
- Produce visual and written work that documents the students' explorations throughout the course, demonstrates their understanding of the concepts, and articulates their personal theoretical frameworks
- Produce written communications that critically review readings and synthesize the theoretical frameworks of the discipline

Teaching Philosophy: As a proponent of student-centered learning, I seek to guide students through the learning process by creating opportunities for students to experience concepts, develop new paradigms, and practice skills in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

Instructional Methods: Course instruction will be lecture with extensive guided discussion on the required readings and class topics. Active participation in class discussions is expected.

Required Readings:

Required reading materials will be provided on Canvas unless otherwise noted.

Grading Policies

Primary Tasks and Evaluations:

Tasks	Percent of Grade
Essay	5%
Book/Article Review & Presentation	15%
Landscape Critiques	15%
Journal	20%
Participation	20%
Final Exam	25%
Extra Credit: Students who complete the extra credit paper will receive up to 5 points added to their final grade. Students may only submit 1 extra credit paper.	

Grading Scale: According to Departmental Policy, Landscape Architecture majors must receive a C or better to move forward. Any grade lower than a C will require that the course be taken over again. Grading will adhere to the University of Florida Grade Policy:

Letter Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E
Numeric Grade	93-100	90-92	87-89	83-86	80-82	77-79	73-76	70-72	67-69	63-66	60-62	0-59
Quality Points	4.0	3.67	3.33	3.0	2.67	2.33	2.0	1.67	1.33	1.0	0.67	0.0

Course Schedule

Schedule and Final Exam: The course schedule is provided below and will be updated as needed. Complete each week's readings PRIOR to Tuesday's class session.

Week 1 (Jan 9-15):

Course Introduction

Week 2: (Jan 16-22)

Theory of Landscape Architecture & Major Themes

- Read Murphy "Chapter 1" in *Landscape Architecture Theory* pp. 3-22.
- Read Meyer "Situating Modern Landscape Architecture" in *Theory in Landscape Architecture: A reader* edited by Swaffield pp 21-31.
- Read Ruddick "How Did We Get Here?" in *Wild by Design* pp 1-13.

Week 3: (Jan 23-29)

Ideas of Wilderness & Landscape

- Essay Due Tuesday January 24th by 4:00 pm
- Read Nash *Wilderness and the American Mind*, Prologue pp 1-7 & Epilogue pp 379-388
- Read Cronon "The Trouble with Wilderness" in *Uncommon Ground* pp 69-90.
- Read Jackson "The Word Itself" in *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape* pp 3-8

Week 4: (Jan 30-Feb 5)

Beginning of the Profession (Late 19th & Early 20th Centuries)

- Read Spirn "Constructing Nature: The Legacy of Frederick Law Olmsted" in *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature* edited by Cronon pp 91-113
- Read Howett "Ecological Values in Twentieth-Century Landscape Design: A History and Hermeneutics" in *Landscape Journal* 17: 80-98

Week 5: (Feb 6-12)

Modernism

- Read Church "Introduction" in *Gardens are for People* pp 3-7
- Read Sasaki "Thoughts on Education in Landscape Architecture: Some Comments on Today's Methodologies and Purpose" in *Landscape Architecture Magazine* 40(4):158-160.
- Read Rose "Articulate Form in Landscape Design" in *Modern Landscape Architecture: A Critical Review* edited by Treib pp 73-75
- Read Eckbo "Pilgrim's Progress" in *Modern Landscape Architecture: A Critical Review* edited by Treib pp 206-219
- Read Halprin "RSVP Cycles" in *Theory in Landscape Architecture: A Reader* edited by Swaffield pp 43-48
- Read Treib "Axioms for Modern Landscape Architecture" in *Modern Landscape Architecture: A Critical Review* edited by Treib pp 36-67

Week 6: (Feb 13-19)

Designing with Nature

- Read McHarg "An Ecological Method" in *Theory in Landscape Architecture: A Reader* edited by Swaffield pp 38-43
- Read McHarg "The City: Process and Form" in *Design with Nature* pp 175-185
- Read Spirn "Ian McHarg, Landscape Architecture, and Environmentalism: Ideas and Methods in Context" in *Environmentalism in Landscape Architecture* edited by Michel Conan pp 97 - 114

Week 7: (Feb 20-26)

Ecological Design

- Read Read Ranier & West “Introduction: Nature As It Was, Nature As It Could Be” & Principles of Designed Plant Communities” in *Planting in a Post-Wild World* pp 13-25 & 29-62
- Read Li & Nassauer “Cues to Care: A Systematic Analytical Review” in *Landscape and Urban Planning 201*
- Thursday - Guest Lecture (Zoom) - Claudia West (Tentative)

Week 8 (Feb 27-Mar5)

Moving Beyond Modern

- Read Olin “Form, Meaning, and Expression in Landscape Architecture” in *Landscape Journal 7(2)*: 149-168
- Read Treib “Must Landscapes Mean?: Approaches to Significance in Recent Landscape Architecture” in *Landscape Journal 14(1)*: 46-62
- Read Cooper-Marcus & Francis “Introduction: Public Places and Design Guidelines” in *People Places: Design Guidelines for Urban Open Space* pp 1-11

Week 9 (Mar 6-12)

Making Places

- Read Hester “Subconscious Landscapes of the Heart” in *Places 2(3)*: 10-22
- Read Olin “Regionalism and the Practice of Hanna/Olin Ltd” pp 243-270
- Read Latz “The Idea of Making Time Visible” in *Topos European Landscape Magazine 33*: 94-99

Week 10 (Mar 13-19)

Spring Break

Week 11 (Mar 20-26)

Book Reviews

- Written book review due Tuesday, March 21st by 4:00 pm
- In-class Presentations on Tuesday, March 21st and Thursday, March 23rd
- In-class book discussion on Thursday, March 23rd

Week 12 (Mar 27-Apr 2)

Landscape Architecture in 21st Century

- Read Fung “Mutuality and the Cultures of Landscape Architecture” in *Recovering Landscape: Essays in Contemporary Landscape Architecture* edited by Corner pp 140-151.
- Read Waldheim “Landscape as Urbanism” in *The Landscape Urbanism Reader* edited by Waldheim pp 35-53

- Read Balmori “From Green Corridor to Thick Edge: The Linear Park” in *The Landscape Manifesto* pp 30-53

Week 13 (Apr 3-9)

Systems & Process-Based Design

- Read Lyle “Introduction: Where Mind and Nature Meet” in *Design for Human Ecosystems* pp 1-21
- Read Berrizbeitia “Re-Placing Process” in *Large Parks* by Julia Czerniak pp. 175-197
- Potteiger “Eating Places: Food Systems, Narratives, Networks, and Spaces” in *Landscape Journal* 32(2): 261-275

Week 14 (Apr 10-16)

Landscape Critiques

- In-class Presentations will take place on Tuesday, April 11th and Thursday, April 13th
- In-class discussion will take place on Thursday, April 13th.

Week 15 (Apr 17–23)

Climate Change, Resilience, and Equity

- Read Benson & Craig “The End of Sustainability” in *Society and Natural Resources* 27: 777-782
- Read Meyer “Sustaining beauty. The performance of appearance. A Manifesto in three parts” in *Journal of Landscape Architecture* pp 6-23
- Read Beck & Franklin “No Time Like the Present: Creating Landscapes for an Era of Global Change” in *Principles of Ecological Landscape Design* pp 235-259
- Read Wilson “Conclusion: Toward Design Justice” in *Resilience for All: Equity Through Community Driven Design* pp 169-175

Week 16 (Apr 24-30)

Final Review & Class Wrap-up (Class on Tuesday Only)

- Journals Due by Tuesday, April 25th at 5:00 pm
- Extra Credit Papers Due by Tuesday, April 25th at 5:00 pm

FINAL EXAM Due by Thursday, May 4th at 10:00 pm

Course Policies

Attendance Policy: Attendance to class is mandatory. One unexcused absence is permitted. Each additional absence will lower the student’s grade by 4%. Cell phone use is not acceptable in class except for emergencies and should be conducted outside of the classroom.

Assignment Policy: Students are expected to complete all assignments in a timely fashion, as well as actively participate in the discussion and combined group tasks. Timely completion of all project

requirements is expected. Late work will be penalized 4% per day unless there is an acceptable excuse for the late submission. Work submitted more than one week late will not be accepted.

Course Technology: All course content will be available through Canvas, UF's online learning portal unless otherwise specified. Students may access this site at <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/> by logging in with their UF credentials. All assignments are to be submitted to Canvas unless otherwise indicated.

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 (Canvas, CD, PDF, word file, etc.). However, all files must be named as follows: (Course#Name)(Project+Description)(Student-Lastname).(file format) with no spaces, hyphens, or underscores. Use capitals for separation. The sections have the following number of characters: Course # - 4, Course Name - 8, Project Description - 8, Student's Last Name - 6. For example: 6231LTheoryBkReviewNettle.pdf

UF Policies

University Policy on Accommodating Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

University Policy on Academic Misconduct: Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students should be sure that they understand the UF Student Honor Code at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/students.php>.

**Netiquette: Communication Courtesy: All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email messages, threaded discussions and chats. [Describe what is expected and what will occur as a result of improper behavior - <http://teach.ufl.edu/docs/NetiquetteGuideforOnlineCourses.pdf>

Course Evaluations: 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://bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/publicresults/>.

Getting Help

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

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.

Other resources are available at <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/getting-help> for:

- Counseling and Wellness resources
- Disability resources
- Resources for handling student concerns and complaints
- Library Help Desk support

Should you have any complaints with your experience in this course please visit <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaints> to submit a complaint.

Disclaimer: This syllabus represents current plans and objectives. As we go through the semester, those plans may need to change to enhance the class learning opportunity. Such changes, communicated clearly, are not unusual and should be expected.