

## LAA 4358

### Senior Independent Project

UF Department of Landscape Architecture

Spring 2024

## SYLLABUS

**CREDITS:** 6

**LOCATION:** Architecture 322

**INSTRUCTORS:** Kevin Thompson, Advisor  
Yi Luo, Advisor

**PREREQUISITES:** Completion of all previous design and construction studios

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This final semester-long project allows students to expand personal interests and talents, to hone decision-making abilities, and to sharpen professional skills through well-rounded, comprehensive completion of individually-directed landscape architecture capstone projects. All work on the project must be reviewed and approved by an assigned faculty advisor.

The emphasis is on independent decision-making processes and organization. This is in addition to the usual expectations of technical competence, graphic and verbal communications, analytical and design skills, and ethics. The vehicle is an independent project, chosen and developed by the student, but approved by the faculty. Faculty serve as advisors to students and review, approve or make suggestions or state requirements for changes of all work submitted.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Verification of entry-level skills
- Independent decision-making as evidenced by time management and project management

### STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Each student in the LA program is expected to understand and apply the design process and continuously develop:

- a range of approaches (creative, cultural, and/or historic) to create spatial and temporal landscape composition
- multiple design alternatives before synthesizing ideas into a defensible plan, and
- the ability to thoughtfully provide, receive, and respond to feedback and critique as part of iterative design decision-making.

At the end of this course, students will be expected to have achieved competency the course learning objectives (CLOs) under the program SLO headings as follows:

CONTENT
SLO 1 – Integrate concepts from the general body of knowledge of the profession of landscape architecture in design decision-making.
CLO 1 - Critique design fundamentals including spatial and organizing principles.

CLO 2 - Employ the various stages of the design process.
CLO 3 - Implement complex site design and planning principles.
CLO 4 - Integrate the history and theories of landscape architecture into planning and design decisions in the built and natural environment with consideration for urban, community, and/or ecological contexts.
CLO5 - Synthesize knowledge of natural, physical, and social sciences.
<b>SLO 2 - Apply core professional landscape architecture skills in design decision-making.</b>
CLO 6 - Analyze site characteristics, including topography climate, vegetation, and existing structures to apply the appropriate organization of space and forms within the landscape.
CLO 7 - Generate, evaluate, and critique alternative design concepts

<b>CRITICAL THINKING</b>
<b>SLO 4 – Combine and analyze information from multiple sources to support design decision-making.</b>
CLO 8 - Assess social, human, economic, and environmental principles of sustainability and resilience as it relates to design decision-making.

<b>COMMUNICATION</b>
<b>SLO 5 – Produce professional visual, oral, and written communications.</b>
CLO 9 – Present ideas convincingly through oral, visual and written communication.

## COURSE OUTLINE / CONTENT

During the previous Fall semester, students explore project topic ideas, identify and analyze a testing ground site, and present a completed site synthesis to the faculty for direction and guidance.

The capstone project should encompass analysis, synthesis, concept development, planning and design, design development, and project management. The emphasis and products will vary with individual projects and the student’s personal and professional priorities. Capstone project considerations include but are not limited to the following points of evaluation:

- scale and scope of project
- project complexity
- project focus or emphasis
- design iteration and development
- project originality
- completeness of information informing synthesis at the site analysis and all subsequent design stages
- clarity, organization and presentation of project ideas, approach, and outcomes

## REQUIREMENTS FOR THE FINAL PROJECT

The final project involves both an oral presentation and a graphically-rich, well-written and expertly-illustrated project report. The oral presentation is made at the end of the Spring semester to a jury of faculty and external reviewers.

The project report must stand on its own and is submitted for inclusion in the Department’s archives, the University’s digital repository and, where appropriate, the Honors College. The project report’s written narrative should be of the highest academic quality and organized in a clear, concise and cogent manner and appropriately illustrated with graphics that demonstrate the student’s most advanced graphic abilities.

The report and presentation should emphasize a clear statement of a design problem, the identification of appropriate site selection criteria and a thorough analysis and synthesis of an identified testing ground site, a

creative design concept ideation and clear design development, and a fully-detailed project outcome. Design work presented must be original. All other work included in the report and presentation that was not produced by the student must be appropriately cited.

We recommend a format for the project be presented in two parts.

## PART ONE

Part One is the refined work from the Fall Capstone Seminar and provides a clearly-written description of the project with graphics that illustrate the project's conceptual development. The refinement and final representation (text and graphics) are to be completed under the focus and direction of the assigned faculty advisor.

The critical elements of this project development (and used as an evaluation for the Fall seminar's final deliverable) is repeated here for reference:

### 1. Project Statement

Students have been asked to define a theoretical project by type with relevance to the contemporary practice of landscape architecture.

Project type is the primary criteria for project selection.

### 2. Precedent, Case Studies, Literature (*foundations of scholarship*)

Students have broadly reviewed all of the University of Florida Capstone projects (precedents) of the previous 4 or 5 years and have reviewed, in detail, capstones of a type similar to that which they conceive for their own undertaking.

They have been asked to identify project examples (case studies) from practice (built or not) that align with relevance to their own project. Project relevance is considered in terms that include: project type, scale, regional context; user groups; program; etc.

Students have also been encouraged to cite written works of relevance to the type of project they have selected. These may include critiques in trade journals, published design reviews in popular media, in addition to any academically-oriented (peer-reviewed) journals, etc. (although this is not a requirement for an undergraduate capstone project.)

### 3. Goals, Objectives, Program

With reference to their case studies, students have been asked to define Goals and Objectives and an initial Program for their project.

### 4. Testing Ground

Students have been asked to clearly-define site selection criteria for the selection of their testing ground site and should be driven by the opportunities and constraints of testing a design premise over the particular needs of a given site. They will address the specific opportunities and constraints of their site in their site synthesis section.

### 5. Site Inventory and Research

Students have been asked to undertake exhaustive desk-top research using web-based, library and other site data repositories in addition to conduct (if possible) site investigations to gather all relevant data.

### 6. Site Synthesis

After analyzing all available and collected site data, students have been asked to prepare a site synthesis that identifies the opportunities and constraints of the site they have selected as a testing ground. This may also be undertaken in the form of a SWOT analysis.

## PART TWO

Part two starts with concept ideation and expands the design exploration for the project. An iterative process is required and close consultation with faculty is essential in developing the concept towards a final workable solution.

### Note:

The advancement of the design development work in Part Two will likely benefit from revisiting, further developing and refining the content of Part One.

1. Concept (sketch) Designs (ideation)

Exploration and iteration are emphasized over graphic presentation quality. The ideation phase concludes with a preliminary (sketch) concept that demonstrates the student's design process and current concept direction.

2. Design Development

Once the final design concept has been determined, the student's effort is directed towards the development of a comprehensive graphic representation including all conventional graphic forms (plans, section/elevations, details, etc) in addition to photographs of models etc. with concise explanatory text (captions less than 35 words). Design development and process should be well-documented and what is not included in the final design representation for the project report and presentation can be included as material in the appendix of the report.

3. Design Narrative

In addition to the graphic representation of design, a 1500 word (3 page) Design Narrative will be carefully written and edited. This design narrative should present an executive summary of the project. Students should anticipate considerable time investments in crafting this statement with multiple submissions to their faculty advisor followed by detailed revisions leading to a final draft. Initial narrative drafts should be submitted for review early in the semester. Students should include a minimum of three draft submissions for the narrative on their project timeline.

Part Two roughly follows the format of the Florida state ASLA award submissions. All students are encouraged to submit their project for award consideration.

## GRADING

Final grades are based on:

- demonstrated progress monitored by the student's advisor throughout the semester
- interim review: the student's performance and the input of jurors
- final jury: the student's performance and quality of the work presented
- quality of the final project submission: the complete package (graphics and text)
- compliance to requirements (meeting deadlines, submitting work in proper formats, etc.)

If any of the prescribed submittals is late or incomplete, a lower grade will likely be issued. If any required product is not turned in, the student will receive a failing grade for the semester until that product is turned in.

Student performance is evaluated after each presentation. If for any reason the student is unable to complete the work expected for these presentations, they will be counseled as to their options. Part of the student's responsibility is to stay on their designated timeline and determine ways to complete the necessary design tasks so that they can meet the important deadlines.

In accordance with departmental policy, a grade of C or above is needed for graduation.

The graded work assesses the course learning objectives as follows:

LAA4358 – Course Learning Objectives									
	SLO 1					SLO 2		SLO 4	SLO 5
Assessment	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Part One Finalization	x			x	x	x			
Mid-Term Presentation	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Final Presentation	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x
Final Report	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x

#### SCHEDULE (SUBJECT TO CHANGE):

Mid-term presentations: all day, Thursday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>

Final presentations: all day, Friday, April 28<sup>th</sup>

#### REVIEW PROCESS

Students will be advancing their work at slightly different rates depending on project types. Some will utilize their planning and design process at multiple scales of concern while others will focus their energies on site planning and design development.

Two important presentations are scheduled for the Spring: an interim review and the final (formal) presentation. All students are required to attend all interim and final presentations.

#### EXPECTATIONS FOR THE FIRST WEEK

Students are expected to meet with their faculty advisor with a project timeline to review and discuss. This timeline should identify all project benchmarks (including scheduled presentation dates) and make appropriate accommodation for submissions and periods of review (student should discuss this with their advisor, one – two business weeks may be appropriate for review of submitted materials).

All materials the student has organized or produced should be available for review during this consultation. It should be appropriately cited, professionally formatted and organized in a clear and logical manner. Students should not refer to material that they do not have with them during this initial meeting.

#### INTERIM REVIEW

The interim review of student projects will be an important milestone in which the student is expected to present their work to date according to their approved timeline. The setting is informal.

The objective of this presentation is for the student to receive constructive feedback from faculty regarding their project. It is intended that the student will have adequate time to complete their project and make substantial refinements to their work prior to submitting their finished project. Serious deficiencies should not exist if a student has actively sought critiques from their faculty advisor at critical times throughout the semester.

Each student must take notes and respond appropriately to questions, comments, and directives from the faculty.

It is recommended that each student have a classmate record notes based on the comments received during the presentation. Students are expected to refine and modify their project based on faculty input. Students should review these comments with their faculty advisor for clear direction moving forward.

The format for the interim review should optimize feedback from the faculty. Students may use any media or combinations of media for this interim presentation (students should discuss this with their advisor and agree on a presentation format). All presentations will be made digitally (PowerPoint, pdf, etc.).

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that their presentation is complete and runs flawlessly from the jury location. Students are advised to rehearse their presentation and to double-check each slide in their presentation to ensure it runs as anticipated.

It is suggested that the text and graphics for all work at this point be complete (edited, reviewed and accepted) and presented in their final and finished format. There should be no grammatical nor spelling errors. Graphics should be professionally-presented. Although student's should present what they regard as being in finished, complete and final content at this point, they anticipate at least a finer-level of refinement based on comments from the interim presentations.

### FINAL PRESENTATION

This is a formal presentation of the student's final project to a jury comprised of visiting professionals for review and comment and to the faculty for acceptance as a completed capstone project.

Changes needing to be made at this point suggest that a student's project has not been developed to an acceptable level and may delay completion of the course. Student's faculty advisor should not be seeing any new proposals or project developments other than the final polish on graphics and text at this point.

### FINAL SUBMISSION OF STUDENT WORK

All capstone projects will be submitted digitally to the Institutional Repository (Library System). Students are required to submit a final, format-compliant digital copy for archiving with the institutional repository (instructions below).

#### *Note:*

Students eligible to graduate with distinctions of honor may be required to submit a hardcopy of their final project report to the department administrative staff for submission and archiving – this procedure and its associated requirement are NOT part of the capstone curriculum. If you are eligible for this honor, you will receive a letter detailing the procedure for project submissions from the Department's Honors Coordinator.

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. Grades will not 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 (file size/format/types and location, etc.). All files must be named according to the following file naming protocol:

`course# name project student name. dwg/pdf/jpg/`

*Example:*    `4358SenrProjFinalRptCarrer`  
                  `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

## UF INSTITUTIONAL REPOSITORY ARCHIVAL PROCESS

*(adapted for LAE Capstone use)*

We will convene a final meeting just prior to the final presentations. At that time, the student will be required to submit a completed and signed (by the student) LA Capstone Final Submission Form (combined Department Signature Page/Honors Evaluation Form/Digital Repository Permissions Form) (this form will be made available to the student electronically later in the semester)

As a part of the forward material in the student's final project report, the student is required to include a title page with the following detail provided:

Project Title  
Author (Student Name)  
Year of Publication (Year of Completion)  
Name of Degree (Bachelor of Landscape Architecture)  
(Name of) Faculty Advisor

This information is required for the catalog record.

Student creates digital copies of the final project report & presentation slides (students should include the presentation slides as a part of their appendix) as PDF-formatted files (or other acceptable file format).

Refer here for other format options:

[http://web.uflib.ufl.edu/committees/etd/policyandprocedures/accept\\_ETD\\_formats\\_0307.pdf](http://web.uflib.ufl.edu/committees/etd/policyandprocedures/accept_ETD_formats_0307.pdf)

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the final project and all associated requirements have been submitted by the final due date.

Failure to submit work or meet this deadline could result in the grade of an "incomplete" thus delaying graduation.

If copyrighted materials are included, the project must be submitted with a signed letter of permission to quote or reproduce copyrighted material from the copyright owner.

Alternatively, the submission must include a list of materials for which copyright permissions were not granted so that the Digital Library Center can ensure that those materials are not included with the online files.

This form is also available on the "submission help" page:

<http://ufdcweb1.uflib.ufl.edu/ufdc/?g=ufirg&m=hitpilosubmission>

### Related Links

Link to the UFIR (Institutional Repository) where the projects will be archived:

<http://ufdcweb1.uflib.ufl.edu/ufdc/?g=ufirg>

Under the banner, click on the tab "Projects in Lieu of Thesis"(or link directly:

<http://ufdcweb1.uflib.ufl.edu/ufdc/?g=ufirg&m=hbt pilo>)

On the projects page, there's a tab for "Submission Help" (or link directly:

<http://ufdcweb1.uflib.ufl.edu/ufdc/?g=ufirg&m=hitpilosubmission>

### Requirements for bibliographical references

Unless otherwise requested by your advisor, use the Chicago citation style. It is one of the most complete that describes/explains sourcing materials, especially materials that have been downloaded from the web. Be careful about using Wikipedia as source material. In some cases the Wikipedia graphics are acceptable, but not Wikipedia information. Examples as follows:

#### Book:

Last Name, First Name. *Title of Book*. Publisher City: Publisher Name, Year Published.

Plaidy, Jean. *The Rose Without a Thorn: The Wives of Henry VIII*. New York: Broadway Books, 2003.

#### Journal article:

Last Name, First Name. "Article Title." *Journal Name* Volume Number (Year Published): Page Numbers.

Hogrefe, Pearl. "Legal rights of Tudor women and the circumvention by men and women." *The Sixteenth Century Journal* (1972): 97-105.

#### Website:

Last Name, First Name. "Page Title." Website Title. Web Address (retrieved Date Accessed).

### Writing style

The style of the final written text that accompanies the student's graphics is to be determined in consultation with your advisor.

Please note: It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the work is adequately described and that ideas are appropriately communicated. The student is expected to produce a high quality of work and is responsible for ensuring that the work they submit at every stage of the project is edited and that it is grammatically and graphically correct.

Students should not expect their faculty advisor to serve as a copy editor. Students should check, edit and refine their work *prior* to submissions.

### Helpful hints for time management and scheduling

- Everything takes twice as long as you think it will.
- Developing text and graphic materials that involve writing, the use of computers for printing and having materials copied can be more complex and time-consuming than you anticipate.
- BACKUP ALL FILES WHILE WORKING AND BACKUP ALL ARCHIVES DAILY. The loss of digital data is not an acceptable reason for late or incomplete work.
- This is a six (6) credit, independent project. Since every student's project is unique, specific work product and deliverables may vary depending on the scope and scale of the project. However, the amount of time expected to be dedicated to the project should remain consistent. One credit hour is the equivalent of approximately three-hours of coursework per week. Therefore, students should expect to spend the equivalent of approximately 18 hours a week throughout the semester (inclusive of meetings and presentations) working on their capstone project.

The Capstone Project is the most challenging, most rewarding, and the most exciting semester of the student's undergraduate career.

### CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

#### GROUP MEETING TIMES

Group meeting times will be announced by email. Students are required to maintain an active notification system or regularly check their UF email account as this shall remain the primary method of communication for this course.



Students must make accommodation for scheduled group meeting times as they occur. All students are required to attend these meetings when they are scheduled.

#### MEETINGS WITH FACULTY ADVISORS

Independent project management and development is stressed. However, students are expected to have scheduled regular (weekly) meetings with their advisor. These should be planned according to the student's needs and their project's timeline. Typically, the frequency and duration of these meetings is greater during the first part of the semester. Students should also plan on meeting with other department and college faculty on an as-needed basis.

Requirements for attendance and work in this course are consistent with university policies. [Click here to read the university attendance policies](#)

#### CLASS DEMEANOR

Students are expected to behave in a professional, respectful manner towards each other and towards faculty and outside consultants. All students enrolled in the course 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 the University's [Netiquette Guide for Online Courses](#).

#### TEXTS, SOFTWARE, AND OTHER RESOURCES

No required text, but a literature search and final bibliography are expected, based upon client information, libraries, texts from previous courses, etc. Various software (e.g., Adobe CC, Autodesk products, Rhino, etc) will be necessary based on each student's individual project requirements.

#### 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 <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/> and the Department of Landscape Architecture Academic Honesty Policy.

### STUDENT ACCOMMODATIONS

Support services for students with disabilities are coordinated by the Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://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 with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Dean of Students Office. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Appropriate documentation regarding the student's disability is necessary to obtain any reasonable accommodation or support service. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester. Accommodations will be provided once the accommodation letter is presented to the instructor; accommodations are not retroactive.

### COUNSELING RESOURCES

Your well-being is important to the University of Florida. The U Matter, We Care initiative is committed to creating a culture of care on our campus by encouraging members of our community to look out for one another and to reach out for help if a member of our community is in need. If you or a friend is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) so that the U Matter, We Care Team can reach out to the student in distress. A nighttime and weekend crisis counselor is available by phone at 352-392-1575. The U Matter, We Care Team can help connect students to the many other helping resources available including, but not limited to, Victim Advocates, Housing staff, and the Counseling and Wellness Center. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, call 9-1-1.

### 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.

### CLARIFICATION & COORDINATION

If students have any questions about any of the information contained in this document or need further clarification of general expectations relating to the course, please write the Capstone Coordinator, Dan Manley at [dpmanley@ufl.edu](mailto:dpmanley@ufl.edu).

### 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://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.