

LAA 6231: Theories of Landscape Architecture

Department of Landscape Architecture
University of Florida
Spring 2024

SYLLABUS

I. General Information

CLASS MEETINGS: 100% In-Person, Tuesdays Period 2-4 (8:30-11:30 AM)

CLASS LOCATION: FAC 208

CREDITS: 3 Credits

INSTRUCTOR: Nicholas Serrano, Ph.D.

OFFICE: ARCH 430

HOURS: Wednesdays 8:00 - 10:00 AM

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Landscape is a uniquely human construct and complex medium of cultural values that underpins design and everyday life in the built environment. It is an interdisciplinary medium that spans the arts, humanities, architecture, and science. Landscape practices have disrupted disciplinary boundaries between art, landscape, architecture, and environmental sciences and forced each to expand and redefine its own terms, field of operations, and image. This course explores the hermeneutics of landscape as medium, vocabulary, and practice particular to the processes of urbanization in the modern era.

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. This course addresses primarily aesthetic and cultural principles and values; however, related ecological and social aspects will also be addressed. LAA 3230 is an organized forum for discussion and exploration of current theoretical issues, thus providing a philosophical and critical basis for future and concurrent design studios as well as providing a broader and deeper exploration of theoretical models introduced in previous lecture and design courses. This is a discussion-based class based on assigned readings.

PREREQUISITE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Students are required to have completed LAA 2710: History of Landscape Architecture. Students are expected to have a foundational knowledge of the landscape architecture history and design.

REQUIRED READINGS AND WORKS

All required readings are either available electronically through the University of Florida Libraries or will be provided on CANVAS.

II. Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

Each student in the LA program is expected to continuously develop:

- a range of approaches (creative, cultural, and/or historic) to create spatial and temporal landscape compositions, and
- 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 the following development level 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 – Summarize key theories of landscape architecture that influence design decision making in the built and natural environment.
SLO 3 – Apply ethical understanding to design decision-making.
CLO 2- Apply ethical and professional principles and considerations in obligations to clients, communities, the public, and landscape environment.
CLO 3 - Interpret and apply knowledge from other disciplines, professions, and perspectives to design decision making.

CRITICAL THINKING
SLO 4 – Combine and analyze information from multiple sources to support design decision-making.
CLO 4 - Examine ideas that are grounded in the natural, physical, and social sciences that address and balance aesthetic, environmental, and social issues and goals.
CLO 5 – Connect the diverse social, cultural, economic, political, and scientific factors that shape the field of landscape architecture, both within North America and globally.
CLO 6 – Characterize how behavioral sciences impact design decision making in landscape architecture.

COMMUNICATION
SLO 5 – Produce professional visual, oral, and written communications.
CLO 7 - Present professional oral communications to defend ideas.
CLO 8 - Present professional written communications to defend ideas.

III. Graded Work

DESCRIPTION OF GRADED WORK

Discussion Participation (30% of total grade)

Students are expected to regularly complete assigned readings before class and actively contribute to class discussions. The instructor will occasionally provide questions/prompts for the class to consider ahead of time, but students should always arrive to class with questions or discussion points of their own. Periodic in-class activities will also count as part of this grade.

Readings/Lecture Responses (30% of total grade)

Students are required to submit written responses to assigned readings and lectures on 4 occasions throughout the semester. These response papers should be 400-600 words in length and actively engage with the readings.

Semester Paper and Presentation (40% of total grade)

Students will research a topic chosen from a list provided by the instructor. Students will deliver a presentation to their classmates at the end of the semester and will submit individual papers.

The graded work assesses the course learning objectives as follows:

Assessment	LAA 3230 – Course Learning Objectives (CLOs)							
	SLO 1	SLO 3		SLO 4			SLO 5	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Discussion Participation							X	
Reading/Lecture Responses		X		X				X
Paper/Presentation			X				X	X
Learning Assessments	X				X	X		

GRADING SCALE

For information on how UF assigns grade points for graduate courses, consult the [UF Graduate Catalog](#).

A	93 – 100%		C	73 – 77%
A-	90 – 92%		C-	70 – 72%
B+	88 – 89%		D+	68 – 69%
B	83 – 87%		D	63 – 67%
B-	80 – 82%		D-	60 – 62%
C+	78 – 79%		E	<60

As per department 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. Please also note that according to the [UF Graduate Catalog](#), “[t]he only passing grades for graduate students are A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, and S. Grades of B-, C+ or C count toward a graduate degree if an equal number of credits in

courses numbered 5000 or higher have been earned with grades of B+, A- and A, respectively...Letter grades of C-, D+, D, D- or E are not considered passing at the graduate level..."

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. Please follow the directions given by the instructor as to how they will be submitted (e.g., Canvas, CD, PDF, word file, etc.). If an assignment is required to be scanned, it must be scanned; photographs of assignments are not acceptable. If a multipage PDF is requested, do NOT submit each page as a separate PDF. It must be submitted as one file. Point deductions on the assignment may result from not following submittal directions or providing incorrect submittal or file formats.

Assignments are expected to be submitted at the beginning of class on the specified due date. The deadline is a hard deadline; no exceptions will be made for scanning, computer related issues, uploading, et cetera. Assignment submissions may be updated and re-uploaded to the Canvas site as needed prior to a submittal deadline. Once the deadline has passed for an assignment and a submission has been made, additional submittals are not guaranteed to be accepted. If the updated, late submittal is accepted, the entire submittal will be considered late and points will be deducted based on the date of the late submission. In addition, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that a submission is complete; missing items will not be given credit.

IV. Tentative Schedule

Week	Topics	Assignments
Jan. 9 th	Course Introduction	The What and Why of Theory?
Jan. 16 th	Ideas of Landscape, Nature, and Wilderness	
Jan. 23 rd	Modernity, Coloniality, and Global Modernisms	Reading Reflection 1 Due
Jan. 30 th	Modernism 1: Landscape and Regional Planning	
Feb. 6 th	Modernism 2: City and Community Planning	Initial Project Proposal Due
Feb. 13 th	Landscape Narratives and Spatial Practices	Reading Reflection 2 Due
Feb. 20 th	Vernacular and Everyday Landscapes	
Feb. 27 th	Landscape and Race 1	Final Project Proposal Due
Mar. 5 th	Landscape and Race 2	Reading Reflection 3 Due
Mar. 12 th	No Class (Spring Break)	
Mar. 19 th	Landscape Feminism	
Mar. 26 th	Landscape, Memory, and Cultural Heritage	
Apr. 2 nd	Environmentalism, Ecology, and Ecocriticism	Annotated Bibliography Due
Apr. 9 th	Flex Date (Landscape Urbanism; Site Theories)	Reading Reflection 4 Due
Apr. 16 th	Workday	
Apr. 23 rd	Student Presentations	
Final	May 2 nd , 12:30-2:30 p.m.	

VI. Required Policies

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance is mandatory. Students are expected to arrive on time. Acceptable reasons for excused absences are as follows:

- 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)

If necessary, students shall be permitted a reasonable amount of time to make up material or activities covered in their excused absence; however, absences do not affect project deadline dates unless prior arrangements have been made.

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. Please schedule an office meeting for any discussions regarding attendance, tardiness, and late assignments. Do not discuss these issues with the instructor during class time.

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>

STUDENTS REQUIRING ACCOMMODATION

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.

UF EVALUATIONS PROCESS

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/>.

UF GRADUATE ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY¹

As a student at the University of Florida, you have committed yourself to uphold the Honor Code, which includes the following Honor Pledge: “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.” You are expected to exhibit behavior consistent with this commitment to the UF academic community, and on all work submitted for credit at the University of Florida, 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 assumed that you will complete all work independently in each course unless the instructor provides explicit permission for you to collaborate on course tasks (e.g., assignments, papers, quizzes, exams). As such, Gators do not cheat, plagiarize, bribe, misrepresent, conspire, or fabricate. Furthermore, as part of your obligation to uphold the Honor Code, you should report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. It is your individual responsibility to know and comply with all university policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and the Student Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code at the University of Florida will not be tolerated. Violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office for consideration of disciplinary action.

Academic Integrity requires graduate students to:

1. Appropriately acknowledge the work of others, in conducting and reporting one’s own research;
2. Be academically honest, in representing one’s academic work according to the research standards and methodology that are appropriate for her field of study;
3. Use their own work in research and graded coursework, not inappropriate and un-cited materials, or work produced by a third-party
4. Conduct responsible research which complies with federal laws, and promotes open and active scientific and knowledge inquiry;
5. Treat other students with respect, to ensure their right to pursue their educational goals without interference

To understand the University’s expectations regarding academic integrity, view the Dean of Students [Academic Integrity Module](#).

COUNSELING AND WELLNESS CENTER

Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

COURSE MATERIALS AND IN-CLASS RECORDINGS

The digital course materials provided on Canvas (e.g., lectures, assignments, quizzes, 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.

Our class sessions may be audio visually recorded. Students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded. If you are unwilling to

¹ Taken directly from the UF Graduate Catalog at <https://gradcatalog.ufl.edu/graduate/regulations/>

consent to have your profile or video image recorded, be sure to keep your camera off and do not use a profile image. Likewise, students who participate orally are agreeing to have their voices recorded.

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third-party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

VI. Resources

Journals

Landscape Architecture Journals

- Landscape Journal
- Journal of Landscape Architecture
- Landscape Research
- Landscape and Urban Planning
- Studies in the History of Gardens and Designed Landscapes
- Topos

Geography Journals

- Progress in Human Geography
- Annals of American Association of Geographers
- Cultural Geographies
- Antipode
- Area
- Geoforum
- Geohumanities
- Environment and Planning D

Art Journals

- Art in America
- Art Bulletin
- Art Journal
- Artforum
- Grey Room
- October

Planning Journals

- Journal of the American Planning Association
- Planning Perspectives
- Journal of Planning Literature
- Journal of Planning Education and Research
- Journal of Planning History
- Journal of Urban History

Architecture Journals

- Journal of Architectural Education (JAE)
- Journal of Architectural and Planning Research
- Technology | Architecture + Design
- Harvard Design Magazine
- Journal of Architectural Historians
- Buildings & Landscapes
- Journal of Urban Design
- Places Journal

Other Important Journals

- Nature
- Science
- BioScience
- New England Journal of Medicine
- Journal of the American Medical Association

Landscape Architecture Institutions

The Big Three

American Society of Landscape Architecture (ASLA)
Landscape Architecture Foundation (LAF)
The Cultural Landscape Foundation (TCLF)

Other Important LA Institutions in USA

Council of Landscape Architecture Registration Boards (CLARB)
Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board (LAAB)
Black Landscape Architecture Network
National Association of Minority Landscape Architects (NAMLA)
WxLA (Women in Landscape Architecture)

International Landscape Architecture Institutions

International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA)
Landscape Institute (LI)
Canadian Society of Landscape Architects (CSLA)
Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture (CELA)
European Council of Landscape Architecture Schools (ECLAS)

Important Allied Organizations

American Planning Association (APA)
American Institute of Architects (AIA)
International Society of Arboriculture (ISA)
National Complete Streets Coalition
US Green Building Council (USGB)
National Recreation and Parks Association
Urban Land Institute (ULI)
National Association of Landscape Professionals

Landscape Architecture References

General Landscape Architecture Reference Books

Oxford Companion to the Garden
250 Things and Landscape Architect Should Know (Ivers, 2021)
Site Planning and Design Handbook, 2nd Edition (Russ, 2023)
Site Analysis, 3rd Edition (LaGro, 2013)
Site Planning (Lynch and Hack, 1984)

Landscape Technology and Construction References

Time-saver Standards for Landscape Architecture, 2nd Edition (Harris and Dines, 1997)
Landscape Architectural Graphic Standards (Hopper, 2006)
Landscape Architectural Graphic Standards, Student Edition (Hopper, 2007)
Constructing Landscape: Materials, Techniques, Structural Components (Zimmermann, 2015)
Landscape Architecture Documentation Standards (Design Workshop, 2015)
Sustainable Stormwater Management (Liptan and Santen, 2017)
The Sustainable Sites Handbook (Calkins, 2012)
Materials for Sustainable Sites (Calkins, 2008)
Sustainable Landscape Construction, 3rd Edition (Sorvig and Thompson, 2018)
Site Engineering for Landscape Architects (Strom et.al., 2013)
Landscape Grading: A Study Guide for the LARE, 2nd Edition (Aymer, 2020)
Landscape Performance Series Case Study Briefs (<https://www.landscapeperformance.org/case-study-briefs?op>)

Landscape History References

Keywords in American Landscape Design (O'Malley, et.al., 2010)
Pioneers of American Landscape Design (Birnbaum et.al., 2000)
Library of American Landscape History
Dumbarton Oaks Research Center and Library

Plant Resources

Missouri Botanical Garden
The Morton Arboretum

Important General Archives

Library of Congress (<https://www.loc.gov>)

Historic American Landscape Survey (<https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/hh/>)

Avery Index to Architectural Periodicals

ASLA Landscape Architecture Archives Collection (<https://www.asla.org/ContentDetail.aspx?id=22682>)

Notable Landscape Architecture Archives

NC State University Libraries Special Collections

Cornell University Library

UC Berkeley Environmental Design Library

Harvard University Frances Loeb Library

Smithsonian Institution Archives of American Gardens

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