

LAA 3353c

# URBAN DESIGN STUDIO

Spring 2025

## SYLLABUS

### GENERAL INFORMATION

CLASS MEETINGS: In-Person.  
MWF: Period 2 - 6 (10:40 PM – 1:40 PM)

LOCATION: Arch 322

CREDITS: 6 Credits

INSTRUCTOR: Kevin Thompson  
Office Hours: W 3:50 – 4:30 (in studio or by appointment)

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores the work of urban design through the lens of landscape architecture while exploring the influence of urban planning and architectural form on urban environments at the human scale.

This semester we will focus on urban environments as places to live, work and socialize within the context of biophilic, car-free site planning and affordable housing for populations with special needs.

Our work this semester includes several projects both local and regional and engages multiple design exploration, development and communication methods while being exposed to collaborative and interdisciplinary project development opportunities.

### PREREQUISITE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Students entering this course must be enrolled in the Landscape Architecture program and have met all the program requirements through leading up to this semester in the program's curriculum sequence.

Specific knowledge and skills that students are expected to have before enrolling in the course include:

General understanding of the role of landscape architecture in urban planning, development and design with urban environments

Ability to conduct a thorough and detailed site INVENTORY, and ANALYSIS and develop a sound, rational and defensible comprehensive SYNTHESIS

Ability to engage in a committed DESIGN PROCESS that includes exhaustive design exploration from the earliest IDEATION stages, through a robust DESIGN DEVELOPMENT STAGE and extending to final DESIGN COMMUNICATION using a MIX of ANALOGUE and DIGITAL approaches included but not limited to:

- Sketching
- Design drawing

- Hand crafted and digitally-fabricated STUDY and PRESENTATION models
- Presentation graphics include hybridized workflows with both analogue and digital outputs

Students are expected to possess solid skills in both hand graphics and digital graphic generation and manipulation including at a MINIMUM:

Free hand sketching and design drawings including VIGENTTES, PARTIS, PLANS, SECTION/ELEVATIONS, PERPSECTIVES and DETAILS

- AutoCAD
- PhotoShop
- Illustrator
- PowerPoint
- SketchUp

Students are expected to have at least an introductory-level working knowledge of digital modelling and programs including RHINO and GRASHOPPER, and with digital fabrication processes and approaches including using LASER CUTTERS and 3D printer.

## **COURSE APPROACH and REFERENCE MATERIALS**

This course will utilize UF's e-learning Canvas site. Announcements, Course Calendar, Grades, Discussions, and Course Resources will be posted to the Canvas site.

Students are required to read all assigned CANVAS postings in detail including MESSAGES, MODULES and ASSIGNMENTS. Students are also expected to set-up push notifications to receive messages to a device and platform that they have regular and committed access to. Student activity and access duration on CANVAS IS monitored and may serve as part of your evaluation for the semester.

Students are also required to comply with all requirements for course assignments and submissions INCLUDING due dates and times and FILE FORMATS. Files submitted not meeting the format requirements or after the assignment closes (ie, submitted in the comments section of CANVAS) may not be accepted.

DO NOT RELY ON OUR CLASSMATES TO LET YOU KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON.

## **COURSE FEES**

Course fees cover the costs involved in providing large-format plotters and consumables for the plotters. These devices and their consumables are expensive to buy and maintain and this service is provided to students enrolled in this course as a courtesy. Students are expected to enter this course with a full working knowledge of this technology (and are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the use of the plotters if not).

Using plotters is not part of the learning objectives for this course.

The calculation of fees is determined by a carefully-studied historical use analysis and works out to be roughly \$18 per credit per student. This represents a considerable savings to students from 3rd party reprographic services.

The Department will continue to provide this technology to students only as long as students demonstrate respected and appropriate use. Keep sustainability in mind when sending files to plot (do not use the plotters for medium (11 x 17) or small (8 ½ x 11) (or similar) plot sizes that result in significant offcuts and paper waste.

Students are also responsible for monitoring the availability of consumables and making arrangements for replacement of paper and ink inventories as needed.

If a plotter runs out of paper or ink or is otherwise not functioning as it should, take responsibility and notify the appropriate people so issues can be rectified.

DO NOT JUST WALK AWAY FROM ONE PLOTTER AND USE ANOTHER. Be professional. Be responsible and respectful.

## **MATERIALS and SUPPLIES**

Students are required to MAINTAIN a supply of standard studio materials including trace paper, tape, glue, pencils and pencils, knife blades etc.

ALWAYS have a roll of trace paper out and available for desk crits

In addition, students should be prepared to acquire additional materials throughout the semester including study and presentation model materials.

These materials may include chip board, bass and balsa wood (FABLAB laser cutting) and other timber material available at local building supply retailers including untreated pine framing timber, sheet goods such as plywood or mdf, etc.

*According to the College Board, students should anticipate spending \$1,200 a year on text books.*

Your instructor works hard to keep your costs down and does not require textbooks for this course but please be prepared to spend upwards of a couple hundred dollars on studio supplies this semester.

## **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (SLOs)**

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 compositions,
- multiple design alternatives before synthesizing ideas into a defensible plan and
- the ability to thoughtfully and RESPECTFULLY 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 developing course learning objectives (CLOs) under the program SLO headings as follows:

<b>CONTENT</b>
SLO 1 – Integrate concepts from the general body of knowledge of the profession of landscape architecture in design decision-making.
CLO 1 - Acquire an understanding of the historical context and background, socio-economic, cultural, and environmental factors contributing to urban disparities for a community/site's context
SLO 2 – Apply core professional landscape architecture skills in design decision-making.
CLO 2 - Students will be able to go apply feedback on critique in their iterative design decision making
SLO 3 – Apply ethical understanding to design decision-making.

CLO 3 – Develop strategies for constructing a thorough understanding of issues, including fostering conversations or relationships with subject-experts, stakeholders, community leaders, and/or advocacy groups as possible to ensure ethical and culturally sensitive design outcomes.

CLO 4 - Develop programmatic and spatial design solutions that address equitable access to urban resources and promote social as well as environmental well-being.

### CRITICAL THINKING

SLO 3 – Combine and analyze information from multiple sources to support design decision-making.

CLO 5 - Prioritize the diverse social, cultural, economic, political, and scientific factors that shape the field of landscape architecture in relation to urban design both within North America and globally

CLO 6 - Analyze how behavioral sciences impact design decision-making in urban landscapes

CLO 7 – Support the diverse needs of users with consideration of abilities, modes of perception, and equitability when deriving urban design solutions

CLO 8 - Evaluate spatial and other relevant data as part of the urban design decision-making process

CLO 9 - Assess different materials for character, quality, cost, sustainability, and cultural relevance as relevant to the design problem and proposal

### COMMUNICATION

SLO 4 – Produce professional visual, oral, and written communications.

CLO 10 – Communicate urban issues and proposed design ideas concretely through visual representation and graphic narratives

CLO 11 – Communicate landscape designs that prioritize spatial justice through urban strategies and design ideas concretely through written and oral communication skills

## DESCRIPTION OF GRADED WORK

The course consists of several exercises and a major project. In addition to work submitted for evaluation, student performance is evaluated on the basis of ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT in a course central to the Department's PROFESSIONAL degree program.

Students are expected to be in studio during class meeting times, ENGAGED, ACTIVELY CONTRIBUTING to discussions and demonstrations and ADVANCING the development of work assigned in THIS class.

As a professional degree program, you are expected to be in class during class times, working on class assignments. This course maintains strict requirements for attendance, participation and engagement.

Students should familiarize themselves with the specific requirements of this course in relation to attendance and absence, active engagement, and submission of work. These requirements may differ from other courses in the program and it is the student's responsibility to understand and work within the requirements and expectations for this course.

### ACTIVE PARTICIPATION - 50% OF FINAL GRADE

Active participation means being in the studio working on the work of this studio and participating professionally and respectfully in all activities of the course. Students will be evaluated on their work development both in and outside our class meeting times and on their preparedness for and responsiveness during design critiques, discussions, lectures, demonstrations, and presentations.

Students are expected to treat the studio as a professional work environment and behave accordingly. Studio class

meeting time is NOT a time for ping pong, loud conversations that dominate the room or food consumption.

Active participation also includes speaking-up during discussions and helping out during demonstrations. It also includes maintaining a professional work environment during and outside of class meeting times. Think of the studio as a professional design office, not a frat house. Studio spaces are provided as curtesy to students and students are expected to keep the space clean, tidy, and free of hazards.

### **EXERCISES**

Through the semester students will be assigned multiple exercises including drawings, models, and presentations.

Grades for these exercises form part of the “active participation” evaluation described above. All active participation work culminates in a deliverable that is to be submitted as a CANVAS assignment. Evaluations for submitted assignments includes active participation instructor observation (your work is graded not just on what you hand in but your development and process of the work as well).

By the nature of the studio experience, students work closely with instructors throughout the semester. Evaluation comments are provided during these group and individual interactions and not the submission comments on CANVAS (which may include additional advice in a confidential environment as appropriate.). Given the number of contact hours and individualized instruction opportunities provided by the studio model, students should not expected further detailed written comments on each submission.

### **MAJOR PROJECT - 50% OF FINAL GRADE**

Our major project for the semester includes a significant submission and presentation at the end of the semester.

In addition to a continuing active participation evaluation during the development, exhibition and presentation of the major project, a significant portion of your grade for the semester will be based on the tangible outcomes (deliverables) for the final project. These deliverables may include sketchbooks, process drawings, photo of study models, final presentation models and graphics, etc.

In addition to clearly defined deliverable expectations (regarded as a minimum), students will also be expected to self-define and deliver additional supporting materials for their final project

The graded work assesses the course learning objectives as follows:

Assessment	LAA 3353c - Course Learning Objectives (CLOs)											
	SLO 1	SLO 2	SLO 2		SLO3					SLO 4		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Assignment 1: Research	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Assignment 2: Design		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

## GRADING SCALE

For information on how UF assigns grade points, visit: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

A	93 – 100%		C	73 – 76%
A-	90 – 92%		C-	70 – 72%
B+	87 – 89%		D+	67 – 69%
B	83 – 86%		D	63 – 66%
B-	80 – 82%		D-	60 – 62%
C+	77 – 79%		E	<60

As per department policy, Landscape Architecture Majors must receive a C or better to move forward in the degree program.

Any grade lower than a **C** will require that the course be taken over again.

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 exercise and assignment. For analogue material (including hand sketches and drawings, study and presentation models, prototypes, site installations, etc) should be carefully photographed and of a high (professional) standard and submitted as part of the students digital submission.

Submission **MUST** comply with the format requirements detailed on the CANVAS site.

Late exercise and assignments submissions will not be accepted.

Students are reminded to manage their deadlines and the development leading to the completion and submission of their work. Technical difficulties with personal computers, studio plotters, print shop services, access to model shop and FABLAB etc, should be anticipated and planned for: these are **NOT** considered acceptable or allowable excuses for late submissions.

Complete assignment submissions may be updated and re-uploaded to the Canvas site as needed PRIOR to a submission deadline.

Incomplete submissions or submissions missing required deliverables will not be accepted.

## TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

This is a sixteen-week, full-semester 6 credit hour course structured as a studio. Students are responsible for learning that is guided by the instructor through activities including lectures, seminar-style discussions, design and planning activities and exercises, and in-studio working sessions to allow time for development, feedback and production. The following schedule provides an outline of topics and is subject to change as we will have engagements with several speakers and collaborators:

<b>WEEK</b>	<b>TOPICS</b>
Week 1	<b>Topic:</b> Course Introduction and Orientation <b>Activity:</b> Lecture, Discussion and Demonstration. Modelshop Orientation and Exercise.
Week 2	<b>Topic:</b> Car Free City Districts <b>Activity:</b> Case Study Research and Presentations
Week 3	<b>Topic:</b> Biophilic Cities. Atrium Challenge <b>Activity:</b> Lecture. Discussion. Design Ideation, Development, Communication
Week 4	<b>Topic:</b> Multi-scale Model Exercises <b>Activity:</b> Lecture. Discussion. Exercises. Review/Presentations
Week 5	<b>Topic:</b> McCoy Creek Project Introduction. Site Visit. Synthesis Presentations. <b>Activity:</b> Lecture. In Field Evaluation. Inventory, Analysis, Synthesis Development
Week 6	<b>Topic:</b> Synthesis Presentations. Dsgn/Comm Exercises. Sketch Crawl <b>Activity:</b> Lecture, Discussions. Demonstrations and Workshop. Critiques.
Week 7	<b>Topic:</b> Urban Form. Architectural Form. Biophilic Human Spaces. <b>Activity:</b> Lecture. Discussion, Demonstration. Critiques.
Week 8	<b>Topic:</b> Design Proposal Development <b>Activity:</b> Lecture, Discussions. Demonstrations and Workshop. Critiques.
Week 10	<b>Spring Break</b>
Week 11	<b>Topic:</b> Final Design Development. 1 <b>Activity:</b> Discussions. Demonstrations. Critiques.
Week 12	<b>LAE Field Trips</b>
Week 13	<b>Topic:</b> Final Design Development 2 <b>Activity:</b> Discussions and Critiques.
Week 14	<b>Topic:</b> Final Presentation <b>Activity:</b> Presentations. Review

Week 15	<b>Topic:</b> Exhibition and Catalogue Development <b>Activity:</b> Discussions. Critique. Exhibition.
Week 16	<b>M: Last Day of Classes.</b> <b>Activity:</b> Studio Business.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

This is a major studio in a professional degree program. Attendance and active participation are MANDATORY.

This course does not provide allowance for unexcused absences.

Excused absences must be approved in advance by the instructor and will only be CONSIDERED for the following reasons:

- Illness or medical emergency
- Serious family emergency
- Documented military obligation
- Religious holidays
- Participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debates.
- Court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena)

In all cases, it is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor IN ADVANCE of any of these situations.

There are very few instances in which a student may not be able to notify their instructor ahead of an absence (such as: in a serious bus accident on the way to class and was in a coma and could not text to alert or apprise). In these few and rare circumstances, exceptions will be considered but not guaranteed.

Studio work time and desk critiques are essential to the learning experience; therefore, attendance is expected for the entire class time. During the studio (critique) portion of the course, it is expected that all students will be in attendance for the entire class and working on LAA3353c course assignments.

Arriving late to class, leaving during class for extended durations, or leaving early from class will be considered being absent from class.

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 studio 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.asp>



## 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/>.

## UNIVERSITY HONESTY POLICY

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students 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.” The Honor Code (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

## 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.

These materials may be removed at anytime during the course and access to the CANVAS website after the last day of the semester will be removed.

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 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.