LAA 1920
Introduction to Landscape Architecture
UF Department of Landscape Architecture
Fall 2025

SYLLABUS

I. General Information

CLASS MEETINGS: Asynchronous Online

CREDITS: 3 Credits

INSTRUCTOR: Jiayang Li, MLA & PhD
Assistant Professor, Department of Landscape Architecture
440 Antevy Hall
Office hour: Mondays 12:30-1:30pm, or by appointment
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Introduces landscape architecture, a profession that "creates healthy, safe, and beautiful outdoor places for everyone", and a field explores the art and science of planning, designing, and managing landscapes for both human use and nature. Open to all students.

The purpose of this course is to provide students with a broad understanding of the profession of Landscape Architecture. It will give an overview of the societal challenges facing the world today, as well as some of the unique solutions created by Landscape Architecture. Through a mixture of online lectures, discussions, and activities/projects, the course introduces the landscape architecture focusing on:
1. **Subject matter:** Provides both practical and theoretical understanding of methods and tools used in landscape architecture, planning, and design. Living landscapes shape human interaction with the world and are in turn shaped by the application of design and planning.
2. **Scales of concern:** Addresses our built and natural environment from backyards to global processes, and everything in-between. Provides an understanding of a continuum of landscapes from wilderness to managed natural areas, rural landscapes, small towns, suburbia, cities, and broader urban regions.
3. **Issues:** Frames the issues facing our world today that drive design and planning decisions. These include climate change, urbanization, transportation challenges, and water management; also addressed are social, cultural, & historical issues, and paradigm shifts in the design profession.

PREREQUISITE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS
There are no prerequisite courses, knowledge or skills for this course.

COURSE MATERIALS

All course content will be posted online to CANVAS, and will include recorded lectures, videos, readings, websites, and other content. There are no required texts for this class. Other library resources are available for Distance Learners or UF Online students at the Library Help Desk.

II. **Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)**

UF's Professional Program in Landscape Architecture requires ongoing assessment of learning outcomes derived from the Landscape Architecture Body of Knowledge and regular curriculum reviews. Each course has unique course learning objectives (CLOs) tied to UF's Student Learning Outcomes. In addition to the CLOs detailed in the chart below, 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 history to create spatial and temporal landscape compositions,
- 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 the following introductory 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 – Identify a range of creative, cultural, and historic approaches used to develop material, spatial, and temporal landscape compositions.
CLO 2 – Recall broad concepts in history and theories of landscape architecture.
CLO 3 - Explain social, human, economic, and environmental principles of sustainability and resilience.
CLO 4 – Recognize how behavioral sciences impact design decision making in landscape architecture.
CLO 5 – Identify current and emerging practice opportunities in landscape architecture
CLO 6 – Recognize the intricate dynamics of urban, community, and ecological planning and design, by exploring how these processes impact societies on various scales.
SLO 3 – Apply ethical understanding to design decision-making.
CLO 7 - Explain the ethical principles and professional obligations of landscape architects.

CRITICAL THINKING
SLO 4 – Combine and analyze information from multiple sources to support design decision-making.
CLO 8 – Recognize how diverse social, cultural, economic, political, and scientific forces in North America and globally frame the practice of landscape architecture and shape our built and natural environment.

III. Graded Work

DESCRIPTION OF GRADED WORK

Weekly Quizzes (20% of grade)
To ensure student engagement and participation in the online content and lectures, quizzes will be given throughout the semester.

Weekly Reflective Discussions (20% of grade)
There will be a series of weekly reflective discussions over the course of the semester. It is important that you provide substantive reflections through quality posts.

Memory Project (20% of grade)
The Memory Project will be assigned to help refine your understanding of a sense of place and the experience of landscapes; it encourages your creative application of course themes to reflections on scenes from your childhood.

Final Research Project (10% of grade)
A final research project will enrich your understanding of the depth and breadth of the profession through an exploration of a specific design project.

Other Projects (25% of grade)
Another two projects will be given throughout the semester to reinforce and apply the understanding of the topics and concepts presented.

Peer Review (5% of grade)
Students will review their classmates' projects and provide meaningful feedback. This is intended to provide an opportunity for critical evaluation of colleagues' work as well as reflection on their own work submitted.

The graded work assesses the course learning objectives as follows:

Assessment	LAA 1920 – Course Learning Objectives (CLOs)							
	SLO 1						SLO 3	SLO 4
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Weekly Quizzes	X	X	X	X	X			
Weekly Discussions	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Memory Project						X		
Final Research Project	X				X			X
Other Projects			X		X	X		
Peer Reviews							X	

Evaluation of Performance
Timely completion of all project requirements is expected; work is typically due by the end of each week (Sunday at 11:59pm), unless otherwise noted. **Late work will be penalized 2.5% per day.** Due to the

structure of the class, work submitted **4 or more days late** will not be accepted unless prior accommodations have been made. Requirements for making up missed assignments or other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found [here](#)[1].

GRADING SCALE

According to Departmental Policy, Landscape Architecture majors must receive a C or better to move forward. Any grade that is 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	100-94	93-90	89-87	86-84	83-80	79-77	76-74	73-70	69-67	66-64	63-61	60-0
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

Please see the [UF Grades and Grading Policies](#)[2] for more information.

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 final grades will be issued until digital submissions have been turned in as requested. *Typically, all files must be submitted as Portable Document Formats (PDFs). Please adhere to each assignment's file submission guidelines.*

IV. Annotated Weekly Schedule

The following is an overview of the course schedule and assignments. Note that the weekly contents might be slightly adjusted during the semester to enhance learning outcomes. Please follow CANVAS for more detailed information regarding course content, assignments, due dates, and other pertinent material for each week.

Course Week + Topic	Required Content	Weekly Assignments	Due Dates

Week 1: Getting Started + What is Landscape Architecture
 	
(Introduce Memory Project 01)
	1 Getting Started: Course Introduction
	2 What is Landscape Architecture
	  • What is Landscape Architecture?
	  • Why Landscape Architecture?
	  • Your Land
	  • Landscape Architecture 101
		- Discussion 01
		- Quiz 01
			Sunday, Aug 24 @11:59pm

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[1] UF Attendance Policies: https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/#absencestext
[2] UF Grades and Grading Policies: https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/

Disclaimer: This syllabus represents my 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.

Week 2: Landscapes Through Time + Urbanized Landscapes	**1 Landscapes Through Time: Origins of Landscape Architecture** • Introduction to Landscapes Through Time • Origins to Japan • Rome to Medieval Europe • Italian Renaissance • French Renaissance **2 History of Urbanized Landscapes** • Overview to Landscape Urbanization & Development Issues • History of Urbanization Part 1 • History of Urbanization Part 2 • Urbanized	- Discussion 02 - Quiz 02 - *Memory Project: Part 01*	Sunday, Aug 31 @11:59pm
Week 3: Urban Parks and Open Space *(Introduce Exploring Streetscapes Project)*	**1 Urban Parks and Open Space** • History of Parks & Open Space - Overview • History of Parks & Open Space - Park Planning **2 Urban Parks + Public Health** • Frederick Law Olmsted: Designing America • Frederick Law Olmsted and the Campaign for Public Health • Interview With Thaisa Way on 10 Parks That Changed America • How Public Spaces Make Cities Work	- Discussion 03 - Quiz 03	Sunday, Sept 7 @11:59pm
Week 4: Neighborhoods and Streets	**1 Background** • What Exactly Is Urban Design? • Why Is Urban Design Important? • Creating A Biophilic City • Cities For People and Cities for The Planet • Landscape City **2 Designing A Healthy Neighborhood** • Planning A Neighborhood • Street Connectivity in Neighborhoods • Mixed-Use Building Development • Diversity Of Housing Types • Parks And Civic Spaces • Streetscape Design • Green Buildings and Preservation **3 Streetscapes** • Moving People and Goods In The City • Streetscapes • Four Ways to Make A City More Walkable • Junction Design: The Dutch Cycle-Friendly Way *Project Precedents*	- Discussion 04 - Quiz 04 - *Exploring Streetscapes Project*	Sunday, Sept 14 @11:59pm

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Week 5: Transportation Infrastructure *(Introduce Memory Project 02)*	**1 Issues in Transportation** • Transportation Issues + Innovations • The Third Rail **2 Future of Transportation** • Why buses are democracy in action • How Will Autonomous Vehicles Transform Our Cities? • Resilient By Design Bay Area Challenge: The Grand Bayway • From Transportation Infrastructure to Green Infrastructure: Adaptable Future Roads in Autonomous Urbanism • Sustainable Transportation *Project Precedents*	- Discussion 05 - Quiz 05 - Peer Review 01 (*Exploring Streetscapes Project*)	Sunday, Sept 21 @11:59pm
Week 6: Landscape Conservation	**1 History of Landscape Conservation in the US** • Overview of History of Landscape Conversation • Here's How the National Park Service Got Started • Why was the United States the first country to establish National Parks? • Psychological Benefits of a Wilderness Experience **2 Landscape Conservation Strategies** • Ecological Planning and Conservation • Cluster Development and Conservation Design • From Landscape Architecture to Conservation Agriculture **2 Focus on Florida** • Florida Greenways • The Last Green Thread • Florida Wildlife Corridors • The Center for Landscape Conservation Planning *Project Precedents*	- Discussion 06 - Quiz 06 - *Memory Project: Part 02*	Sunday, Sept 28 @11:59pm
Week 7: Blue-Green Infrastructure *(Introduce Memory Project Part 03)*	**1 What is Blue-Green Infrastructure** • Intro to Green Infrastructure - What & Why? • Blue Infrastructure • Water Solutions • Urban Nature-Based Solutions: What Are They and Why Are They So Important? • Green on Gray • The Case for Nurturing a City's Other Green Infrastructure- Trees **2 Blue-Green Infrastructure Interventions** • Shaped by Water: Green Infrastructure in the Netherlands • Urban Habitat: Biodiversity in Our Cities • Green Infrastructure, City of New Orleans • Faced with Climate Impacts, Communities Turn to Green Infrastructure • Rooftop Dunes Bring the Beach to the City • Working Wetlands • Seeing Green Infrastructure	- Discussion 07 - Quiz 07	Sunday, Oct 5 @11:59pm

	Project Precedents		
Week 8: A Deeper Dive: Blue-Green Infrastructure, Urban Flooding, and Climate Resilience	**1 Urban Flooding + Stormwater Management** • Stormwater Pollution and Green Infrastructure Solutions • Firm Profile: Dreitseitel Studio • Louisiana Watershed Initiative Working with Nature Training Series • NYC Department of Environmental Protection's Green Infrastructure Program • Greater New Orleans Urban Water Plan **2 Coasts + Climate Resilience** • Interview with Kate Orff on Earth Day 2020 • Resilient by Design Bay Area Challenge *Project Precedents*	- Discussion 08 - Quiz 08 - *Memory Project: Part 03*	Sunday, Oct 12 @11:59pm
Week 9: Culture Influences + Community Design *(Introduce Memory Project Part 04)*	**1 Cultural and Landscape** • What Do Landscapes Tell Us About Our Culture? • Landscape Architecture - Preservation and Design Evolution • Restoring the Spiritual Home of the Amah Mutsun • Interpreting Vernacular Landscapes as Archetypes for Design of Green Infrastructure • Race and Space: "Rochester Heights" • Designing Indian Country" **2 Community Design** • Community Design Precedents • Planning Concepts in Community Design • How Urban Spaces Can Preserve History and Build Community • How We Can Design Timeless Cities for Our Collective Future • Architecture That Is Built to Heal *Project Precedents*	- Discussion 09 - Quiz 09	Sunday, Oct 19 @11:59pm
Week 10: Global Influences	**1 Global Influences** • European Landscapes: French Landscape Architecture • Latin America Landscapes: Colombia • Latin America Landscapes: Argentina • Latin America Landscapes: Brazil • Latin America Design Pioneers: Roberto Burle Marx & Luis Barragan • Japanese Design Pioneers: Shunmyo Masuno & Robert Murase & Isamu Noguchi **2 International Practice** • Landscape Architects Without Borders • Sponge City and Sponge Planet • Manifesto About the Profession's Future • Developing Landscapes of Resource Management • Life on the Wedge *Project Precedents*	- Discussion 10 - Quiz 10 - *Memory Project: Part 04*	Sunday, Oct 26 @11:59pm

Week 11: Design as Practice - Part 01 *(Introduce Observing the Landscape Project)*	**Design as Practice** • Overview • Large Estate Era - Beatrix Ferrand, Fletcher Steele, Russell Page, & Geoffrey Jellicoe • The "Architect's Landscape Architect" - Dan Kiley • California Style - Thomas Church & Garrett Eckbo • Minimalist Landscapes - Peter Walker • Temporary Landscapes - Martha Schwartz • Climate, Place, & Meaning - Martino, Oehme van Sweden, & Halprin • Landscape as Sculpture - Kathryn Gustafson • Corporate Landscapes - Hideo Sasaki & The SWA Group • Modern Residential - Andrea Cochran, Topher Delaney, & Raymond Jungles *Project Precedents*	- Quiz 11 - Discussion 11 - *Peer review 02 (Memory Project: Part 04)*	Sunday, Nov 2 @11:59pm
Week 12: Design as Practice - Part 02	**Design as Practice- Con't** • Ecology & Art - George Hargreaves & Michael Van Valkenburgh • Inside the LA Studio with Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates *Project Precedents*	- Discussion 12 - Quiz 12 - *Observing the Landscape Project*	Sunday, Nov 9 @11:59pm
Week 13: Critical Issues- Part 01 *(Introduce the Final Research Project)*	1 Health + Wellness 2 Racial Equity + Social Justice 3 Universal Design	- Discussion 13 - Peer Review 03 *(Observing the Landscape Project)*	Sunday, Nov 16 @11:59pm
Week 14: Critical Issues- Part 02	1 Climate Change Adaptation + Action 2 Gardens + Biodiversity 3 Urban Agriculture	- Discussion 14	Sunday, Nov 23 @11:59pm
Week 15: Future of Landscape Architecture	• The New Landscape Declaration • The New Landscape Declaration: Visions for the Next 50 Years • Landscape Perspectives Interviews	- Discussion 15	Sunday, Nov 31 @11:59pm
Week 16: Conclusion	• Course Reflections • Evaluations	- Discussion 16 - *Final Research Project*	Sunday, Dec 7 @11:59pm

VI. Required Policies

COURSE POLICIES
WORK EXPECTATIONS
As this is an ***asynchronous online course***, there is no required class attendance. The course has been constructed similarly to a regular 3-credit class, which means that **there is a total of ~9 hours of work required per week including lectures, readings, quizzes, discussions, and assignments each week.** *Please be sure to schedule the appropriate amount of time each week to devote to this class and the various assignments.*

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(Remember, one credit hour represents "not less than 1 hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of 2 hours out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester…" (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges[3].)

PARTICIPATION

Students are expected to complete all assignments, discussions, and quizzes in a timely fashion. Students will be able to engage with their classmates through a number of avenues. First, they will complete peer reviews of their classmates' project assignments. In addition, they can comment on peer's responses for the weekly discussion boards. Class participation is also monitored through Canvas.

NETIQUETTE

All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email messages, threaded discussions, and chats. A guide provided by University of Florida can be found here[4].

UF REQUIRED POLICIES

Please use this link (https://go.ufl.edu/syllabuspolicies) to UF's academic policies and campus resources, including information on:
- Class Attendance
- Make-up Exams
- Assignments
- Accommodations/Disability Resources Center
- Grading Policies
- Course Evaluations
- Guidance on how to Provide Constructive Feedback
- UF's Honesty Policy
- In-Class Recording

As well as a**cademic resources**, including:
- E-learning technical support
- Career Connections Center
- Library Support
- Academic Resources: ex. General study skills and tutoring.
- Writing Studio: ex. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.
- Academic Complaints: Office of the Ombuds
- Enrollment Management Complaints (Registrar, Financial Aid, Admissions)
- UF Student Success Initiative: for resources that support your success as a UF student, and

Campus Health and Wellness Resources:
- UF Whole Gator Resources: for resources that are designed to help you thrive physically, mentally, and emotionally at UF.

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[3] SACS: https://citt.ufl.edu/resources/student-engagement/ensuring-academic-rigor/
[4] UF Netiquette: http://teach.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/NetiquetteGuideforOnlineCourses.pdf

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