LAA 2376c
Design Communication 1
UF Department of Landscape Architecture
Fall 2025

SYLLABUS

I. General Information

CLASS MEETINGS: 100% In-Person,
Tuesday, Thursday Periods 3-4 (9:35 AM – 11:30 AM)
LOCATION: Antevy Hall 120
CREDITS: 3 Credits

INSTRUCTOR: Aishwarya Shankar
436 Antevy Hall
Office Hours: Thursdays, Period 5| 11:45 AM to 12:35 PM or by appointment
shankaraishwarya@ufl.edu

TA: Christopher Bonura (c.bonura@ufl.edu)
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Exploration of intermediate hand and digital drawing tools and techniques to enhance visual communication and design representation. The curriculum covers advanced drafting of curved solids, sciography on multiple planes, and sophisticated outdoor sketching. Students will also become familiar with Adobe Suite, explore motion graphics, and dive into AI for conceptual renders. The course concludes with an introduction to cutting-edge technologies like LiDAR and Google SketchUp for 3D conceptualization. Through targeted assignments, students will refine their ability to visually communicate intricate landscape architecture projects with precision and creativity. This course expands the idea of visual thinking from analog to digital and is the second in the series for other design communication course sequences.

PREREQUISITE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

LAA 1XXXc Introduction to Design Communications or instructor approval

REQUIRED READINGS AND WORKS

All required readings and works can be found online, course reserves, or in the UF Library (see annotated schedule).

Materials and Supplies Fees: see schedule of courses.

REQUIRED DRAFTING SUPPLIES

The equipment marked with an asterisk "*" is mandatory. This equipment will be used in both Design Communications 1 and Principles of Landscape Architecture as well as future studios and throughout your education.

Drafting Equipment
2 Sketchbooks, approximately A4 and A5 sizes [atleast 50 sheets each] *
12" roll of white trace paper (2 rolls)* and 18" roll of white trace paper (2 rolls)* [we will be using these for weekly drawing practice exercises]
Drafting dots or drafting tape*
Scales – architectural* and engineer*
Triangles (10" inking): 45º and 60º/30º
Rolling Ruler
Push pins and T-pins*

Drawing Implements
Lead pencils (HB 0.5mm and 0.7mm)
No.2 Pencil set (atleast 10 pencils)*
Sketch pencils set [2H, HB, B, 2B, 4B, 6B]*
Charcoal/graphite
Water color paints
Cutter (to shape pencil tips)*
Sharpie: Chisel Tip and Fine Tip*
Uni-Ball AIR - 0.7mm Medium Rollerball - 6 Pack - Black
Micron or Staedtler pens with at least 3 different tips (fine to medium width)
Erasers*

Markers*

Colored Pencils*

Soft Pastels and/or oil pastels

Crayons

Modelling Clay (that never hardens) *

II. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (SLOs) & COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES (CLOs)

Each student in the LA program is expected to understand and apply the design process to studio projects in increasing levels of sophistication over the curriculum arc. In the DS1 studio, students should demonstrate beginning levels of design thinking through:

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

Students taking design studios are also expected to demonstrate diligence, independence, and curiosity as part of an ongoing practice of learning and transformation.

The **course learning objectives** (CLOs) below align with the Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board (LAAB) standards, and UF's MLA Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) are used to guide the assessment of student learning throughout their engagement in the program.

At the end of this course, students will be expected to have achieved an appropriate developmental level of the following **CLOs** numbered in the chart below (each with an individual name):

CONTENT
SLO 1 – Integrate concepts from the discipline's general body of knowledge [of the profession of landscape architecture] in design decision-making.
2. **Composition:** Identify and describe spatial systems, including the organization and interplay of physical, functional, and perceptual elements, within a designed environment.
SKILLS
SLO 2 – Apply core professional landscape architecture skills in design decision-making.
6. **Representation:** Apply standard conventions used in representation methods (including drawing and modeling) in landscape architecture practice.
CRITICAL THINKING
SLO 4 – Combine and analyze information from multiple sources to support design decision-making.
3. **Creativity:** Apply natural, physical, and social sciences, along with creative thinking techniques, to develop site-specific design solutions that incorporate diverse perspectives and calculated risks.
COMMUNICATION
SLO 5 – Produce professional visual, oral, and written communications.
1. **Visual Communication:** Clearly and effectively convey ideas through visual media, adapting design and presentation to suit various contexts.
5. **Workflow:** Display an effective design development/visualization workflow, including progression between analog and digital platforms, and drawing and modeling techniques.
6. **Drawing Conventions:** Demonstrate and ability to employ architectural drawing conventions (diagram, plan, section, perspective) and models (physical and digital) to design three-dimensional spaces.

III. Graded Work

Grading policies in the course are consistent with [University grades and grading policies.](#) Deadlines for assignments are listed in the Annotated Weekly Schedule and on Canvas. Students should submit work on the dates indicated except where university policy provides an exemption.

DESCRIPTION OF GRADED WORK

Project 1 –Drawing Products Analog and Digital (30% of total grade)
Students will be required to produce hand-drawn and digital graphics including, but not limited to, plan, section, and elevation for a specific site using techniques and principles found in graphics produced by landscape architectural professionals. This project will be broken down into multiple assignments [Assignment 1.1-1.6].

Project 2 – Digital Drawing/Software Proficiency (30% of total grade)
Students will be required to produce digital graphics including, but not limited to, photomontages, rendered plans, section and elevation, diagrams, animations, 3-d modelling and graphic layouts using techniques and principles found in graphics produced by landscape architectural professionals. Software proficiency will be evaluated. This project will be broken down into multiple assignments [Assignment 2.1-2.6].

Drawing Practice Exercises (10% of total grade)
Students will have various readings, lettering exercises and 'free sketching' graphic exercises that will be assigned and evaluated at various points during the semester.

Sketching and Reading the Landscape (10% of total grade)
Throughout the semester, students will be required to hand sketch in a sketchbook. These sketches will primarily be performed outside of class, and your sketchbook will be submitted for review at various times throughout the semester.

Final Publications (10% of total grade)
At the end of the semester, students will be required to submit their work in self-published portable formats like a portfolio, a zine, a poster or a pamphlet [Final Assignment 3].

Participation (5% of total grade)
This includes attendance, timely submissions and overall sincerity in effort for the course. This includes attendance, timely submissions and overall sincerity in effort for the course. Students are allowed to miss 2 classes, after which they will lose 2% of their grade for each class missed.

Creativity and Initiative (5% of total grade)
This includes student's ability to experiment and show initiative in learning beyond what was taught in the course. This goes hand in hand with participation, so students are expected to effectively communicate their thinking process and creative initiatives. This score also includes performance during desk crits.

The graded work assesses the course learning objectives as follows:

	LAA 2376C - Course Learning Objectives (CLOs)					
	SLO 1	SLO 2	SLO 4	SLO 5		
Assessment	2	6	3	1	5	6
Project 1 – Drawing Products	X	X	X	X	X	X

Project 2 – Software Proficiency	X	X	X	X	X	X
Drawing Practice Exercises		X	X	X	X	X
Sketching and Recording		X	X	X	X	X
Portable Publications					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

The Department acknowledges that the student retains ownership of their documents; however, it is a necessity for the Department to retain the right to use the documents for professional accreditation purposes. Furthermore, other course specific work, such as service-learning opportunities may require the Department to ultimately provide work created by students to an outside organization.
Digital copies of student work for this course must be turned in at the completion of each assignment. Please follow the instructor's directions on 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.

IV. Annotated Weekly Schedule

Week	Topics, Homework, and Assignments
Week 1	• **Topic:** Course Introduction, The Sketchbook, What are LA drawings? • **Summary:** This week we will introduce the course; we will explore the different types of drawings that landscape architects produce in a professional office; we will discuss basic drawing conventions; and we will explore hand sketching. • **Assignment:** Obtain Required Drawing Equipment and Review Syllabus.
Week 2	• **Topic:** Lettering, Plan Drawings • **Summary:** This week we will introduce and discuss basic techniques and conventions used in plan drawings and start our lettering and drawing practice exercises. • **Assignment:** Project 1.1 Plan Graphic (working drafts due Week 3).
Week 3	• **Topic:** Sections and Elevations • **Summary:** This week we will study and apply the principles and techniques landscape architecture professionals use to create sections and elevations.

	• **Assignment:** Project 1.2 Section/Elevation.
Week 4	• **Topic:** Rendering • **Summary:** We will explore various rendering techniques of plans, sections, and elevations. • **Assignment:** Project 1.3 Rendering.
Week 5	• **Topic:** Perspective, Axonometric and Exploded Diagrams • **Summary:** This week we will analyze and practice the principles and techniques used in manual three-dimensional drawing. • **Assignment:** Project 1.4 Diagramming.
Week 6	• **Topic:** Our Body and the Landscape- Drawing the Sensorial • **Summary:** We will learn how to draw and record landscape experience using other senses in our body like smell and sound. Using the human body as a tool, we will also explore understanding other living beings in the landscape. • **Assignment:** Final versions of Project 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4 due this week. Intro to Assignment 1.5 (Drawing the sensorial).
Week 7	• **Topic:** Introduction to Digital Graphics and How to Record in the Field • **Summary:** We will begin our discussions on digital graphics and begin to explore digital graphic production and workflow using the Adobe suite of products. We will also prepare for the field trip in the following week. • **Assignment:** Project 1.5 Sensorial Representations due. Intro to Final Portfolio Project. ***PART 1 Pin Up.***
Week 8	**LA Experience/ Fall Field Trip** • **Summary:** This week students co-registered in LAA2360 - Principles of Landscape Architecture will be attending a trip to visit landscapes. While we will not be having class during this week, students will be expected to sketch throughout the week. • **Assignment:** Assignment 1.6 Field Sketching and Reading the Landscape.
Week 9	• Introduction to Adobe Photoshop • **Summary:** Learn to raster render your drawings in plan, section, elevation and perspective. • **Assignment:** Assignment 2.1 Photoshop Intensive.
Week 10	• Introduction to Adobe Illustrator • **Summary:** Learn to draw in vector in plan, section, elevation and perspective. • **Assignment:** Assignment 2.2 Illustrator Intensive.
Week 11	Introduction to Adobe InDesign • **Summary:** Learn to compose and compile your work in a formal portfolio. • **Assignment:** Assignment 2.3 InDesign Intensive. **Revisit final publication project.**
Week 12	Introduction to Motion Graphics • **Summary:** Learn the basics of animation and motion graphics and how to apply them to your drawings. • **Assignment:** Assignment 2.4 Motion Graphics Intensive. ***PART 2 Pin Up.***
Week 13	Introduction to LiDAR and Google SketchUp *(conceptual 3D)* • **Summary:** Learn the basics of 3D representation for conceptual models.

	• **Assignment:** Assignment 2.5 3D Basics Intensive. [Veteran's Day Holiday on 11th Nov]
Week 14	Introduction to Artificial Intelligence • **Summary:** Learn to use Artificial Intelligence critically for conceptual rendering. • **Assignment:** Assignment 2.6 Artificial Intelligence Intensive.
Week 15	Thanksgiving Break
Week 16	Conclusions and final project desk crits. **Final publication project pin-ups schedule TBD.** No classes during Finals Week

VI. Required Policies - https://go.ufl.edu/syllabuspolicies

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 **academic 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.

Studio Policies:

Critique:

Your work in the design studio will develop through presentations and group discussions about the work during each class session. From time to time, at the end of a project or at a critical moment of the work, more formal "critiques" are scheduled. These are public presentations of the work and provide a forum for its discussion. Usually, one or more external critics are invited to provide a fresh viewpoint and to stimulate discussion. These sessions are usually more formal than class sessions and should be taken seriously. Critics come in on their own time and expend a serious level of energy on trying to understand your endeavors and give you good feedback. You should think of your presentation not as a moment of judgment but as an opportunity to get input on possible directions for future development, whether through continued work on the project or through work on future projects.

Please recognize that the critiques of your peers and studio colleagues provide you with excellent learning opportunities and will be essential to your education as a designer. You are required to both attend and actively participate in the discussions of work by others.

Studio Culture:

We ask that you understand that the studio is a public space and conduct yourselves in an appropriate manner. The work atmosphere must accommodate a range of tastes in music, language, public conduct, and so forth. Be both courteous toward and tolerant of your colleagues. Remember, the studio is an academic workplace, not an extension of your private house or apartment. Treat it as a professional environment, and act as you would if working at an architectural firm. This includes curtailing loud music and conversations, no smoking (UF is a tobacco-free campus), e-cigarettes, or vaping.

When working in the studio outside of class, please respect the wishes of your fellow classmates by limiting loud, boisterous, and/or long mobile phone conversations, as these may be distracting to others. If requested, please take your conversation out of the studio.