LAA 4356C: Landscape Architecture Design 5

UF Department of Landscape Architecture
Fall 2025

SYLLABUS

I. General Information

CLASS MEETINGS: 100% In-Person | MWF | 1:55-4:55 pm (Period 7-9)
Antevy Hall 316

CREDITS: 6 Credits

INSTRUCTORS: Dan Farrah, Ph.D, PLA
Antevy Hall 452
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Office Hours: M Period 5 (11:45 – 12:35)
W F Period 6 (12:50 – 1:40)

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COURSE DESCRIPTION. An introduction to environmental planning and design for landscape architects, covering regional suitability analysis, site selection, design development, and impact assessment.

This design studio introduces environmental planning and leads students through a regional-scale design decision-making process using GIS and land use suitability analysis techniques. Decisions made at a regional scale are used to inform GIS analysis, decision-making, and design at an individual site scale. Students will understand how to gather and assess information to decide on the best and most environmentally sustainable location for each land-use activity.

In the first half of the semester, students will learn about suitability analysis, connectivity, ecological impacts, and other topics related to the course. Students will develop a proposal for their studio project that includes data collection, a project outline, literature review, and their choice for a project advisor. The second half of the semester will focus on a studio project that allows students to apply the skills developed in the first half of the semester. Students can choose to work on a multi-faceted, real-world project in coordination with local professionals, or can choose a project in Florida that allows the students to further develop the goals of the class.

PREREQUISITE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS. *Course prerequisites include LAA 3350c: LA Design Studio 3*

This class builds upon the principles and technologies introduced in previous lecture classes and design studios.

REQUIRED READINGS + WORKS

Carr, M., & Zwick, P. (2007). Smart land-use analysis: The LUCIS model. Redlands, CA: ESRI Press.

McHarg, I. (1969). Design with nature. Garden City, NY: Natural History Press.

All required readings can be found on Canvas.

COURSE FEES

Each semester, a list of approved courses and fees is published in the Schedule of Courses. (UF-3.0374 Regulations of the University of Florida). Material, supply, and equipment use fee information is available from the academic departments or the schedule of courses (Florida Statutes 1009.24).

MATERIALS and SUPPLIES

Drafting supplies required of all studio courses, including drafting paper and colored pencils or markers. The following software is required:

- ArcGIS Pro (latest version)
- MS Office (Word, Excel and PowerPoint)
- Adobe Suite Products (Photoshop)
- Adobe Acrobat Reader or other PDF reading software

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 general body of knowledge of the profession of landscape architecture in design decision-making.
1. **Sustainable Design:** Articulate and explain the human, social, economic, and environmental principles of sustainable development as they relate to design decision-making.
2. **Plant Ecology:** Understand and integrate the foundational principles of ecology, aesthetics, and horticulture to create environmentally responsible and visually compelling landscapes.
3. **Earth Systems:** Describe earth systems - including soil science, geology, hydrology, and topography - and their influence on landscape design decision-making.
SLO 2 – Apply core professional landscape architecture skills in design decision-making.
4. **Ecosystem Interaction:** Analyze the interrelationships between abiotic and biotic components of ecosystems and climate to inform design strategies that promote environmental resilience and adaptation.
5. **Interdisciplinarity:** Synthesize and integrate knowledge, methods, and perspectives from other disciplines to design decision-making.
CRITICAL THINKING
SLO 4 – Combine and analyze information from multiple sources to support design decision-making.
6. **Design Synthesis:** Conduct a comprehensive analysis and synthesis of objective and subjective information to inform the organization of space and forms within the landscape.
7. **Design Impact:** Define and measure the impact of a design in response to specific challenges, needs, and aspirations based on measurable outcomes.

IV. GRADED WORK

Grading policies

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:

Module 1 GIS (20% of total grade)
Students will develop vector and raster GIS skills. Students will complete a series of GIS exercises based on in-class lectures to build understanding and proficiency in ArcGIS.

Module 2 Proposal (20% of total grade)
A proposal including an outline, literature review, goals, objectives, project description, and data sources will be created to serve as the basis for the studio project.

Module 3 – Final Project (40% of total grade)
Develop individual projects to focus on topics such as habitat preservation, ecotourism, trail development, green belt identification, or cultural resources within the study area based on the results of the suitability analysis developed in the first portion of the semester.

Quizzes (10% of total grade)

Quizzes will be given based on the knowledge and skills developed through readings, lectures, in-class GIS assignments, and GIS homework.

Professional Practice (10% of total grade)

Students will present their work weekly at project directors and steering committee meetings. Peer evaluations, weekly schedules, and advisor meetings will help students efficiently progress on their project.

The graded work assesses the course learning objectives as follows:

Assessment	GIS	Proposal	Final Project	Quizzes	Pro Practice
1. Sustainable design (SLO1)		X	X	X	
2. Plant ecology (SLO1)			X		
3. Earth systems (SLO1)	X	X	X	X	
4. Ecosystem interaction (SLO2)			X		
5. Interdisciplinarity (SLO2)		X	X	X	X
6. Design synthesis (SLO4)		X	X		
7. Design impact (SLO4)	X		X		

GRADING SCALE

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[1] for more information.

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. No final grades will be issued until digital submissions have been turned in as requested.

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.

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

ANNOTATED SCHEDULE

Week	Topics, Homework, and Assignments
Week 1	• **Topic**: Introduction to Course, ArcGIS Pro, and Regional Planning • **Summary**: This week, students will review the course syllabus, course objectives, and schedule, and install ArcGIS Pro. • **Required Readings/Works**: Design with Nature: A Step Forward, pages p.31-41 • **Assignment**: none
Week 2	• **Topic:** Vector GIS, suitability analysis by hand, file organization, proposal introduction • **Summary:** This week, students will learn about regional planning and suitability modeling, including using hand-drawn methods of suitability analysis. We will also explore the ArcGIS Pro layout and vector analysis. The studio project proposal will be introduced. • **Required Readings/Works:** • **Assignment:** Hand overlay assignment, GIS homework 1
Week 3	• **Topic:** Creating maps and regional character analysis • **Summary:** This week, students will continue learning vector GIS, learn to make maps in GIS, and work on proposals. • **Required Readings/Works**: Smart Land-Use Analysis chapters 6-8 • **Assignment:** GIS Homework 2 & 3
Week 4	• **Topic:** Raster analysis and suitability using ArcGIS • **Summary:** This week will introduce the students to raster analysis using ArcGIS Pro. This will serve as the foundation for future projects in this course. • **Required Readings/Works:** • **Assignment:** GIS Homework 4
Week 5	• **Topic:** Raster analysis and suitability using ArcGIS • **Summary:** Students will learn additional raster analysis tools and methods. • **Required Readings/Works:** • **Assignment:** GIS Homework 5
Week 6	• **Topic:** Raster analysis and land use suitability and opportunities analyses (Task 2) • **Summary:** Students will explore tools in ArcGIS to combine multiple raster layers. Students will present their proposal for their studio project. • **Required Readings/Works:** • **Assignment:** GIS Homework 6
Week 7	• **Topic:** Suitability analysis • **Summary:** This week, students will develop a suitability analysis and continue other work for the studio project. • **Required Readings/Works:** • **Assignment:** no new assignments
Week 8	• **Topic: Suitability Analysis**: Studio Project • **Summary:** Students will work on their studio project. • **Required Readings/Works: n/a** • **Assignment:** no new assignments

Week 9	• **Topic:** ASLA National Conference (no class) • **Summary:** • **Required Readings/Works: n/a** • **Assignment:**
Week 10	• **Topic: Suitability Analysis**: Studio Project • **Summary:** Students will work on their studio project. • **Required Readings/Works:** • **Assignment**: no new assignments
Week 11	• **Topic: Suitability Analysis**: Studio Project • **Summary:** Students will work on their studio project. • **Required Readings/Works: n/a** • **Assignment:** no new assignments
Week 12	• **Topic: Suitability Analysis**: Studio Project • **Summary:** Students will work on their studio project and learn about creating effective presentations. • **Required Readings/Works: n/a** • **Assignment:** no new assignments
Week 13	• **Topic: Suitability Analysis**: Studio Project Presentation Development • **Summary:** Students will work on the presentation for the studio project. • **Required Readings/Works: n/a** • **Assignment:** no new assignments
Week 14	• **Topic: Suitability Analysis**: Pre-final presentation / revisions to project • **Summary:** Students will present their studio project to the class and revise the project and presentation. • **Required Readings/Works: n/a** • **Assignment**:
Week 15	• **Topic:** Final project presentations • **Summary:** Students will present their final projects this week.

VI. Required Policies

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.