

LAA-4230
Theory of Landscape Architecture
Spring 2020
Costis Alexakis

Class meeting times: Tuesday 9th period, Thursday 8th & 9th periods
Classroom: RNK 230
Office: ARCH 440
Office hours: Email for appointment – acostis@ufl.edu
Canvas e-learning site: <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/>

Overview

This course deals with the conceptual foundations of landscape architecture. We will be studying ideas that have become central to the profession of landscape architecture, their history, and the ways in which they are being appropriated by landscape architects in our days. As this in an introductory course we will be addressing a broad range of concepts, some of immediate practical consequence, others less so. All matters addressed have stirred controversies, inspired novel approaches or reframed our professional focus within the last century.

Objectives

To acquire familiarity with ideas and processes that inform the practice of landscape architecture
and
To advance the profession of landscape architecture through a critical understanding of current practices and approaches
and
To grasp the breadth, complexity and unfulfilled potential of our profession.

Prerequisite Knowledge and Skills

None

Requirements

We will accomplish those objectives in a variety of ways:

1. Weekly lectures (Tuesday 9th period)
2. Student presentations (Thursday 8th period)
3. Discussions (Thursday 9th period)
4. Weekly readings, chosen to support the lectures and fuel discussions
5. Written responses (four per student) to weekly readings and lectures
6. A mid-term and final exam

Students should come prepared to lectures having carefully studied each week's readings.

Each student will be assigned one presentation. An outline of the presentation will be expected a week in advance, a final draft on the day of the presentation.

Students should actively participate in class discussions, which will raise ideas and issues from readings, lectures and presentations.

Written responses will be brief (2-3 pages, double-spaced) and focused on a specific theme.

More details about presentations, reports, class discussions and the final exam will be given in class.

Learning Outcomes

Students will become familiar with important ideas and processes that have conditioned our understanding of landscapes, they will build up an arsenal of references which can be used to interpret abstract concepts and support landscape work.

Teaching Philosophy

Landscape architecture is a very exciting discipline. Its greatest strength (and perhaps weakness) is its broad scope. It is important for students to grasp the breadth and richness of our profession, to explore ways of framing their interests and formulating their own aspirations. The study of various historical and theoretical perspectives on the practice of landscape architecture offers a great opportunity for this kind of exploration.

Instructional Methods

This course comprises a mix of lectures, student presentations and class discussions. I ground my teaching on my own professional experience and academic research. When lecturing, I emphasize the ways in which ideas and concepts have been reiterated throughout history and are being appropriated in our days. Presentations and discussions are opportunities for students to associate the material taught to their own experiences, to grasp it on their own terms.

Resources

No textbook has been assigned for this course; instead, several texts will be distributed each week,

The following titles will be held on reserve at the Architecture and Fine Arts Library for general reference:

John Dixon Hunt, *Greater Perfections: the Practice of Garden Theory* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000)

Simon Swaffield, ed., *Theory in Landscape Architecture: a Reader* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002)

Marc Treib, *Modern Landscape Architecture: a Critical Review* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1993)

James Corner ed., *Recovering Landscape* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999)

Raymond Williams, *Keywords: a Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985)

Lectures by the Week

00. INTRODUCTION
01. LANDSCAPE AS REPRESENTATION
02. LANDSCAPE AS PROCESS
03. VERNACULAR LANDSCAPES
04. WASTE LANDSCAPES
05. SHATTERED PARKS: POCKET, LINER & VERTICAL
06. LANDSCAPE AESTHETICS
07. ECOLOGY
08. THE IDEA OF WILDERNESS
09. MODERNITY
10. REGIONALISM

Grading

Attendance is mandatory. Students who are late will be considered absent. Five unexcused absences will result in a failing grade.

Late assignment will be assigned a failing grade.

Grades will be based on the following criteria:

Participation (25%)

Weekly reports (25%)

Presentation (25%)

Mid-term exam (12.5%)

Final exam (12.5%)

Grade allocation for papers and tests will adhere to the general UF policy:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

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>

Academic Honesty

The University requires all members of its community to be honest in all endeavors.

When students enroll at UF they commit themselves to honesty and integrity. Your instructor fully expects you to adhere to the academic honesty guidelines you signed when you were admitted to UF. In completing the registration form at the University of Florida, every student has signed the following statement:

"I understand the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all their academic work. I agree to adhere to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University."

Furthermore, on work submitted for credit by all UF students, 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 to be assumed that all work will be completed independently unless the assignment is defined as a group project by the professor. This does not mean that students cannot help one another in learning material, but all work that is turned in must be independent work of that individual.

Misrepresentation or plagiarism, such as claiming another's work to be one's own, refers to graphic and design work as well as written work. Submitting work from one course to fulfill the requirements of another (unless expressly allowed by the instructor) is also misrepresentation.

The University Honor Code and the Department of Landscape Architecture Academic Honesty Policy are to be followed to the letter. Any students found to have cheated, plagiarized, or otherwise violated the Honor Code in any assignment will be punished according to the severity of the act and may be referred to the Honor Court. It is each student's responsibility to report any infraction, and it is expected that each faculty will report all infractions as well.

For more information, see <http://www.chem.ufl.edu/~itl/honor.html> and the Department of Landscape Architecture Academic Honesty Policy.

Course Materials on Canvas

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

Online Course Evaluations

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/>.

Student Accommodations

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester

Health and Wellness Resources

- U Matter, We Care: If you or a friend is in distress, please contact <mailto:umatter@ufl.edu> or 352 392- 1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.
- Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.
- Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS) Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.
- University Police Department, 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies). <http://www.police.ufl.edu/>

Academic Resources

- E-learning technical support, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to <mailto:Learningsupport@ufl.edu>. <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>.
- Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling. <http://www.crc.ufl.edu/>
- Library Support, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
- Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. <http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>
- Writing Studio, 302 Tiger Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>
- Student Complaints Campus: https://www.dso.ufl.edu/documents/UF_Complaints_policy.pdf. On-Line Students Complaints: <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process>