

USC School of Architecture

Architecture 544

Urban Landscape: Theory, Process and Place – Los Angeles

Fall 2015

Class Location: Watt 212

Instructor: Esther Margulies ASLA

3 units, MW 8:30 – 9:50

Office hours: Monday 10:00 am or By Appt.

Contact Information:

Email: emarguli@usc.edu

This course examines the processes of building the urban landscape as products of man and nature. Cities evolve as cumulative layers and projects applied under theoretical constructs in the context of economic, social, ecological and natural forces.

This course will examine the growth of the City of Los Angeles, place and population. Readings and projects will focus on this City's evolution from migratory settlements dependent upon natural systems to a new form of globally connected Urbis with complex communications, political, transportation, housing, infrastructure and technology systems. Los Angeles can be seen as the product of layers of planning. We will examine the past to better understand and critique the present and future.

This course will include lectures, field trips, research assignments and mapping to explore and document the City. Students will dissect and document the systems, districts, landmarks and neighborhoods of this metropolis. Readings will include a wide range of perspectives on the City, contextual urban theory and critical writings speculating on the future of the City. Projects will focus on analysis and documentation of the characteristics, history, culture, physical qualities and myths that make up Los Angeles.

Meetings will include lectures, class discussions, field trips and project presentations. Students will be responsible for leading class discussions.

The syllabus will be updated periodically throughout the semester.

Grading

Assignments: Three (3) required assignments – 20 points each

Reading Responses, class participation and discussion leadership: 20 points

Final Paper – 20 points

Class Attendance and Additional Work Requirements

Attendance at all meetings and field trips are mandatory. Students must notify the instructors and request to be excused prior to the class meeting time. Students are expected to spend a minimum of 3 hours of additional work time each week outside of class time to complete readings and assignments.

Specific content and presentation requirements for all assignments and reviews will be provided.

Required Skills:

This course will require production of mapping and site documentation. Students will have Arc GIS accounts provided for the semester and training. Maps may be created digitally or by hand. Students will develop a final research paper with proper citations and notes.

Software

MS Office or equal, Adobe Creative Suite for mapping, CADD optional

Class Schedule

Date	Lecture Topics and Frameworks	Required Readings – Will be updated throughout the Semester
24-Aug	First Day of Class – Establishing base line understandings of the City of Los Angeles 1. 1. Lecture Pre European Los Angeles – Ist Nations	Alvitre, Cindi Moar, Coyote Tours, Latitudes, Heyday, Berkeley, Ca. 2015 P. 43 - 53 See Blackboard
26-Aug	2. Lecture Spanish Planning Principles, Mexican Ranchos	O’Flaherty, Joseph An End and a Beginning Selected Chapters See Blackboard
31-Aug	3. Field I Trip El Pueblo	Clay, Grady, How to Read the American City, University of Chicago Press, 1980 See Blackboard
2-Sep	1. Lecture – The Growth of Los Angeles 1880s to 1920	Nolen, John, City Planning A series of Papers Presenting the Essential Elements of a City Plan, D. Appleton and Co. New York, 1916 See Blackboard
9-Sep	2. Class Discussion	TBD
Sept 14 _ RH	3. Field Trip II and Observation	TBD
16-Sep	4. Water Essential Substance, Critical Infrastructure	Starr, Kevin, Material Dreams Southern California Through the 1920s, Oxford U Press, New York, 1990 p, 3 - 64 See Blackboard
21-Sep	5. Real Estate Development and the Growth of Los Angeles	Starr, Kevin, Material Dreams Southern California Through the 1920s, Oxford U Press, New York, 1990 See Blackboard
Sept 23 _ YK	6. Assignment 1 Research Session	
28-Sep	7. In Class Presentations Assignment 1	
30-Sep	8. The Mobile City – Transit, Movement and Migrations	Koeppel, Dan Cycleway – Latitudes p. 95 Jacobs, Allan, The Good City, Routledge, London, 2011, P. 123 – 132 See Blackboard
5-Oct	9. Class Discussion	
7-Oct	10. Economic Engines Over Time – Agriculture, Oil, Celluloid, Fashion	Starr, Kevin, Material Dreams Southern California Through the 1920s, Oxford U Press, New York, 1990

12-Oct	11. Class Discussion	
14-Oct	12. Immigration –City of Cities	TBD See Blackboard
19-Oct	13. Class discussion	
21-Oct	14. The Creative Economy - Arts and culture, institutions and	TBD See Blackboard
26-Oct	15. Mapping Presentations Group 1	
28-Oct	16. Mapping Presentations Group 2	
2-Nov	17. Civic Open Space	Reitan, Meredith Drake (11/01/2014). "Beauty Controlled: The Persistence of City Beautiful Planning in Los Angeles". <i>Journal of Planning History (1538-5132)</i> , 13 (4), p. 296. See Blackboard
4-Nov	18. Class Discussion	
9-Nov	19. Field Trip – Location TBD	TBD
11-Nov	20. Parks and preservation – Griffith, Olmsted, NPS	Hise, Deverell, Eden by Design The 1930 Olmsted-Barthomew Plan for the Los Angeles Region
16-Nov	21. The post Autopia Era in Los Angeles	Urban Future Manifestos, Ed. Peter Noever, MAK, Vienna, Hatje Cantz, Vienna Austria, 2010 See Blackboard Starr, Kevin, Coast of Dreams California on the Edge, Vintage Books, NY, 2004 See Blackboard
18-Nov	22. Re-discovering Natural Systems in Los Angeles Assignment III Deadline	TBD See Blackboard
23-Nov	23. Class Discussion	
30-Nov	24. The Future of Los Angeles	TBD
2-Dec	25. Research Paper Advising	
9 Dec	26. Final Research Paper Due	

Bibliography – Sources that may be valuable throughout the semester to supplement required readings.

- Banham, Reyner, Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies, London, Allen Lane, 1971.
- Bird, Eric, Coastal Geomorphology Second Ed. Wiley & Sons, Chichester, UK, 2008
- Clay, Grady, *Close-Up: How to Read the American City*, pp. 11-16 and 38-65 (Chicago, 1980).
- Cronon, William ed., *Uncommon Ground: Toward Rethinking the Human Place in Nature* (Norton, 1995);
- Cuff, Dana, *The Provisional City*, MIT, Cambridge, Mass 2000
- Davis, Mike *Ecology of Fear: Los Angeles and the Imagination of Disaster* (Holt, 1998);
- Deverell, William Francis. *Land of Sunshine : an Environmental History of Metropolitan Los Angeles* University of Pittsburgh Press,, 2005.
- Fogelson, Robert *The Fragmented Metropolis: Los Angeles, 1850-1930* (California, 1993);
- Geddes, Patrick, *Cities in Evolution* (Williams and Norgate, 1915);
- Gottlieb, Robert. *Reinventing Los Angeles : Nature and Community in the Global City*. Cambridge, MA, USA: MIT Press, 2007. ProQuest ebrary. Web. 7 July 2015.
- Hayden, Dolores *The Power of Place: Urban Landscape as Public History* (MIT, 1995);
- Hise, Greg and Deverell, William eds., *Eden By Design: The 1930 Olmsted-Bartholomew Plan for the Los Angeles Region* (University of California, 2000).
- Hise, Greg. *Magnetic Los Angeles : planning the twentieth-century metropolis* / Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999, c1997.
- Jacobs, Allan B., *The Good City Reflections and Imaginations*, Routledge, Abingdon, Oxon, 2011 p125, 173
- Klein, Norman M. *The History of Forgetting: Los Angeles and the Erasure of Memory*, London, Verso, 2008, pp. 27-72.
- Lynch, Kevin, *Good City Form* (MIT, 1981);
- McCawley, William, *The First Angelinos*, Malki Museum Press, Banning, Ca. 1996
- McCawley, William and Juriman, Claudia, O, *My Ancestor*, Heyday Books, Berkeley, Ca. 2009
- McPhee, John, "Los Angeles against the Mountains," in *The Control of Nature* (Farrar Straus Giroux, 1989)
- Newman, P and Jennings, I, *Cities as Sustainable Ecosystems: Principles and Practices* (Island Press, 2008)
- Noever, Peter, 1941- ed, and Kimberli Meyer. 2010. *Urban future manifestos*. Ostfildern:Hollywood: Hatje/Cantz ;MAK Center , Edward Soja p. 42 – 43, Dana Cuff p 14 – 15 , Klein, Norman p. 42 - 44
- O’Flaherty, Joseph S., *An End and a Beginning*, The Castle Press, Pasadena, Ca. 1992

http://cityhubla.github.io/LA_Building_Age/#12/34.0267/-118.2621

http://articles.latimes.com/1997-04-12/local/me-48039_1_los-angeles-river

Assignments

Reading Responses

- **Submit a question related to the required reading for each class with an assigned reading. Questions will be used to spur conversation and dialogue in class. Questions must be submitted to emarguli@usc.edu by 6 pm the day before class.**
1. Space and Place – As Los Angeles has grown it has swallowed green fields and reinvented existing places.
 - a. Identity, culture, meaning + physical space – cultural history and meaning cannot be separated from the physical form and they create meaning together. Example:suburbs - how does the physical repetitive land development, topography, iconography, natural systems, individualism express the social and economic values of the period in which they were developed? What were the ideological goals, economic rewards? What did the market demand? Examine a specific neighborhood such as Leimert Park, Beverly Hills, the San Fernando Valley or the San Gabriel Valley. Select and document a specific neighborhood or district in Los Angeles. Illustrate the physical history of development and natural systems as well as the cultural characteristics of the people who have lived there. Select one property and create a linear history over time.
 2. Mapping
 - a. Each Student will be responsible for completing 2 maps during the semester that will become part of the class atlas as a final product.
 - b. Students will choose their map topic and be responsible for presenting it in class, as a digital file and in the Atlas format at the end of the semester
 3. Los Angeles Place Vocabulary using the model of Common Ground’s 1990 alphabet, create a specific lexicon for the City of Los Angeles – provide 10 specific landscape types or place names that are unique to LA. Create 5 new terms for landscapes that are unique to LA.

Final Papers – Topics to be Determined

USC Policies

Statement for Students with Disabilities

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 A.M.–5:00 P.M., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards* <https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>. This is important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. *The Center for Women and Men* <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage sarc@usc.edu describes reporting options and other resources.

Accreditation

The Master of Landscape Architecture degree program includes three curricula. Curriculum +3 for students with no prior design education and Curriculum +2 for students admitted with advanced standing have full accreditation by the Landscape Architecture Accreditation Board. Information about landscape architecture education and accreditation in the United States may be found on-line at <http://www.asla.org/Education.aspx>.

Religious Holidays

The University of Southern California recognizes the diversity of our community and the potential for conflicts involving academic activities and personal religious observation. The University provides a guide to such observances for reference and suggests that any concerns about lack of attendance or inability to participate fully in the course activity be fully aired at the start of the term. As a general principle, students

should be excused from class for these events if properly documented and if provisions can be made to accommodate the absence and make up the lost work. Constraints on participation that conflict with adequate participation in the course and cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the faculty and the student need to be identified prior to the add/drop date for registration. After the add/drop date the University and the School of Architecture shall be the sole arbiter of what constitutes appropriate attendance and participation in a given course.

Support Systems

A number of USC's schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. *The Office of Disability Services and Programs* http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* <http://emergency.usc.edu/> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

School of Architecture Attendance Policy

A student may miss the equivalent of one week of class sessions (in this case, **ONE, TWO, OR THREE (faculty, edit this as needed)** excused absences are permitted) without directly affecting the student's grade and ability to complete the course. An excused absence is a confirmed personal illness, family emergency, or religious holiday. For each absence over the allowed number, your grade can be lowered by 1/3-letter grade. If additional absences are required for a personal illness, family emergency, pre-approved academic reason/religious observance, you must discuss the situation with your faculty member immediately.

Any student not in class within the first 10 minutes is considered tardy, and any student absent (in any form including sleep, technological distraction, or by leaving mid class for a long bathroom/water break) for more than 1/3 of the class time can be considered fully absent. If arriving late, a student must be respectful of a class in session and do everything possible to minimize the disruption caused by a late arrival. It is always the student's responsibility to seek means (if possible) to make up work missed due to absences, not the instructor's, although such recourse is not always an option due to the nature of the material covered.

Sustainability Initiative

The School of Architecture has adopted the 2010 Initiative for Sustainability. Solutions to design problems must engage the environment in a way that dramatically reduces or eliminates the need for fossil fuel.