

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
SOL PRICE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY**

PPD 531 | Pershing Square: What Will Make It a Sustainable Public Space for the 21st Century?

Section 51207D

Classroom: VPD112 – Friday 9AM to 12:00PM

Office Hours: By Appointment

INSTRUCTOR

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Public spaces can contribute to the quality of life and sustainability of cities by providing environmental benefits, contributing to economic revitalization, and encouraging socialization and community engagement. After decades of decline, Pershing Square, the oldest public space in the City of Los Angeles, located in the heart of Downtown Los Angeles, is currently being redesigned. Students will trace the history of the one block Square in the City, audit and evaluate the existing space, as well as evaluate the proposed redesign, against a broad range of sustainability criteria and City policy, in dimensions such as urban greening, resource use, mobility and access, equity, and physical and social health. Suggestions may also be made about additions to the design to enhance its sustainability outcomes. Students will also develop metrics to measure the space's change and improvement over time, and implementation, maintenance and operations strategies to ensure that it is sustained for future generations of Angelenos to enjoy.

CLIENT

Agence Ter Design Team Members: Allan Compton, SALT Landscape Architecture and Deborah Murphy, Deborah Murphy Urban Design

CLASS FORMAT

The studio meets once per week. Attendance is mandatory. Sessions will be a combination of lecture, discussion, invited guests, field trips, and student presentations. Be prepared to discuss the assigned readings. The studio is meant to be an interactive experience of shared learning, taught from a practitioner's perspective. The instructor is available for office hours on an appointment basis, either on campus or at a mutually agreed location.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments are due at the start of class on the day they are due. They must be submitted in hard copy or electronically. Late assignments will be marked down by one letter grade for each 24 hour period they are late. If there is a medical emergency preventing you from completing an assignment on time, to avoid a reduced grade you must show a doctor's note or medical documentation that demonstrates sufficient incapacitation. This documentation must come from a certified medical doctor, not a wellness practitioner, naturopath, acupuncturist, herbalist or holistic healer.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will:

- learn to apply sustainability design concepts (including environmental, economic and equity dimensions of projects) to a real world space.
- examine and observe public spaces and evaluate their safety, physical characteristics, use, maintenance and environmental benefits and impacts.
- learn about and apply "green project" rating systems to a space and a proposed design.
- research and analyze the existing City policy framework regarding parks and open space, and design of the public realm, and compare it to other cities' approaches.
- learn from a design team, public space programmer and maintenance and operations team how public spaces are operated and programmed, and develop methodologies to evaluate their sustainability over time.
- focus on written, graphic, and oral presentation of research materials and proposals, including inclusion of charts, graphs, site plans, and other descriptive images in final projects.

ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to attend and participate in each scheduled class for the specified time period. Absences may be excused by prior notification to the instructor orally or by e-mail. However, more than two absences will result in a reduced Participation grade.

ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING WEIGHT

1. **Site Audit Package** – 10%
 - a. Due: Beginning of class on January 27
 - b. Assignment: Complete site audit forms provided by instructor, include representative photos of existing project conditions.
2. **Site Audit Presentation** – 5%
 - a. Due: January 27
 - b. Assignment: Teams will share their findings with the class, then we will discuss as a group.
3. **Rating Systems Presentations** (5%)
 - a. Due: February 24
 - b. Assignment: Student teams will present their summaries of one chosen green building/green park rating system.

4. **Mid-Term Project Report – 20%**
 - a. Due: March 10
 - b. Assignment: Evaluate the proposed Pershing Square design and determine the extent to which it addresses the broad range of sustainability considerations we are studying in this course. Identify design components proposed by the design team which will address sustainability concerns or improve outcomes, and identify dimensions of sustainability that are not addressed by the design. Suggest additional design components for addition into the project. Green project rating systems will be referenced as evaluation tools that have been consulted in assessing the design. * More details on assignment to be shared in class.

5. **Mid-Term Project Presentation – 10%**
 - a. Due: March 10
 - b. Assignment: Each team presents midterm findings.

6. **Term Project Final Report – 20%**
 - a. Due: April 21, by 9am. Turn assignment in via hard copy and email to instructor.
 - b. Assignment: Teams will build on their findings at the Mid Term, by using a chosen green building/green park rating system to develop principles and metrics for measuring the effectiveness of the Pershing Square redesign, and its maintenance, programming and operations, in order to ensure that it achieves a broad array of sustainable outcomes.
* More details on assignment to be shared in class.

7. **Term Project Final Report Presentation – 20%**

Due: April 21

 - a. Assignment: Each team presents project final report findings.

8. **Class Participation – 10%**
 - a. Assignment: Students are expected to actively participate in group discussions throughout the semester. You should be regularly asking the instructors questions that help you better understand the material and how to apply the ideas you are learning to the specific issues you are interested in. We can't know what you don't know, so you have to interrupt us during presentations and ask for clarification if there's something that is unclear. Other students will appreciate you did as well.

Grading Criteria

Student grades will be based on the following general criteria:

1. Consistent and productive class participation is required. Participation can be based on questions or opinions about the readings or lectures, findings from class assignments, or insights from a student's own work or experience outside the classroom.
2. Comprehension of class presentations, guest speakers, site visits, and materials and lecture presentations as demonstrated through class participation and assignments.
3. Quality of critical thinking employed in research and assignments.

4. Skill in presentation, including oral and/or graphic presentations; ability to defend and support positions effectively.
5. Approximate guide:
 - A = your logic is well organized and easy to follow. Your arguments are supported by evidence and work together as a whole.
 - B = you do have some good arguments or assertions that are supported, but they were hard to follow and it wasn't always clear how they fit together overall and/or there were gaps in your logic.
 - C = your arguments or assertions are not clear or are not consistent with the instruction/assignment.

INCOMPLETE COURSE GRADE

A grade of IN Incomplete may be assigned as the final grade for the course when work is not completed because of documented illness or other “emergency” occurring after the tenth week of the semester. Arrangements for an IN and its completion must be initiated by the student and agreed to by the instructor prior to the final examination. Marks of IN must be completed within one year from the date of the assignment of the IN. If not completed within the specified time limit, marks of IN automatically become marks of IX (expired incomplete) with the exception of thesis, dissertation, and non-letter-graded courses, and are computed in the GPA as a grade of F (zero grade points).

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, 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 of the 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 <http://sarc.usc.edu> describes reporting options and other resources.

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, provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html

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.

CLASS SCHEDULE Current as of November 30, 2016, subject to change.

Introduction

1) January 13

INTRODUCTION:

Introduction of students and course materials. Includes introduction of Pershing Square and review of Pershing Square Project history. Introduction of Sustainability concepts and how they can be applied to a public space project, including: Physical, Environmental, Infrastructure, Economic, and Social dimensions of the project. Introduction of public space auditing, using case studies from several southern California projects, including Metro's First Last Mile Strategic Plan, the Metro Foothill Goldline Extension, the Michigan Avenue Neighborhood Greenway, and other national tools. Forming of project teams and discussion of project schedule, project planning and data needs.

Related Readings:

- + Chiesura, Anna. The role of urban parks for the sustainable city. *Department of Leisure, Tourism and Environment, Wageningen University Generaal Foulkseweg 13, Wageningen 6703 BJ, The Netherlands* Received 16 September 2002 ; received in revised form 23 June 2003 ; accepted 8 August 2000
- + Nasar, Jack. Creating places that promote physical activity: Perceiving is believing. Research Review. *Activeliving.org* August 2015
- + Harnik, Peter, Plowden, Jennifer, and Sargent, Jessica. The Economic Benefits of the Park & Recreation System in San José, California *The Trust for Public Land*. September 2016

2) January 20

Site visit to Pershing Square and Public Space Audit (May include a visit to Central Library)

The class will meet on site at Pershing Square and conduct a site audit and do photo documentation of existing conditions. If it can be arranged, the site visit will include a trip to the Los Angeles Central Library one block away, to view historic materials pertaining to the Square.

Related Readings:

- + Request for Qualifications and Request for Proposal for Pershing Square Redesign

3) January 27

Present Audit Findings and Turn in Site Audit Package

Students will briefly present the results of their site visit and audits to the class. The group will compile and summarize key take away themes from the presentations.

4) February 3

Review of City policy relating to sustainable open spaces and public realm design, and comparative review of other Parks agencies sustainability policies

Students will prepare for class by reviewing City of Los Angeles documented policy relating to the sustainability of parks and open space, as compared to policy developed by other state and federal agencies.

Related Readings:

- + LA Department of Recreation and Parks, Planning Page: <http://www.laparks.org/planning/park-improvements>
- + LA Department of Building and Safety Green Building:
<https://www.ladbs.org/services/green-building-sustainability>
<https://www.ladbs.org/forms-publications/forms/green-building>
- + LA Department of Sanitation:
<https://www.lacitysan.org>
<http://www.lastormwater.org/blog/category/green-streets/>
- + City of Los Angeles PLAN for Sustainability:
https://www.lamayor.org/sites/g/files/wph446/f/landing_pages/files/The%20pLAN.pdf
- + County of Los Angeles Low Impact Development Standards
- + City of Los Angeles Low Impact Development Manual
- + City of Los Angeles Rainwater Harvesting Program

- + Gallagher, Tim. Developing Sustainable Park Systems in Oregon A Component of the 2013-2017 Oregon Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. *Gallagher Consulting* June 2012
- + National Parks Service Green Parks Plan 2016
- + City of Bellevue. WA Environmental Best Management Practices & Design Standards 2016

5) February 10

Presentation of Pershing Square Design

The design and project client team will present the proposed project design to the class and take questions. Presenters will include: Pershing Square RENEW, Council District 14, City of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation, City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation, Agence Ter, S.A.L.T. Landscape Design, Deborah Murphy Design, CARS, Gensler

Related Readings:

- + *Agence Ter team proposal for Pershing Square project*

6) **February 17**

Sustainability Evaluation of Proposed Design

The class will discuss and evaluate the proposed Agence Ter Design, to determine which elements of sustainability are addressed, and which dimensions aren't addressed. Principles extracted from one Green project Rating Systems will be used as a guide.

Related Readings, Green Park Ratings Systems (may also include others as suggested by students):

- + Oregon Greenpark Scorecard
- + Parksmart GBCI Green Garage Ratings <http://www.usgbc.org/resources/parksmart-certification-standard>
- + LEED SITES the Sustainable Sites Initiative <http://www.sustainablesites.org/>
- + Living Building Challenge <https://living-future.org/lcc/requirements><https://living-future.org/case-study/mcgilvrapplepark>

7) **February 24**

Rating Systems Presentations

Students will present Criteria or Principles by which to evaluate the Agence Ter Design based on their review of a green project rating system of their choice.

8) **March 3**

Progress Review and Work Session

9) **March 10**

MID-TERM PRESENTATION: Presentation of Design Analysis & Sustainability Concepts (Client will be invited)

Student teams will present their analysis of the Agence Ter design, in the context of the Sustainability Principles they derive from the green project Rating System of their choice. Students will suggest which dimensions of sustainability are addressed in the design, which are not, and suggest additional design, programming, maintenance and operations issues which should be addressed in the design. Description of elements to be added will be conceptual, not detailed, and may both reflect the students' understanding of the proposed redesign, as well as the existing conditions.

10) **March 17**

Spring Break No Class

11) **March 24**

Measuring Success: Using Green Rating Systems as a Guide for developing Project Metrics and Indicators

Students will review the component parts of their chosen green project rating system in order to develop a comprehensive set of metrics and indicators that can be used to evaluate the success of the Pershing Square design, and the project, in terms of its sustainability, after it is implemented. As

feasible, students will identify baseline data relating to existing conditions at the Square, such as permeable surfaces, energy and water use and the like, in order to provide a comparison of existing conditions to expected results.

12) March 31

Sustainably Managing and Operating Open Space and Programming

The sustainability of a public spaces not only results from their design, but also from the standards by which they are maintained and operated. Further, staffing and programming choices also influence the outcomes of public space projects, and may encourage equitable access and socialization, local job production and revenue generation, to name a few things.

Guest Speaker TBA

Related Readings:

- + Healthy Parks/Healthy People San Francisco <http://sfrecpark.org/recprogram/healthy-parks-healthy-people/>

13) April 7

Sustainable Park Project Presentation

What does sustainability in public space design look like in Los Angeles? Examples of exemplary, sustainable public space design will be described and illustrated for the class.

Guest Designer TBA

Related Readings:

- + City Parks Alliance Case Studies <http://www.cityparksalliance.org/issues-a-resources>
- + Crissy Field, San Francisco Case Study <http://www.parksconservancy.org/assets/programs/cfc/pdfs/crissy-field.pdf>
- +

14) April 14

Progress Update and Group Work Session

15) April 21

Final Presentations/Final Projects Due (Client will be invited)

ADDITIONAL READINGS/RESOURCES

Active Living by Design: <http://activelivingresearch.org/toolsandresources/all>

National Recreation & Parks Association: <http://www.nrpa.org/research-papers/>

Institute at Golden Gate: <http://www.instituteatgoldengate.org/>

Trust for Public Land:

2016 Park Score

<http://parkscore.tpl.org/>

2016 City Park Facts

<https://www.tpl.org/2016-city-park-facts>

Economic Benefits of the Park & Recreation System in San Jose California

<https://www.tpl.org/how-we-work/research-libraryThe Economic Benefits of the Park & Recreation System in San José, California>

San Francisco Economic Value Report

<https://www.tpl.org/san-francisco-economic-value-report>

Public Spaces/Private Money The Triumphs and Pitfalls of Urban Park Conservancies

<https://www.tpl.org/public-spacesprivate-money>

City Parks Clean Water

<https://www.tpl.org/city-parks-clean-water>

In a Heat Wave, Parks are Literally the Coolest

<https://www.tpl.org/blog/how-to-combat-the-heat-island-effect>

City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks, Citywide Community Needs Assessment, 2009

Patrick Ferguson, Xiangyi Jing, Katelyn Leenhouts, & Hannah Woo The Los Angeles Parks Foundation: A Study of the 50 Parks Initiative *Sol Price School of Public Policy, USC*, May 2014

Fresno State Sustainable Parks and Recreation Community Initiative

<http://www.fresnostatenews.com/2016/01/25/fresno-state-partners-with-city-to-look-at-sustainable-parks-system/>

Fresno State's program is based on the Sustainable City Initiative at the University of Oregon. Twenty other universities and colleges in the U.S. have developed similar models. The Department of Recreation Administration also recently launched its Recreation Research and Service program, which also involves students and faculty providing planning and research for various parks and recreation agencies.