

ARCH698a

# The Future of California's Foodscapes

Instructor: Alison Hirsch (alisonh@usc.edu)



San Joaquin Valley, 2014. Photo by Gregory Urquiaga, UC Davis (<https://californiawaterblog.com>)

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This research seminar is intended to provide a platform to develop and discuss ideas and theories related to the full-year design-research studio (ARCH642) on the San Joaquin Valley. The emphasis for this course is (1) understanding the primary challenges of the landscapes of production in the Central Valley as they might be contextualized within larger speculations on the future of global food production; and (2) developing fieldwork methods to understand, record and interpret the current and projective environmental conditions and human dynamics defining the Valley today. Through reading responses and research assignments, students will develop a series of resources to reference for the year-long studio.

As stated below, evaluation will be largely dependent on active, engaged participation in readings and discussion, and a commitment to academic integrity. The course additionally intends to develop critical and interpretive abilities (of readings, images, projects, etc) and improve presentation skills. While we will start the course exploring the Central Valley – as perceived and conceived through time (in literature, image, map) – and then move on to inquiries into alternative forms of fieldwork, beginning October 10, the course readings and discussions will turn to speculations on environmental futures, food security and survival on a global scale. These large-scale visions and speculations are intended to open up the imagination to consider a broader (temporal and spatial) scale of impact for your studio projects.

## ASSIGNMENTS

### **I. Readings + Responses**

Each week there are assigned readings, students are responsible for bringing a reading response (300-500 words). This is intended to be a critical and interpretive response to the readings and should demonstrate you engaged the material thoughtfully and critically. Bring these to class and submit them at the end of class.

## II. Bibliography + Map/Image Inventory (3 groups), ONGOING, REVIEW DUE: September 5

Each group should tackle one of the following:

1. An **Annotated Bibliography** of books, journal articles, press, documentaries (etc) that are related to the Central Valley, San Joaquin Valley, Fresno/Madera Counties, and the futures of food production as related to landscape and urbanism. The Bibliography should be in Chicago Manual of Style, 17<sup>th</sup> edition (see [https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide/citation-guide-1.html](https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-1.html)) and should be organized into sections similar to the Bibliography listed on the ARCH642 syllabus. If there are links to articles include these, since this is intended to be a resource for the whole class throughout the year (please post as a Google Doc in our class folder). Annotations can be a 2-3 sentences and taken from abstracts or summaries using quotation marks where exact words are used.
2. A **Map Inventory** of the Central Valley/San Joaquin Valley/Fresno+Madera Counties with bibliographic information including website if digitized. This should be an electronic document with maps scanned from books, downloaded from digital collections or photographed from archives. I expect this group to look across archives and repositories including at USC (Special Collections), Huntington Library, Fresno Public Library, Fresno Historical Society (etc). This inventory should be made accessible to all classmates and instructor on Google Drive.
3. A historic **Image Inventory** of the Central Valley/San Joaquin Valley/Fresno+Madera Counties with bibliographic information including website if digitized. This should be an electronic document with images (can be photographs, paintings, prints, etc) scanned from books, downloaded from digital collections or photographed from archives. I expect this group to look across archives and repositories including at USC (Special Collections), Fresno Public Library, Fresno Historical Society (etc etc). This inventory should be made accessible to all classmates and instructor on Google Drive. Contemporary images might be included if documenting a past event or condition consequential to landscape/urbanism.

## III. Fieldwork Methods case presentation (groups of 2), DUE: September 19

With a partner, investigate creative fieldwork methods used by a designer, artist or social scientist pushing the bounds of standardize fieldwork methods. This is intended to create an inventory of fieldwork methods beyond the conventional to see how they can be conducive to creative intervention. Once discovered, you will be asked to succinctly present these methods to the class (5-7min) and submit the PowerPoint with all images labeled with proper sources, etc. These will be made accessible to all students in the class for reference.

## IV. Case Study Projects/Propositions in Agri-Urbanism (groups of 2), DUE: Oct 10-Nov 14 (sign up)

With a partner, investigate design projects/propositions that negotiate with large-scale agricultural territory. These can be speculative propositions or built projects. You will be asked to sign up for a date to present this case, using 40 minutes of classtime – a 30 minute presentation of the case and 10 minutes of Q+A/discussion. You will submit the PowerPoint with all images labeled with proper sources by November 14<sup>th</sup> and these will be made accessible to all students in the class for reference.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**Responsible Scholarship:** Ability to properly cite sources (text and image), demonstrating fullest scholarly integrity and adherence to academic standards: See: [https://dornsife.usc.edu/assets/sites/903/docs/Trojan\\_Integrity\\_-\\_Guide\\_to\\_Avoiding\\_Plagiarism.pdf](https://dornsife.usc.edu/assets/sites/903/docs/Trojan_Integrity_-_Guide_to_Avoiding_Plagiarism.pdf)

**Critical Reading:** Ability to critically read texts and form insights that are relevant to the contemporary context.

**Archival Work:** Ability to work with various resources of archives and critically interpret their value in terms of relevance for the present day.

**Case Study Evaluation:** Ability to examine, comprehend and critique the fundamental principles present in relevant precedents and to make informed choices about the incorporation of such principles into landscape architecture projects.

**Communication:** Ability to communicate a stance through short, succinct and well-structured logics – in writing and speaking formats.

### **GRADING BREAKDOWN**

*Participation in class discussions:	35%
Reading Responses:	15%
Bibliography/Visual Inventory:	15%
Fieldwork Methods Presentation:	15%
Case Study Presentation:	20%

\*Active, engaged participation in the course is critical to passing.

**Following academic standards for avoiding plagiarism is fundamental to passing this course and each of its assignments.**

### **COURSE SCHEDULE (Subject to Change!)**

#### **I. Central Valley**

##### **Week 1 (August 22): Introduction**

##### **Week 2 (August 29): CONTEXT**

###### **Required:**

McPhee, John. *Assembling California*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1994.

Reisner Mark. *Cadillac Desert: The American West and its Disappearing Water*. New York: Penguin, 1983.

CLASSTIME: Discuss readings + Alison to present some alternative fieldwork methods to assist in Assignment III

##### **Week 3 (September 5): A LAND OF MIGRANTS**

###### **Required:**

Mitchell, Don. *Lie of The Land: Migrant Workers and the California Landscape*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996.

Steinbeck, John. *The Grapes of Wrath*. New York: Viking Press, 1939.

CLASSTIME: Discuss readings + groups to briefly present their Assignment II

**DELIVERABLE: Submit Bibliography + Map/Image Inventories for review**

#### **II. Fieldwork**

##### **Week 4 (September 12): CULTURAL LANDSCAPES + FIELDWORK METHODS**

###### **Required:**

Appadurai, Arjun. "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy." *Public Culture* 2, 2

(1990), pp. 1–24.

Hayden, Dolores. "Urban Landscape History: The Sense of Place and the Politics of Space," in Paul Groth and Todd Bressi, eds. *Understanding Ordinary Landscapes*. New Haven: Yale University, 1997, pp. 111-133.

Hood, Walter. 1997. *Walter Hood: Urban Diaries*. Washington, D.C: Spacemaker Press.

CLASSTIME: Discuss readings

**\*Week 5 (September 19): CULTURAL LANDSCAPES + FIELDWORK METHODS**

Thompson, Gabriel, ed. *Chasing the Harvest: Migrant Workers in California Agriculture*. London/New York: Verso, 2017.

Holmes, Seth, and Philippe Bourgois. *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies: Migrant Farmworkers in the United States*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013. Pp. xi-xvii, 1-87 and 182-198.

CLASSTIME: Discuss readings + presentations (see below)

DELIVERABLE: 5-7min presentations on case study fieldwork methods (submit Powerpoint)

**\*NOTE: ALISON IS AWAY UNTIL MIDDAY (landing at LAX at 1pm). WE WILL HAVE SEMINAR DURING THE SECOND HALF OF STUDIO THAT DAY.**

**Week 6 (September 26): FIELDWORK IN FRESNO**

**Week 7 (October 3): MIDREVIEW WEEK**

CLASSTIME: Rehearse design narrative in class for October 5 mid-review + group feedback

DELIVERABLE: See above – come ready to rehearse

**III. Landscape Futures + Case Studies in Agri-Urbanism**

**Week 8 (October 10): THE FUTURE OF AGRICULTURE**

Required:

Conkin, Paul Keith. *A Revolution down on the Farm: The Transformation of American Agriculture since 1929*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2009.

Shiva, Vandana. *Who Really Feeds the World?: The Failures of Agribusiness and the Promise of Agroecology*. Berkeley, California: North Atlantic Books, 2016.

CLASSTIME: Discuss readings + presentations (see below)

DELIVERABLE: Case Study Presentation

**Week 9 (October 17): THE FUTURE OF FOOD**

Required:

Pollan, Michael. *Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals*. New York: Penguin, 2006.

Roberts, Paul. *The End of Food*. Boston: Mariner Books, 2009.

CLASSTIME: Discuss readings + presentations (see below)

DELIVERABLE: Case Study Presentation

**Week 10 (October 24): LANDSCAPE FUTURES**

**Lecture by Aroussiak Gabrielian**

Required

Tsing, Anna L. *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015.

CLASSTIME: Discuss readings + presentations (see below)

DELIVERABLE: Case Study Presentation

### **Week 11 (October 31): LANDSCAPE FUTURES**

Required

Klein, Naomi. *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. The Climate*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2014.

CLASSTIME: Discuss readings + presentations (see below)

DELIVERABLE: Case Study Presentation

### **Week 12 (November 7): LANDSCAPE FUTURES**

Required

Diamond, Jared. *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Survive*. Revised Edition. New York: Penguin, 2011.

CLASSTIME: Discuss readings + presentations (see below)

DELIVERABLE: Case Study Presentation

### **Week 13 (November 14): CASE STUDIES**

CLASSTIME: presentations (see below)

DELIVERABLE: Final 2 Case Study Presentations

### **Week 14 (November 21): THANKSGIVING BREAK (no school)**

### **Week 15 (November 28): FINALS REHEARSAL**

CLASSTIME: Rehearse final project narrative in class for Final Review + group feedback

DELIVERABLE: See above – come ready to rehearse

## **POLICIES**

### **Attendance Policy**

The School of Architecture's general attendance policy is to allow a student to miss the equivalent of one week of class sessions (three classes if the course meets three times/week, etc.) without directly affecting the student's grade and ability to complete the course. If additional absences are required for a personal illness/family emergency, pre-approved academic reason/religious observance, the situation should be discussed and evaluated with the faculty member and appropriate Chair on a case-by-case basis. For each absence over that allowed number, the student's letter grade will be lowered 1/3 of a letter grade (e.g., A to A-).

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 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.

Being absent on the day a project, quiz, paper or exam is due can lead to an "F" for that project, quiz, paper or exam or portfolio (unless the faculty concedes the reason is due to an excusable absence for

personal illness/family emergency/religious observance). A mid term or final review is to be treated the same as a final exam as outlined and expected by the University.

### **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.

### **Statement on Academic Integrity**

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. *SCampus*, the Student Guidebook, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00, while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A: <http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/SCAMPUS/gov/>. Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/>. The USC summary of how to avoid plagiarism: [http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct/ug\\_plag.htm](http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct/ug_plag.htm) and specific advice for grad students: [http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct/grad\\_ai.htm](http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct/grad_ai.htm) may also be useful.

### **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.