

ARCH642a: Academic Terrains

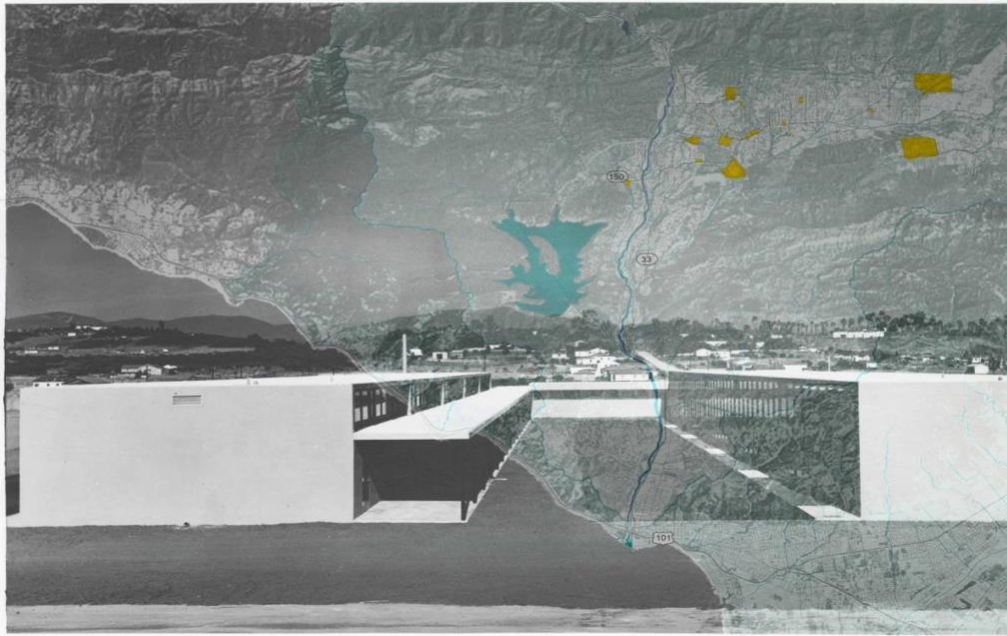
New directions in school landscape design

Fall 2019

Instructors:

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Course Description

This course will investigate the potential of school landscapes as physical, cultural and ecological infrastructure and learning environments. You will be asked to develop regional, site, and body scaled design strategies. Critical stances on the future of education will inform your design of functional spaces that respond to the realities of everyday learning environments.

There is no more important social space than a school. It is where we bring our future generations to learn about themselves, each other, and the world around them. Despite the dedication of teachers, administrators, staff and parents, the school itself, classrooms, offices, and fields, tells its own story. Too often the implicit message students experience in is that they live in a disconnected indifferent world where their imagination and unique qualities are not valued.

This studio will ask you to reframe the academic landscape at three scales, *recentering* and deepening school sites within a civic ecological geography, choreographing the movement of students and teachers across a site, and realigning school grounds and elements to students' specific cognitive, developmental and physical needs.

Ojai Valley schools will serve as sites and case studies. Because we have established long-term relationships with these institutions and the city of Ojai your research, analysis and proposed design interventions may inform fully realized design and implementation projects in the near future. Over 16 public and private schools are located in

the Ojai Valley ranging from nationally recognized college prep boarding programs to alternative boarding schools with unique educational philosophies to underperforming public schools, with higher than average rates of truancy and expulsion. The Ojai Valley community is recovering from the trauma and displacement of the Thomas Fire of 2017, which has decreased overall student enrollment and has exacerbated uncertainty as the District looks to cut costs while simultaneously addressing the urgent need for more resilient water, land and resource management. Across the Valley and State, schools are struggling to balance standardization and innovation, openness and safety in times of tremendous political and ecological upheaval. However, because of these shared challenges, the diversity of types, and schools' proximate locations, a rigorous design investigation of Ojai Valley schools will offer critical mass of impactful strategies for all school landscapes.

Learning Objectives

Refining and Developing Research Questions: Ability to formulate and communicate research questions verbally and visually that drive the design process.

Research: Ability to understand and deploy deliberate research methodologies and practices during the design process.

Critical Interpretation: Ability to critically read territories and sites across history, scales and disciplines and apply relevant insights to the design process. *Ability to self-critique and constructively participate in critiques of the work of classmates.*

On-site Fieldwork: Ability to conduct wide-ranging fieldwork, including interviews with critical organizations/persons, investigative research and observation, and interpretive visualization.

Investigative Skills: Ability to gather, assess, record, and comparatively evaluate relevant information and performance in order to support ideas across design scales.

Design Thinking: Ability to raise clear, precise critical questions, use abstract ideas to interpret information, consider diverse points of view, develop well-reasoned theories, *take a position* and test alternative outcomes against relevant criteria and standards.

Iterative Design Experimentation: Ability and willingness to take risks and try new design techniques, methods, materials, (etc). Ability to craft ideas through repeated processes of making and refinement.

Vision Creation: Ability to design bold multi-purpose landscape systems, which address future paradigms and spatially challenge the *status quo*.

Strategic Projects: Ability to identify site specific themes/ issues that materialize and anchor the vision in tangible projects at a number of scales that address localized systems, and communities.

Professional Communication Skills: Ability to write and speak effectively and use representational media appropriate both within the profession and with the general public. Ability to communicate a stance through short, succinct and well-structured logics.

Grading Breakdown

Fieldwork Assignments: 10%

Iterative modeling exercises: 10%

Futures Assignment: 5%

Theory as a Bridge Assignment: 5%

Development and Refinement of Theoretical Position: 5%

Site Design + Design-Research Development (drawings + required model): 25%

[quality, content, rigor and integration of progressive feedback]

Verbal-Graphic Presentations (Ojai/Mid/Pin-ups): 20%

[graphic/verbal clarity, persuasiveness, quality of presentation, etc; see criteria below]

Final Presentation: 20%

- Writing: Statement, written narrative, captions
- Drawings + Layout
- Models
- Overall clarity of argumentation

Each of the above will be evaluated according to the following criteria (as appropriate):

Academic Integrity: You will be closely evaluated for your adherence to academic standards on avoiding plagiarism and exhibiting responsible scholarship.

Design Intent: You will be evaluated based on their ability to articulate design rationale in all aspects of the project including the following: verbal, written, visual, and physical modelmaking.

Critical Input and Participation in Discussion: We will have many pin-ups and other opportunities to participate in critical discussion that pushes your project forward. You will be evaluated by your presence and participation in collective discussion and feedback sessions.

Process: You will be evaluated on the iterative process of design. You are expected to take risks in your design process and engage in design exploration. *Your project must develop over time and respond to critique.*

Applied Research: You will be evaluated on your research and analysis through verbal discussion, text, visual communication, and the demonstrated integration of the work into a given project.

Clarity: You will be evaluated on the clarity and comprehensiveness of your presentations. This includes the organization, cohesiveness, and clarity of your verbal narrative *and your graphic representation.*

Skill and Technique: You will be evaluated on the quality of your drawings, models and verbal written presentation, which demonstrate your mastery of the skills and techniques introduced in this course.

General Deliverables (specifics will depend on the particularities of each project)

Written Argument (100 - 300 words); DUE: progressive submissions

The “written argument” is more-or-less your narrative for presenting the project in its entirety but with bibliographic references/citations to sources, including visual materials that might illustrate your research.

Bibliography; DUE: progressive submissions

Using Chicago Manual of Style (17th edition), you will generate an annotated bibliography of texts that have enriched your design-research.

Theory as a Bridge: Educational Philosophies and Their Implications for Landscape Design Assignment; DUE: September 16

Comparative analysis of educational philosophies that situates one of your choice within contemporary discourse in landscape theory. This assignment will also form a critical component of your annotated bibliography of texts that have enriched your design-research.

Fieldwork I: Regional Analysis | Projective Recording Assignment; DUE: September 16

This interpretive mapping assignment asks you to research the ecological, social, cultural and economic challenges of the region and propose how the network of school landscapes can perform as critical infrastructure for the Ojai Valley community and the Ventura Watershed. Group focus areas: Hydrology/topography/water + land resource management, fire/wildlife habitat/urban - wildland interface, demographics/economics/land use, transportation infrastructure/trails/public transport, history/community/cultural resources/parks/public space.

Fieldwork II: Experiential Transect | Site Analysis + Visual Narrative; DUE: September 30

Chose an individual who uses your site (student, teacher, staff, animal) and follow their experience over the course of the day visually narrating what they experience moving from their home to the site and partaking in activities on the site. Tie this assignment to Fieldwork I. by expressing how the scale of the body informs the performance of the network of school landscapes.

Futures Assignment; DUE: progressive pin + mid-review (October 14)

Brief assignment intended to get you thinking about both anticipated plausible futures (existing projections) and speculative possibilities for school landscapes. You will submit a written statement forecasting the future of thinking in your areas of investigation while citing very specific studies and texts. This assignment is intended to spark imagination and research rigor in thinking about future innovation and change in outdoor learning environments. You will be evaluated for how you integrate this research into your developing projects.

Iterative Site Modeling Exercise; DUE: progressive pin (September 30) + mid-review (October 14) + final review (December 16)

These models should be measured (at a scale) and site referential but is not necessarily a site model. You might model dynamics or processes you hope to catalyze with your strategic visions or the actual territory conceptually or physically transformed. They should be developed progressively in study models culminating in a final model. The objective of this exercise is to stimulate spatial and organizational thinking as related to concepts and geographies you have been exploring. The hope is this exploratory model opens up new ways of thinking about your “site,” and catalyzes spatial design thinking.

Site Design/Design Development Drawings + Site Model; DUE: progressive pin ups and final review (December 16)

This particular “deliverable” will range for each site, however everyone will be required to generate a regional analysis, site plans, sections, design details, and final site models.

Course Schedule (subject to change)**General weekly schedule will be:**

Monday: Pin-up and/or desk crits with Mike+Aja

Wednesday: Mike conducts desk crits

Friday: Site visits, individual research, desk crits

Week 1	<u>Introductory Week</u> Monday (August 26) Wednesday (August 28) Friday (August 30)	Course Introductions Studio Introduction/Portfolio Review Site Visit Prep Desk Crits
Week 2	<u>Research + Site Analysis Week</u> Monday (September 2) Wednesday (September 4) Friday (September 6)	NO CLASS: Labor Day Philosophies of Education Research PIN UP: Theory as a Bridge Assignment *Ojai Site Visit #1 Overview
Week 3	<u>Research + Site Analysis Week</u> Monday (September 9) Wednesday (September 11) Friday (September 13)	Desk Crits Desk crits (individual research)
Week 4	<u>Research + Site Analysis Week</u> Monday (September 16) Wednesday (September 18) Friday (September 20)	PIN UP/ Discussion: Site Analysis I. Mapping Desk crits, Site Selection *Ojai Site Visit #2
Week 5	<u>Site Design/Research Development</u> Monday (September 23) Wednesday (September 25) Friday (September 27)	Desk Crits Desk Crits (individual research)
Week 6	<u>Site Design/Research Development</u> Monday (September 30) Wednesday (October 2) Friday (October 4) Sunday (October 6 th) (Optional event)	PIN UP / Discussion: Site Analysis II. + Iterative Site Modeling I. Desk crits or Optional Individual Site Research in Ojai Unscene LA event at Whittier Narrows
Week 7	<u>Pre-Review Week</u> Monday (October 7) Wednesday (October 9)	Desk crits Desk crits

	Friday (October 11)	(individual research)
Week 8	<u>Mid-Review Week</u> Monday (October 14) Wednesday (October 16) Friday (October 18)	Desk crits MIDTERM REVIEW: All Work to Date FALL BREAK
Week 9	<u>Integration of Feedback</u> Monday (October 21) Wednesday (October 23) Friday (October 25)	VERTICAL WORKSHOP VERTICAL WORKSHOP VERTICAL WORKSHOP
Week 10	<u>Integration of Feedback</u> Monday (October 28) Wednesday (October 30) Friday (November 1)	Desk crits (individual research) Desk crits
Week 11	<u>Site Design/Research Development</u> Monday (November 4) Wednesday (November 6) Friday (November 8)	Pin-up / Discussion Desk crits (LCW Conference, Aja in Yosemite) Desk crits (LCW Conference, Aja in Yosemite)
Week 12	<u>Site Design/Research Development</u> Monday (November 11) Wednesday (November 13) Friday (November 15)	Desk crits Desk crits *Ojai Site Visit #3 in-depth research
Week 13	<u>Site Design/Research Development</u> Monday (November 18) Wednesday (November 20) Friday (November 22)	(individual research) ASLA in SD Desk crits (individual research)
Week 14	<u>Site Design/Research Development</u> Monday (November 25) Wednesday (November 27) Friday (November 29)	Pin-up / Discussion Desk crits (individual research)
Week 15	<u>Refining Layout + Narrative</u> Monday (December 2) Wednesday (December 4) Friday (December 6)	Pin-up / Discussion Desk crits *Ojai Site Visit #4, Presentations to Schools

Week 16	<u>Refining Layout + Narrative</u> Monday (December 9) Wednesday (December 11) Friday (December 13)	Study Days Desk crits Desk crits
Week 17	<u>Study Days: FINALS PREP</u> Monday (December 16) Wednesday (December 18) Friday (December 20)	Final Critique Exams Winter Recess

Educational Philosophies/Philosophers to Research (Additions will be added to this list)

Maria Montessori, J Krishnamurti, Rudolf Steiner, John Dewey, Nel Noddings, Carol Gilligan, Paulo Freire

Required and Recommended Reading (subject to change)

Escobar, Arturo. “Designs for the Pluriverse Radical Interdependence, Autonomy, and the Making of Worlds,” 2018. <https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822371816>.

Malhotra, Meeta. “Relevance of Educational Contribution Of Jiddu Krishnamurti In The Present System Of Education.” *International Journal of Scientific Research and Management*6, no. 01 (February 2018). <https://doi.org/10.18535/ijssrm/v6i1.el07>.

Smith, Gregory A. “Place-Based Education.” *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education*, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190264093.013.95>.

Barry, Ellen “In Britain’s Playgrounds, ‘Bringing in Risk’ to Build Resilience” *The New York Times*. March 10, 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/10/world/europe/britain-playgrounds-risk.html>

Castella, Krystina. “Designing for Kids: Creating for playing, learning and growing.” Routledge 2019

Lange, Alexandra. “The Design of Childhood: How the Material World Shapes Independent Kids” Bloomsbury 2018.

Resources

<https://www.outdoor-learning.org/>

<https://transitiondesignseminarcmu.net/>

<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/the-avenue/2019/06/06/imagining-playful-learning-landscapes-for-every-community/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reggio_Emilia_approach

Educational Philosophies:

<https://oregonstate.edu/instruct/ed416/PP3.html>

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

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 Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

Support Systems:

Student Health Counseling Services - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call

engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call

suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call

engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) | Title IX - (213) 740-5086

equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu

Information about how to get help or help a survivor of harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following protected characteristics: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations.

Bias Assessment Response and Support - (213) 740-2421

studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions for appropriate investigation and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776

dsp.usc.edu

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Support and Advocacy - (213) 821-4710

studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101

diversity.usc.edu

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information.