

# **ARCH545 Urban Landscape: Contemporary History and Prospect**

**Units: 3**

**Spring 2023 / Tuesday 1-3:50pm**

**Location:** Harris Hall Room 115A

**Instructor:** Lauren Hamer

**Office:** NA

**Office Hours:** Tuesday 12-1pm or by Appointment

**Contact:** Laurenhamer@gmail.com / 415-697-9582

DRAFT

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is a synthetic overview of “landscape” as process, product, object and concept. You may already be aware of the lack of concrete definition for the term Landscape as well as the vast array of spaces and places it is used to describe. We will take as a given that landscape architecture and landscape architects have always been rootless and peripatetic in their intellectual foundations and that our discipline is enriched by its heterogeneous conceptual basis. We will draw on readings from other disciplines such as geography, ecology, environmental history, philosophy, comparative literature, architecture, anthropology, and visual art (to name a few). In the post-war period “landscape” has encompassed work that is executed at a variety of scales and has become implicated in larger narratives around environmental, spatial, social and racial justice. This course offers a variety of intellectual frameworks and concepts to help you, as a designer, gain a better understanding of landscape as a medium as well as the vast array of working methods and conceptual approaches that may enrich your work. There is no way to encompass all of the valid forms and paths of inquiry and ideation present in post-war and contemporary work. Instead I hope to offer you a structure for creating your own synthetic modes of research, inquiry, ideation and action. Each week provides a framework to describe landscape in a conceptual sense and then provide a number of built precedents for discussion. Formal analysis and critical appraisal of built work is also a key component of this course.

Topics to be covered in this course include: Landscape as Representation, as Critical Practice, as Semiotic, as Ecological Process, as Territory, as Memory/Memorial, as Public Realm, as Adaptation, as Labor, as Infrastructure and as Discipline.

## **LEARNING OBJECTIVES (Adapted from Dr. Alison Hirsch ARCH545 2022)**

The major course objective is the development of critical and interpretive skills of landscape designs, drawings and texts, as well as providing a strong theoretical foundation for emerging leaders in landscape architecture and architecture and allied fields.

1. Responsible Scholarship: Ability to properly cite sources (text and image), demonstrating fullest scholarly integrity and adherence to academic standards.
2. Critical Thinking: Development of critical and interpretive skills (of designs/sites/writings), as expressed verbally and in writing.
3. Critical Thinking: Developing ability to challenge hegemonic theories that exclude or suppress narratives that are essential to more inclusive understandings of land, landscape and public space.
4. Critical Thinking/Analysis: Ability to recognize how structures of oppression are legible and enforced in landscapes, texts, images.
5. Disciplinary Language/Vocabulary: Development of a strong landscape lexicon (language of landscape and some of its contested terms: Nature, Wilderness, Garden, Land, etc).
6. Disciplinary Knowledge: Understanding canonical texts essential to the formation of a theory of landscape architecture, and what has historically been left out.
7. Disciplinary Knowledge: Developing a foundation of knowledge critical to understanding and intervening in the built environment.
8. Disciplinary Knowledge: Recognizing and developing the ability to reference sites and texts critical to the

development of the field.

9. Site Interpretation: Understanding how to interpret designed landscapes as forms of critical practice.

10. Writing: Developing writing skills (crafting an argument, structuring a thesis and providing supportive evidence).

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## **COURSE NOTES**

Class sessions will be split into three parts: first a lecture by LH followed by a student-led presentation of a precedent project and, finally, a class discussion of readings and precedent. There will be a 15 minute break between lecture and student presentation.

All announcements will be posted to Blackboard.

All readings will be sent to you as a single zipped file at the start of the semester. This zip file will contain both your course readings and additional, optional readings, for your perusal.

All lecture slides will be available at the end of each lecture under "Content" on Blackboard following the lectures.

Please direct all communication to LH per email at [LaurenHamer@gmail.com](mailto:LaurenHamer@gmail.com)  
Please include "ARCH545" in the subject line

No late assignments are accepted without documented medical issue, etc.

All weekly readings must be completed in advance.

During discussion either myself or a student will take notes and upload these to Blackboard as a record of our conversations.

I will not respond to emails about "raising your grade" at the end of the semester.

## **GRADING**

Weekly Critical Inquiries: 30%

Discussion Leadership: 20%

Lexicon: 30%

Participation: 20%

### Grading Scale

Course final grades will be determined using the following scale

A 95-100

A- 90-94

B+ 87-89

B 83-86

B- 80-82

C+ 77-79

C 73-76

C- 70-72

D+ 67-69

D 63-66

D- 60-62

F 59 and below

## **ATTENDANCE**

The School of Architecture's attendance policy is to allow a student to miss the equivalent of one week of class sessions (so one class session for ARCH 566) 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 administrator 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 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.

## **CITATION**

All assignments must incorporate proper citations. All images should be cited, all quotations put in quotation marks and footnoted, and all paraphrased information footnoted. For this class, please use Chicago Manual of Style, 17th edition: <https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html>

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## **ASSIGNMENTS**

### **I WEEKLY CRITICAL INQUIRIES**

Each week you are asked to write 250 words responding to the readings as a totality and yet also asking at least one critical, interpretive question that could be a basis for class discussion.

These inquiries are due to Blackboard by Monday at 6pm. I will collect your responses and if class discussion is slow, will directly read your questions or your inquiries aloud to the class as a basis for discussion. Meeting the timed deadlines is critical for this to work so late submissions will not be accepted.

Reading Responses/Critical Inquiries will not be returned but will receive a mid-evaluation and a final grade. If I detect a consistent issue with the inquiries, I will contact the student directly.

Examples of successful inquiries will be provided on Blackboard. AGAIN: Reading Responses/Critical Inquiries will not be accepted after the class for which they are assigned. I will highlight some strong responses in the beginning of semester so you get a sense of what is expected for the assignment. Growth and development throughout the term will earn you a strong evaluation.

### **II DISCUSSION LEADERSHIP + PROJECT ANALYSIS**

Each week, beginning on January 24th, each lecture will be followed by a student-led discussion of a precedent project. The goal of the presentation is to clearly present the formal, built-elements of the project as well as to relate the project to the readings in terms of the thinking of the designers (if known) or by using the readings as a lens for interpretation of the project. Presenters should be critical of the project, not necessarily celebratory – there are always missed opportunities or doubts that you may bring to the discussion.

Groups should feel free to send me discussion questions ahead of time. You will be expected to research the project, to scan books for images and, in short, to go well, well beyond a google image search. I also encourage you, if appropriate, to reach out to the designer of the project with a few short questions.

You will sign up for these presentations by the end of the first week as I will be sending you a sign up sheet by email via blackboard. You may propose an alternate case study if desired!

### III LEXICON

def: The vocabulary proper to some department of knowledge or sphere of activity (OED).

A lexicon is a reference tool comprised of a list of keywords explaining the vocabulary of a field, discipline or profession. Since the descriptive terms of any body of knowledge impact the analytical, critical and creative processes – the thinking, evaluating, creating and making phases—a lexicon is not only a dictionary. It is a foundation of core knowledge and values.

Students are required to create their own landscape architecture lexicon. It should synthesize what is gleaned from the required readings and lectures into a format that becomes a reference tool for your future studies and practice. The intention of the assignment is to sharpen critical skills and most particularly challenge you to be more precise and deliberate with the use of language and its intentionality.

The lexicon should contain 8-10 words from the following list. If you would like to propose additional keywords, get advanced approval from your instructor.

List: aesthetics, agency, beauty, choreography, climate, community, culture, cultural landscape, democracy, duration, ecology, ecosystem, environment, field, formal, garden, global(ization), habitat, hybrid/hybridity, image, industrialization, informal, infrastructure, justice, labor, land, landscape, memory, matter, Modernism, Modernity, modernization, Nature/natural, resource, network, park, participation, picturesque, place, planet(ary), Post-Modernity, precarity, process, program, property/tenure, public space, reciprocity, remediation, representation, resilience, reclamation, restoration, risk, site, space, species, stewardship, sublime, sustainability, system, urbanism, urbanization, technology, wild/wilderness

Format: On a regular basis—after each class or each week—outline and write a new entry for a couple of your lexicon's keywords that synthesizes your evolving understanding of the word. Refine and edit your other entries. Include specific citations to the class readings and/or lectures. Each entry should define the keyword in several voices (noting author and date) including your own, explain the evolving meaning and significance of the word, and suggest the relevance of the word today.

- Do not wait until just before the deadlines to write your entries. Write regularly, as a mode of thinking and synthesizing.
- Each keyword entry should be 1-3 pages long by the end of the semester. It should not be just a list of quotations, but include a written interpretation/synthesis in your own voice of any quotations included. It should be highly analytical.
- Organize the keywords alphabetically and start with an etymology or origin of the term.
- Each entry in your lexicon should include a short bibliography of the readings that you drew upon, listed alphabetically by author.
- You may incorporate images and diagrams in your entries.

FOR THE FINAL, EACH TERM SHOULD INTEGRATE AT LEAST THREE READINGS PLUS AT LEAST ONE OUTSIDE SOURCE (peer-reviewed; or not popular press – could be Places, Landscape Architecture Magazine, etc.)

Example Lexicon: Raymond Williams, *Keywords* (1976) (cultural theory and the humanities)

DUE DATES:

Your first draft of the lexicon will be due to the Blackboard assignments uploader: March 28  
Final lexicon date TBD based on finals schedule.

## **SCHEDULE:**

### **0 - JAN 10: Course Introduction - What is Landscape?**

Syllabus Introduction, Instructor and Student Introductions

Readings:

DW Meinig "The Beholding Eye"

Thomas Hardy "Jude the Obscure" (Single Page Fragment)

Open Class Discussion

### **1 - JAN 17: Landscape As Critical Practice**

Readings:

Girot, Christophe. "Four Trace Concepts"

James Corner, "Recovering Landscape as Critical Cultural Practice" in Corner, ed. *Recovering Landscape* (1999).

Elizabeth Meyer, "Situating Modern Landscape Architecture"

Tschumi, "Disjunctions"

CASE STUDY: Tschumi (et al.) - Parc de la Vilette, FR

### **2 - JAN 24: Landscape as Representation (Land Art and Landscape Rep)**

Readings:

Cosgrove, "Prospect, Perspective and the Evolution of the Landscape Idea,"

Corner, "Representation and Landscape"

Adams, "Joseph Beuys Radical Ecology"

Smithson, "Frederick Law Olmsted and the Dialectical Landscape,"

CASE STUDY GROUP 1: Bas Smets - Continuously Habitable Zones, PT

### **3 - JAN 31: Landscape As Semiotic**

Readings:

Lucius Burckhardt, "Warum ist die Landschaft Schoen? (Why is the Landscape beautiful?)"

Heidegger, "Building, Dwelling, Thinking"

Kienast, "Illusion and Reality" + "Gardens and Nature"

Weilacher, "Ten Theses from Dieter Kienast"

CASE STUDY GROUP 2: Vogt Landschaftsarchitekten - Novartis Campus Park, CH

### **4 - FEB 7: Landscape as Urban Process**

Readings:

Berrizbeitia, "Re-Placing Process" in Czerniak and Hargreaves, eds. *Large Parks* (2007)

Gilles Clement, "In Praise of Vagabonds" from *Planetary Garden*

Jacobs, "Introduction" in *Life and Death of Great American Cities* (1967)

Optional (but required for the presenting group):

Weiss, Burghardt, Gaussmann et al., "Nature Returns to Abandoned Industrial Land: Monitoring Succession in Urban Industrial Woodlands in the German Ruhr," in Kowarik and Korner, eds. *Wild Urban Woodlands* (2005): 143-162.

CASE STUDY GROUP 3: Natur-Park Schoeneberger Suedgelaende, DE

## **5 - FEB 14: Landscape as Territory**

Readings:

Dang, Tiffany, "Decolonizing Landscape" in *Landscape Research Journal*, Vol 46 No 7 (2021): 1004-1016

Agence Ter, "Introduction," *Territories* (2008) (Expt, to be added to PDFs)

Raxworthy, Julian, "The Landscape of Practices: Decolonizing Landscape Architecture"

Rod Barnett, "Designing Indian Country" in *Places*, October 2016.

CASE STUDY GROUP 4: Chris Grosset et al, Kinngaaluk Territorial Park, Belcher Islands, Canada, 2010

## **6 - FEB 21: Landscape as Ecology**

Readings:

Ian McHarg, "An Ecological Method," in *Landscape Architecture* (1967): 105-107

Anne Spirn, "The Authority of Nature," in *Nature and Ideology*, Wolschke-Bulmah, ed (199): 249-259.

Fritz Steiner, "The Ghost of Ian McHarg," *Log Magazine* no 13/14 (2008): 147-151.

James Corner, "Ecology and Landscape as Agents of Creativity," In Thompson and Steiner, eds., *Ecological Design and Planning* (1997)

CASE STUDY GROUP 5: Mosbach Paysagistes - Phase Shifts Park, Taiwan 2011-2020

## **7 - FEB 28: Landscape as Strata (Memory)**

Readings:

Erika Doss, "Death Art and Memory in the Public Sphere,"

Sara Zewde, "Transatlantic Memory: material and Immaterial design at the Valonga Wharf,"

Andrea Roberts, "Haunting as Agency," in *ACME Intl Journal for Critical Geographies*

CASE STUDY GROUP 6: TBD

## **8 - MAR 7: Landscape as Public Realm**

Readings:

Olmsted, "Justifying the Value of a Public Park"

Lefebvre, "The Right to the City" in *Writing on Cities*, Kofman and Lebas, eds. (skim)

Mitchell, Don, "To go Again to Hyde Park," in *The Right to the City* (2003): 13-42.

Optional (but required for the presenting group):

Sennett, Richard, "The Fall of Public Man" (1974): 3-44.

CASE STUDY GROUP 7: TBD

## **MAR 14: SPRING BREAK**

### **9 - MAR 21: Landscape as (Climate) Adaptation**

Guest Speaker: Lauren Micir, AECOM NY  
Project Manager of the Lower Manhattan Coastal Resiliency Project (LMCR)

Readings:

EDC "Lower Manhattan Climate Resilience 2019"  
Ford, Norgaard, "Denial to Resistance" (skim)  
Nordenson, Guy, *Rising Currents and Palisades Bay* (2010)

Optional (But required for presenting group):  
Lotsma, Bart, "Synthetic Regionalization: The Dutch Landscape Toward a Second Modernity"

CASE STUDY GROUP 8: Arcadis Landscape & Urbanism - Zuidpolder Landscape Park, NL  
(Please provide backgrou via the Room for the River program in Netherlands, SEE Instructor)

### **10 - MAR 28: Landscape as Labor/Care**

Guest Speaker: Michelle Arevalo Franco, OSU Knowlton School of Architecture

Readings:

Franco, Michelle, "Invisible Labor: Precarity, Ethnic Division, and Transformative Representation"  
Southern Poverty Law Center, "Close to Slavery: Guestworker Programs in the United States" (2013)  
Anita Berrizbeitia, "Bosspark Amsterdam" in *Large Parks*

CASE STUDY GROUP 9: Bos Park Amsterdam

### **11 - APR 04: Landscape as Infrastructure**

Tentative Guest Speaker: Annelies de Nijs of Horizonte (Brussels, BR) and formerly of Agence Ter, FR

Readings:

Alex Wall, "Programming the Urban Surface," in Corner, ed. *Recovering landscape* (1999): 233-249.  
Anita Berrizbeitia, "Scales of Undecidability," in Czerniak, Ed., *Case: Downsvie Park* (2001): 116-124  
Belanger, Pierre, "Landscape as Infrastructure," in *Landscape Journal* vol 28, no. 1 (2009); 79-95.

CASE STUDY GROUP 10: Atelier Loidl - Parc Gleisdreieck, Berlin  
See: Books by LOIDL (from instructor) and you can contact this office

### **12 - APR 11: Landscape as Duration**

Readings:

Hunt, JD, "Lordship of the Feet," in *Landscape Design and the Experience of Motion*, Michel Conan, ed.  
Dewey, John, "Art as Experience" (Chp 1)  
Girot "Vision in Motion: Representing Landscapes in Time"

Latz, "The idea of Making Time Visible," In *Topos* Issue 33 (2000): 94-99.

CASE STUDY GROUP 11: Georges Descombes – Voix Suisse (Swiss Path)

See: Marc Treib, *The landscapes of Georges Descombes*

### **13 – APR 18: Landscape as Terrain Vague**

Readings:

Picon, "Anxious Landscapes"

Sola Morales, "Terrain Vague," in *Anyplace* (1995)

A Huyssen, "Introduction" in *Present Pasts Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory* (2003)

Georges Descombes, "Doing Almost Nothing"

CASE STUDY GROUP 12: Mauerpark Berlin or Latz + Partner – Landschaftspark Duisburg Nord, DE

### **14 – APR 25: Landscape as Discipline (Final Class – Possible Field Trip to KX Labs, Chinatown)**

Tentative Guest Speaker: Tim Switzer from Terremoto Landscape

Readings:

Raxworthy, Julian, "Introduction" from *Overgrown: Practices between Landscape Architecture + Gardening*.

NO GROUP PRESENTATION AND NO RESPONSES ARE DUE

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## **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](http://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](http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct).

Support Systems:

*Counseling and Mental Health* – (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call [studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling](http://studenthealth.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](http://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) 740-9355(WELL), press "O" after hours



- 24/7 on call [studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault](http://studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault) Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

*Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)* - (213) 740-5086 | Title IX - (213) 821-8298  
[equity.usc.edu](http://equity.usc.edu), [titleix.usc.edu](http://titleix.usc.edu) Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298  
[usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care\\_report](http://usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report) Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity | Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

*The Office of Disability Services and Programs* - (213) 740-0776 [dsp.usc.edu](http://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 Campus Support and Intervention* - (213) 821-4710  
[campussupport.usc.edu](http://campussupport.usc.edu) 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](http://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](http://dps.usc.edu), [emergency.usc.edu](http://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](http://dps.usc.edu) 11  
Non-emergency assistance or information

