

Crit 570: Reimagine Payahuunadü: A Speculative Ecology

Units: 4

Summer 2022—2 week intensive

Location: Hybrid: Downtown Los Angeles and Lone Pine (field trip)

Instructors: Suzanne Lacy and Lauren Bon

Office: Online or Mateo Grad Building

Office Hours: by appointment

Contact Info: lacys@usc.edu, laurenmetropolis@gmail.com

Adobe Help: Nikhil Murthy

Hours of Service: 10-5 m-f

Contact Info: nmurthy@usc.edu

roskihelpdesk@usc.edu

IT Help: ITS Customer Support Center

Hours of Service: 24 hours per day, 7 days per week; Telephone: 213-821-1414

Email support: consult@usc.edu

Hours for email support: Monday-Friday, 8am-6pm **Contact Info:** Hayk Avetiysyan,

havetisy@usc.edu 213-740-5555, ext. 11414

Course Description:

Payahuunadü – *Land of the Flowing Water*, is the place the Nüümü – *the People* (Owens Valley Paiute), call home, a place where they have lived since time immemorial. In this intensive course, students will spend 4 days in the Owens Valley, a deep valley 75 miles long in California's Eastern Sierra, and discuss the colonization of landscape by Los Angeles, and, by extension, the Greater West. They will trace the birthplace of the Los Angeles water source on Mount Whitney, visit the desiccated Owen's Lake, drained of water by Los Angeles, and follow the concrete channels that carry the water back to the L.A. River--site of a monumental speculative ecology artwork, *Bending the River*, by Lauren Bon and Metabolic Studio.

The Metabolic Studio has brought an artists' voice to a conversation on a state and city level about the responsibility of creative practice to shift the narrative about our common resources like water, the air we breathe, our labor and our topsoil. Taking three of Bon's works in this area as a reference, the students will spend five days on creative work teams preparing their own project-based responses to specific LA River sites in downtown Los Angeles, exploring relationships between ecology, community, water, and social practice art/performance.

In this course we will explore the concept of post-human infrastructure through the construction of speculative ecologies centered around water-based eco-zones. Speculative ecology is a discipline that focuses on the development of hypothetical or "what-if" scenarios for ecological systems. The aim of speculative ecology is to promote ecological regeneration and resilience. We will start by examining the ways in which human infrastructure has impacted these eco-zones and identify the challenges they face. Each student team will choose a specific eco-zone and explore it in-depth, addressing their biggest concern for this area; they will work with the Metabolic Studio team to analyze and photograph a site and propose a speculative ecology project as a final project.

The question of "art" is ever present in this course. We will examine engaged, participative and social art practice in terms of the artist's body and the artist's acts/actions, as well as the temporality, materiality and spatiality of its presentation. Who makes it, to what effect, and what remains?

Students at the graduate level from all disciplines are encouraged to join this interdisciplinary course. Advanced undergrads by permission of the instructor. The course begins on Monday May 15 through Thursday May 26.

Learning Objectives

Describe how the water sources for the City of Los Angeles originate in the Owens Valley and culminate in Los Angeles, and how the Los Angeles River functions within the context of federal, state and local dialogues that are both topical and pertinent to the climate and extinction crisis.

Describe how ongoing durational art practices intersecting with ecological sciences and the socio-political sphere can generate a deeper understanding of the relationships between an artist's intentions, the community formed within a work, the series of contexts that are part of the work, and the outcomes of a work.

Work collaboratively to produce discussions and a final presentation with/for their colleagues in the class.

Prerequisites Graduate Status, any discipline

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required

Students are expected to have computers and skills necessary to produce research analyses and papers. Students should have basic familiarity with photographic and video technologies if they plan to create art projects in response to assignments. Roski provides Adobe Creative Cloud applications and Lab provides cameras and lighting equipment.

Required Readings – selections from:

Jame Bridel, *Ways of Being*

Newton and Helen Harrison, *The Time of the Force Majeure*, Prestel

Mierle Laderman Ukeles, *Maintenance Art Manifesto*

Matthew F. Vessel and Herbert H. Wong, *Natural History of Vacant Lots*

Susan Griffin, *Woman in Nature, the Roaring Inside her*

The Real Experiment, Allan Kaprow, in *Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life*, ed. Jeff Kelley

Steal Us a River, chapter in *The Dreamt Land*, by Mark Arax

Savage Dreams, *A journey to the Hidden Wars of the American West*, Sierra Club Books, Rebecca Solnit, 1994

William DeBuys, *A Great Aridness: Climate Change and the Future of the American Southwest*, Oxford

University Press, Oxford 2011

William L. Fox, *Playa Works: The Myth of the Empty*, University of Nevada Press, Reno

Vandana shiva reader, 2014, University Press of Kentucky

Theodor Schwenk, *Sensitive Chaos: The Creation of Flowing Forms in Water and Air*, Schockin Books

Websites to visit

Women's Environmental Art Directory <https://www.weadartists.org>

Newton and Helen Harrison <https://theharrisonstudio.net>

Metabolic Studio <https://metabolicstudio.org>

Assignments:

Daily Journal

Record observations, questions, and questions on readings in your journal each day. You will be required to show this to the instructor and it will be relevant for your final project. At the end of the session you will be required to present a short paper on your personal reflections and learnings.

Collaboration and Citizenship

You will be graded on your demeanor of respect for your classmates, willingness to carry your share of the workload and clean up, and ability to participate equally with team members.

Oral Presentations

Throughout the class, you will be asked to present your work to the class and discuss issues that are arising in your research. You will be graded on your ability to actively engage with each other and the faculty.

Final Project

Your final speculative ecology project, presented as a team, should include literary references, visual material, and text, and be presented orally as a power point and as a printed proposal.

Grading Breakdown

10%	Participation, including timeliness, cleaning up, and other citizenship attributes
20%	Daily Journal with contributions from each day of the class
20%	Final oral presentation
50%	<u>Final Project</u>
100%	Total

Assessment:

Grading Scale: A indicates work of excellent quality; B of good quality; C of average quality; D of below average quality; and F indicates inadequate work. NOTE: THERE ARE NO EXTENSIONS FOR ASSIGNMENTS EXCEPT FOR FAMILY / HEALTH EMERGENCIES, in which case a medical certificate must be presented

Grading Scale

A	95-100
A-	90-94
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82

Assignment Submission Policy

Assignments must be submitted to Suzanne and Lauren (via email) by the end of day on May 28th, as we will need to submit grades shortly after this.

Attendance and Late Policy

Students are expected to attend all sessions unless they have a medical reason not to. Tardiness for meetings will impact your grade. Given that this is an intensive course, missing a single day will impact severely on your grade.

COURSE SCHEDULE (Subject to change)

Dates of Class: between May 15 – May 25

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
			Zoom Q&A Orientation? Reading assng 1 hour 6 hours reading		12 USC Graduation	
14 Mothers Day	15 – LA Orientation: Metabolic studio Prj LA exhib Student intro @ mateo? 6 hours + 2 meal – class	16 - LA What is speculative ecology? Workshops at the Moon Form groups 6 hours – class time	17 – Lone Pine Water flow Aqueduct Abundance Jaime Mining/defens e 8 class time 2 hours group	18 – Lone Pine Mike Fraiser 8 class time 2 hours group	19 – Lone Pine Kathy Bancroft 8 class time 2 hours group	20 – return LA Meet in work groups Stop by MOAH/Andy C. 6 class time 3 hours group
21	22 – LA Workshop 6 hours group	23 – LA Workshop 6 hours group	24 – LA Workshop 6 hours group	25 – LA Final Present 6 hours+ 2 meal	26	Memorial day weekend starts

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.

Student Conduct Code

<https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/> 11.12

- A. Acquisition of term papers or other assignments from any source and the subsequent presentation of those materials as the student’s own work or providing term papers or assignments that another student submits as their own work.
- B. Distribution or use of notes or recordings based on university classes or lectures without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than individual or group study. This includes, but is not limited to, providing materials for distribution by services publishing class notes. This restriction on unauthorized use also applies to all information, which had been distributed to students or in any way had been displayed for use in relationship to the class, whether obtained in class, via email, on the Internet or via any other media. (See Section C.1 Class Notes Policy).
- C. Recording a university class without the express permission of the instructor and announcement to the class. Recording can inhibit future free discussion and thus infringe on the academic freedom of other students as well as the instructor.

Equity Statement

By registering for this course, you are agreeing to a social contract. We recognize that in order to establish the conditions by which we will collectively and individually develop a practice of freedom, we must leave our preconceptions and biases outside of the classroom. Confronting and undoing the work of oppressive indoctrination requires us to unlearn and *relearn* modes of thought and existence in a space of generosity, support, and mutuality.

Every member of this class has the right to freedom of discrimination pertaining to citizenship, race, ancestry, ethnicity, cultural expression, class, disability, place of origin, skin color, religious belief, sexual orientation, gender expression, age, record of offenses, marital status, and family status. This applies to all areas of shared space and related classroom activities including interactions with faculty, visitors, colleagues, and the class as a whole. By registering for this course, you acknowledge that you will be an active and engaged member of this community. You consent to uphold, and when appropriate, advocate for the practice and maintenance of this freedom.

Support Systems:

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call
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

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 "0" after hours – 24/7 on call

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, 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

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

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

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 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.

Office of the Ombuds - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)

ombuds.usc.edu A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.