

USC School of Architecture

Course Arch 538 Planting Design

Units: 2

Fall 2023 Thursdays from 2:00 – 3:50 pm Pacific Time

Location: MLA Corner, Third Floor Studio Space

Instructor: Sally Reynolds, PLA ASLA

Office: Virtual <https://usc.zoom.us/j/2313604428?pwd=WTN1aDMxQW1pVkRxbGFGS2hjTkV3UT09>

Office hours or meetings with students: Thursdays 4 pm or as arranged with the instructor

Contact Info: Email: sallyr@usc.edu Cell in Case of Emergency: 510 368 0136

IT Assistance: <https://itservices.usc.edu/students/>

“In biological systems there are no parts, only participants.” Hans Peter Duerr 1929-2014



“... the tension in which nature now exists; its continued disappearance in the wild; its expanded potential in urban and suburban areas. Wild spaces may be shrinking, but nature still exists. The front lines of the battle for nature are not in the Amazon rain forest or the Alaskan wilderness; the front lines are in our backyards, medians, parking lots, and elementary schools. The ecological warriors of the future won't just be scientists and engineers, but gardeners, horticulturalists, land managers, landscape architects, transportation department staff, elementary school teachers and community association board members.”

Planting in a Post- Wild World by Thomas Rainer and Claudia West

Course Description

This course will provide practical and implementable tools and theory to build methodologies in planting design with a focus on the complex qualities of designed plant communities. Lectures, readings and case studies will encompass a diversity of planting design practices with specific intention and purpose.

Assignments will examine and illustrate principles and methods of planting design that address contemporary issues of climate resilience, the role of vegetation in landscape performance, planting as artistic media and composition, cultural expression and meaning, and as a source of food, medicine and other products.

Planting design is the nexus of the arts, science and social aspects of landscape design. It requires multifaceted decisions to assess site, climate, ecological, cultural and program requirements. The development of planting design with regionally appropriate vegetation is a constantly evolving sub discipline in landscape architecture that is enhancing and developing with advancing technology, resources and understanding of climatic conditions.

Students will implement practical tools for developing site analysis and resilient plant selection and design. Field trips and guest lectures will illustrate excellence in the profession of landscape architecture theory and practice via guided visits of completed works in the Los Angeles region.

This is a hands-on class that will require active engagement in every class. If you miss a class you will need to make up any work that is done during the class time. Your classmates have a wide range of experience and knowledge in horticulture, cultural practices and technology. Collaborative work will be required, and each student is expected to do a fair share of each group assignment.

Learning Objectives

- Develop varied approaches to planting design that respond to the range of scales involved in the practice of Landscape Architecture from climate change to client soil texture.
- Using site assessment data and tools develop site analysis documentation specifically for planting design purposes.
- Develop appropriate plant palettes based on site conditions, project program and additional objectives.
- Create planting design and documentation that utilizes vegetation as a medium to create well defined outdoor spaces, provide quantifiable landscape performance benefits and social/cultural value.
- Develop preliminary skills in CAD and Land fx software to document planting plans and schedules.

Prerequisite: Arch 537 or Permission of the Instructor

Preliminary Course Schedule

Subject to change.

	Topics/Daily Activities	In Class Activity	Assignment
Week 1 Aug 24	Course Introduction & Overview	Class Discussion & Campus Walk for Assign. #1	Assignment #1 and Reading #1
Week 2 Aug 31	Site Analysis & Planting Design	Pin Up Discussion Assign 1, Site Analysis Lecture & Field Exercise	Assignment #2
Week 3 Sept 7	Structure in Planting Design	Pin Up Discussion Assign 2, Lecture Structural qualities of plants and space making	Assignment #3 and Reading #2
Week 4 Sept 14	Planting Plan Documentation Methods	Pin Up Discussion Assign 3, CAD / LandFX Training Session	Assignment #4
Week 5 Sept 21	Field Trip 1	Downtown LA (or CSULA) tbd	<i>Assignment – Field Notes & Photo documentation methods</i>
Week 6 Sept 28	Guest Lecture – Judy Venonsky, OLIN	Guest Lecture and Discussion	Assignment # 5– Document site and planting in Cad, Introduce Midterm Project
Week 7 Oct 5	Designing Plant Communities, Ecological Palette Development	Midterm WorkSession	Cont. Working on Midterm
Week 8 Oct 12	Fall Recess No Class		
Week 9 Oct 19	Midterm & Plant Performance Lecture	Mid Term Pin Up + Plant Performance Lecture – Pollinators, Bloom Sequence, Combinations, Native vs Non Native, Water Usage, Culture	Assignment #6 and Seasonal Cycle / Performance Diagramming of Midterm Design
Week 10 Oct 26	Field Trip 2	Garden Landscape (Descanso, date tbc)	<i>Assignment – Field Notes & Photo Documentation</i>
Week 11 Nov 2	Aesthetics and Maintenance	Maintenance Lecture, Irrigation	Assign Case Study Project with Relevant Readings
Week 12 Nov 9	Field Trip 3	Nursery (Amigos or C&S)	Continue working on Case Study
Week 13 Nov 16	Case Studies	Case Study Presentations, Assign Final Project, Site Selection Walk	Reading #5, Assign Final Project
Week 14 Nov 23	Thanksgiving Break No Class		
Week 15 Nov 30	Workshop (model)	Lecture – Planting Practice – Nursery Trade, Final Project Desk Crits	Final Project Development
FINAL Dec 7	Final Presentation	Final Project Presentations 10 min each	

Preliminary list of Field Trip Locations –Exact Dates and Sites TBD

Downtown LA Sites:

- US Federal Courthouse 1st Street – Studio MLA
- LAPD HQ – RELM
- GRAND PARK – RIOS
- BANK OF AMERICA PLAZA – Peter Walker

East LA Site

- CAL STATE LA DORMS – RELM
- ARLINGTON GARDEN –

Nursery

- Amigos Nursery or C&S Nursery

Garden Visit

- Descanso Garden
- Huntington (extra credit most likely a Saturday date in November)

Virtual / Zoom Guest Lectures – Final Dates and Topics TBD

OLIN Living Systems Specialist – Judy Venonsky, project tbd

Other Lecture – TBD

Course Notes

Students will be expected to utilize in person site observations, site documentation, research, simple physical modelling and spatial design skills.

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required

Students will utilize hand sketching, Adobe Suite, Auto Cad, Land Fx and simple physical modelling. If students have proficiency with digital modelling they may use them as an alternative. Additional information may include how to access free versions of the products if available. Link information for the [USC Computing Center Laptop Loaner Program](#). Link information for software support and availability. USC Technology Support Links [Zoom information for students](#), [Blackboard help for students](#), [Software available to USC Campus](#).]

USC technology rental program

We realize that attending classes online and completing coursework remotely requires access to technology that not all students possess. If you need resources to successfully participate in your classes, such as a laptop or internet hotspot, you may be eligible for the university's equipment rental program. To apply, please submit an application. The Student Basic Needs team will contact all applicants in early August and distribute equipment to eligible applicants prior to the start of the fall semester.

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

All readings and assignments will be posted on Blackboard and must be submitted on Blackboard for credit.

All readings must be completed before the class meeting in which they have been assigned. Readings will be supplied online, posted on Slack and Blackboard and in Class Google Drive folder in advance of the class they are assigned for.

Description and Assessment of Assignments

Students will be expected to utilize in person site observations, site documentation, research, simple physical modelling and spatial design skills.

Participation

Class participation is based on active involvement in class discussions, pin ups, field trips and guest

lectures. Attendance alone will not be considered participation.

Grading

Individual work is expected to be completed by students per the University academic conduct policies. Group work requires an equal level of effort by all group members. Students will provide a peer review of the group work and be evaluated on their contributions to the group products. Students are expected to spend 4 hours of time per week on homework, reading or other preparation for class.

Grading Breakdown

Field Trip Notes – Field Visits	15%
Homework Assignments	35%
Mid Term Assignment	15%
Final Assignment	25%
Class Participation	10%

Grading Scale

100 – 95	A
94 – 90	A-
89 – 85	B+
84 – 80	B
79 – 75	B-
74 – 70	C+
69 – 65	C
64 – 0	Fail

Assignment Submission Policy

Assignments will need to be submitted on Blackboard. Late assignments will have grade reductions of 1/2 letter grade per day late. Assignments submitted over one week late will not be accepted.

Grading Timeline

[Announce a timeline for when students can expect grading and feedback from the instructor.]

Attendance

All students will be expected to attend class under the policies of the School of Architecture.

If a student has a planned absence or is aware that an illness will affect attendance please notify your instructor ahead of time.

Classroom Norms

All students are expected to contribute to class discussions and share their life experience and perspectives. We will use respectful language and make space for equitable and inclusive discussions. In order to achieve our course learning objectives your instructor will be responsible for time management to accommodate the course content. USC is an open campus and from time to time there are unpredictable events that occur on the campus. If a stranger enters our classroom or joins our group while we are on a field trip, I will actively ask them to leave the classroom or the group. My primary concern is your safety. It is my responsibility as your faculty to notify USC DPS if strangers enter our classrooms or if there are other potential situations that require assistance

Zoom etiquette

["Netiquette" or "internet etiquette," describes the recommended communication and behavior of online communication. Having a [Zoom netiquette policy](#) for your course can help minimize the chances of miscommunication and perceived disrespect. It is also recommended that you encourage students to contact you with questions or concerns about complying with a policy. For instance, if a student is unable to keep their camera on during the synchronous Zoom session, encourage them to contact you prior to the class session.]

Academic Integrity

The University of Southern California is a learning community committed to developing successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the dissemination of ideas. Academic misconduct, which includes any act of dishonesty in the production or submission of academic work, compromises the integrity of the person who commits the act and can impugn the perceived integrity of the entire university community. It stands in opposition to the university's mission to research, educate, and contribute productively to our community and the world.

All students are expected to submit assignments that represent their own original work, and that have been prepared specifically for the course or section for which they have been submitted. You may not submit work written by others or "recycle" work prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s).

Other violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), collusion, knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty, and any act that gains or is intended to gain an unfair academic advantage.

The impact of academic dishonesty is far-reaching and is considered a serious offense against the university. All incidences of academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity and could result in outcomes such as failure on the assignment, failure in the course, suspension, or even expulsion from the university.

For more information about academic integrity see [the student handbook](#) or the [Office of Academic Integrity's website](#), and university policies on [Research and Scholarship Misconduct](#).

Please ask your instructor if you are unsure what constitutes unauthorized assistance on an exam or assignment, or what information requires citation and/or attribution.

Use of AI Generators

Given that you will be using AI tools as learning tools in other departmental courses, the use of AI generators are not prohibited in this course. However, please discuss any proposed AI use with Instructor and receive written approval for use prior to implementing these tools. AI tools are not permitted for reading analysis assignments.

If AI is approved, you should also be aware that AI text generation tools may present incorrect information, biased responses, and incomplete analyses; thus they are not yet prepared to produce text that meets the standards of this course. To adhere to our university values, you must cite any AI-generated material (e.g., text, images, etc.) included or referenced in your work and provide the prompts used to generate the content. Using an AI tool to generate content without proper attribution will be treated as plagiarism and reported to the Office of Academic Integrity.

Course Content Distribution and Synchronous Session Recordings Policies

USC has policies that prohibit recording and distribution of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning environment.

Recording a university class without the express permission of the instructor and announcement to the class, or unless conducted pursuant to an Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) accommodation. Recording can inhibit free discussion in the future, and thus infringe on the academic freedom of other students as well as the instructor. ([Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook](#), page 13).

Distribution or use of notes, recordings, exams, or other intellectual property, 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 course materials. 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. ([Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook](#), page 13).

Course Evaluations

Please fill out the course evaluations when available. They are an important and valuable method for the school to obtain your feedback.

Course Expenses

Students are expected to attend all field trips. Transportation will be required to visit 3 of the sites which are off campus. The instructor will work with students to arrange car pools, however ride share costs may be incurred. Some model making materials will need to be purchased to complete the final assignment as well as sketchbook / paper and drawing instruments. Costs anticipated to be minimal (~\$20-\$40). Printing / plotting for pin ups and work sessions will be required.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Integrity:

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All students are expected to submit assignments that represent their own original work, and that have been prepared specifically for the course or section for which they have been submitted. You may not submit work written by others or "recycle" work prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s).

Other violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), collusion, knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty, and any act that gains or is intended to gain an unfair academic advantage.

The impact of academic dishonesty is far-reaching and is considered a serious offense against the university. All incidences of academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity and could result in outcomes such as failure on the assignment, failure in the course, suspension, or even expulsion from the university.

For more information about academic integrity see [the student handbook](#) or the [Office of Academic Integrity's website](#), and university policies on [Research and Scholarship Misconduct](#).

Please ask your instructor if you are unsure what constitutes unauthorized assistance on an exam or assignment, or what information requires citation and/or attribution.

Students and Disability Accommodations:

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. [The Office of Student Accessibility Services \(OSAS\)](#) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at osas.usc.edu. You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at osasfrontdesk@usc.edu.

Support Systems:

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

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

[988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline](#) - 988 for both calls and text messages – 24/7 on call

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline is comprised of a national network of over 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices. The new, shorter phone number makes it easier for people to remember and access mental health crisis services (though the previous 1 (800) 273-8255 number will continue to function indefinitely) and represents a continued commitment to those in crisis.

[Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services \(RSVP\)](#) - (213) 740-9355(WELL) – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender- and power-based harm (including sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking).

[Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX \(EEO-TIX\)](#) - (213) 740-5086

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

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

[The Office of Student Accessibility Services \(OSAS\)](#) - (213) 740-0776

OSAS ensures equal access for students with disabilities through providing academic accommodations and auxiliary aids in accordance with federal laws and university policy.

[USC Campus Support and Intervention](#) - (213) 740-0411

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

[Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#) - (213) 740-2101

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

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) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call

Non-emergency assistance or information.

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

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.

[Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice](#) - (323) 442-2850 or otfp@med.usc.edu

Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.

Preliminary Bibliography

Bibliography will be expanded upon over the course of the semester.

Beardsley, John Editor, Cultural Landscape Heritage in Sub-Saharan Africa, Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, DC. 2016

Beattie J. Imperial Landscapes of Health: Place, Plants and People between India and Australia, 1800s–1900s. *Health and history*. 2012;14(1):100-120. doi:10.5401/healthhist.14.1.0100

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