

LARC 250 | Theory of Landscape Architectural Design
Course Syllabus | Fall Semester 2016
[updated to 08/22/2016]

Instructors

Stefania Staniscia – Assistant Professor
Office: # 4316 New Agricultural Sciences Building
Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:30-13:30; and by appointment
Email: stefania.staniscia@mail.wvu.edu

Sofija Kaljevic – M.Arch, Ph.D. Candidate
Office: # 704-F Allen Hall
Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:30-13:30; and by appointment
Email: sokaljevic@mix.wvu.edu

Course Description

“Application of elements and principles of art and design to landscape architecture.” (1 hr. lecture, two 2-hr. studios)
This is a project-based course and the students are expected to work 9 hours outside of class per week.

Prerequisites: LARC 121 or equivalent.

Course Schedule and Location

Lecture: Tuesday 08:30-09:20 - Room 610 Allen Hall
Studio: Section 1 Tuesday and Thursday 09:30-11:20 - Room SAS 1010
Section 2 Tuesday and Thursday 14:00-15:50 - Room SAS 1010
Computer Labs: Agricultural Sciences Building Ground Floor Rooms G08 and G10.

Textbook

Booth, N. K. (1983). *Basic elements of landscape architectural design*. Waveland Pr Inc. (Required)

Copies of readings from the books listed below will be provided when and if needed for integrating the content of the required book.

Form and Fabric in Landscape Architecture: A Visual Introduction, by Catherine Dee
Foundations of Landscape Architecture, by Norman Booth

Course Objectives

1. To introduce to basic design elements and design principles through the analysis of an important landscape architecture precedent and through a projectual exercise at the scale of an urban public space.
2. To expand and improve students' design skills in all aspects of Landscape Architectural Design by designing a project to synthesize the lesson learned through the case studies analysis.
3. To improve students' ability to communicate project materials graphically and orally.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Have knowledge of and apply the main elements, static and dynamic, that can be used in a LA design.
2. Have knowledge of and apply the main principles through which the elements can be assembled and arranged in a LA design.
3. Find the rationale behind the selected precedents and apply a rationale for your own LA design.
4. Produce oral and digital presentations and represent your ideas graphically.

Class Format

Lecture

Lectures will be used to explain the contents that will be applied during studio time and to describe the assignments due.

Studio

Studios will begin with a general meeting in which the agenda for the day and the progress of the work are discussed. Following the meeting the individual work and the desk critiques will start.

We will use studio time – exclusively the morning section – for the all three presentations so the afternoon section will be canceled for the day.

Media

For developing and representing the studio assignments, students will use analog and digital media.

You would mostly use AutoCAD, Photoshop, and Illustrator; for the presentation phase the software used would be mainly Power Point and InDesign.

THIS IS NOT a software training course. If you would like to thoroughly master a software product, then please explore other courses that have software mastery as a learning outcome.

Course structure

The course will be structured in three different phases.

1_

In the first phase (2- 6 weeks) you will be introduced to:

1. The basic elements that are used in the landscape architectural design (landform, plant materials, buildings, etc.);
2. The processes (natural, anthropogenic, and other types of dynamics) that influence the program of the project;
3. The concept that represents (through forms) the idea that is behind the project;
4. The spatial organization through which the elements and the processes are arranged and structured according to the concept.

Through the analysis of an assigned case study you will identify all the components and aspects listed above.

At the end of this first phase there will be a **FIRST EVALUATION**. You will present your case study analysis giving a presentation using Power Point or an equivalent software in front of all your colleagues.

Note: the presentation will happen during the morning studio section – see the Class Format paragraph.

2_

In the second phase (7- 12 weeks) you will be assigned a project. You have to design a public urban space in one specific area underneath and/or connected to the PRT structure. Each of you will have a spot assigned that we will choose together during and after the site visit.

After the first two weeks in which you will carry out the site analysis, you will start the designing process following the sequence identified for the first phase.

Based on what you discovered during the site analysis, you are expected for your own project to:

1. Choose the basic elements that you want to use in your design based on the analysis process done in the first phase;
2. Identify the processes that you consider relevant to include in your design;
3. Determine an effective concept that will constitute the coherent framework for implementing further design ideas;
4. Define a spatial organization that is coherent with the concept, and through which you can assemble the elements and processes that you chose in step 1 and 2.

Note that step 4 will be carried out during a WORKSHOP that will last the entire 12th week. At the end of the workshop you will present your project giving a presentation using Power Point or an equivalent software in front of all your colleagues and the professors invited. It is very important to be present for the workshop activities. A special schedule for this week will be applied and provided to you a few days prior to the beginning, so be prepared to adjust your plans accordingly.

At the end of this second phase there will be a SECOND EVALUATION.

Note: the presentation will happen during the morning studio section – see the Class Format paragraph.

3_

In the third phase (13- 16 weeks) you are expected to prepare the final drawings/illustrations for your design. They consist of:

1. A map and a photomontage through which you will describe the site analysis;
2. A plan of your design;
3. A sectional elevation;
4. Two perspectives;
5. An orientation map (not necessarily in scale);
6. A short description of the project (text).

You will assemble the aforementioned drawings, illustrations and text in one sheet (22.0 x 34.0 in.)

Note that every element in your drawings has to be measured; this means that, for example, if you are asked “how wide is the path that you designed” you should be able to answer “It is X feet wide”. Drawings that are not scaled to size are not accepted.

At the end of this third phase there will be a THIRD EVALUATION. You will print the sheet, pin it up and present your own work in front of your colleagues and the professors invited.

Note: the presentation will happen during the morning studio section – see the Class Format paragraph.

Grades

Semester grade will be determined as follows:

30%	Phase 1 Project Analysis and Interpretation
45%	Phase 2 Design Project
15%	Phase 3 Representation
2,5%	Attendance
2,5%	Participation
2,5%	Attitude
2,5%	Improvement
5%	Extra credit (for the A+ or for enhancing your grade)
105%	Final Semester Grade

You can obtain the 5% extra credit by attending the entire “Living Architectures” Movie Seminar (8 movies) on a weekly basis from September 15th to November 3rd.

The following are the GRADE INTERPRETATIONS for letter grades (and their numerical equivalents):

A (100-90) = excellent work; exemplary; greatly exceeds satisfactory standards. Student is a self-starter and routinely takes initiative, does outside research, develops work through multiple and complex iterations, generates thoughtful and innovative solutions, and carries work to a high level of finish – going well beyond assigned elements.

B (90-80) = very good; exceeds satisfactory standards. Student shows consistent progress in studio, does some outside research, develops work through multiple iterations, generates good workable solutions, and always carries work to full completion, going beyond requirements and assigned elements.

C (80-70) = acceptable work; meets satisfactory standards. Student shows inconsistent progress and occasional initiative, does little outside research, does some iterations, completes all assigned work, but with little evidence of taking initiative or going beyond minimum requirements and assignments.

D (70-60) = marginal work; somewhat below satisfactory standards. Student does not complete all work, shows little initiative, does not do outside research, does minimal iterations, and lacks consistency in meeting minimum requirements and including assigned elements.

F (<60) = unacceptable work; does not meet satisfactory standards. Work shows serious deficiency in meeting satisfactory standards. Student shows no initiative, does not do outside research, does not develop evidence of iteration, generates inappropriate solutions, shows little or no care in finished work, and is missing assigned elements.

A detailed handout explaining the requirements and specific evaluation criteria for each specific assignment will be issued the day the assignment is introduced.

Course Policies

Lecture Attendance

Lecture attendance in this course is required because it correlates directly to performance, a positive work ethic and professional responsibility.

Only 1 absence will be allowed. 2 absences will automatically result in an F for the course. Being more than 10 minutes late will be counted as an absence.

Studio Attendance

Studio attendance in this course is required because it correlates directly to performance, a positive work ethic and professional responsibility.

Only 2 absences will be allowed. 3 absences will automatically result in an F for the course. Being more than 15 minutes late will be counted as an absence.

Studio Participation

Studio time should be considered productive work time for which you must be physically present and working on the assignments.

Each studio period is a "work day", not a day to finish up and plot out final drawings. However, since desk critiques are an integral part of this studio course, it will not be permitted to have a studio time without having a desk critique for each student. Since it is impossible to critique something without it being expressed graphically, students are expected to have visible evidence of work available to be critiqued during studio. This should be preferably on a piece of paper. You are expected to have new representations and transformations of your projects each and every time you meet with an instructor. Instructor may choose to not speak with you if you have prepared no drawings, models or text for that day's critique and this will be equivalent to an absence. Students who do not utilize assigned studio time for work on assigned projects will be considered absent. Leaving studio before the scheduled studio time ends will result in an absence.

Late Policy

Late work will not be accepted unless other arrangements are made in advance.

Work submitted late for any reason other than an excused absence will result in a 10% grade reduction over the total grade for the specific assignment.

Use of Smart Phones, Tablets, Computers

Electronic devices, unless approved to be used for note taking, are prohibited when we are meeting as a class. These times include, but are not limited to the following: lectures, pin-ups, class discussions, desk critiques, and presentations. There will be times in studio where you will be expected to be working at your desks on studio-related work. You may use electronic devices during these work times – in strict moderation. Please do not abuse this privilege: I reserve the right to revoke it at any time.

Syllabus Changes

The instructor reserves the right to make changes in the syllabus as needed throughout the semester. Changes in assignments, point values, and due dates are also at the discretion of the instructor though such changes will always be

announced with significant prior warning. Improved opportunities for meeting specific learning objectives during the semester will be the basis for making such changes. Get used to checking your email at least every 12 hours so we can stay in touch regarding possible changes to assignments and schedules.

Retention of Work

All work submitted by the student will normally be returned within a reasonable amount of time. However, the instructor may retain student work for display and/or photography, and will return it promptly thereafter.

Plagiarism

The integrity of the classes offered by any academic institution solidifies the foundation of its mission and cannot be sacrificed to expediency, ignorance, or blatant fraud. Therefore, I will enforce rigorous standards of academic integrity in all aspects and assignments of this course. For the detailed policy of West Virginia University regarding the definitions of acts considered to fall under academic dishonesty and possible ensuing sanctions, please see the Student Conduct Code at http://studentlife.wvu.edu/office_of_student_conduct/student_conduct_code.

Should you have any questions about possibly improper research citations or references, or any other activity that may be interpreted as an attempt at academic dishonesty, please see your instructor before the assignment is due to discuss the matter.

Social Justice Statement

"The West Virginia University community is committed to creating and fostering a positive learning and working environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion. If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise your instructor and make appropriate arrangements with the Office of Accessibility Services (293-6700). For more information on West Virginia University's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives, please see <http://diversity.wvu.edu>."

SCHEDULE

