Instructor: Rodney D. Robinson, RLA FASLA
rodneyr@udel.edu

LARC 232:
Foundations of Landscape Architecture
(3 credits)
133 Alison Hall
Section 010 T/TH: 9:30-10:45 AM

Fall, 2018 - Syllabus

Landscape architects view themselves as stewards of the land. They apply artistic and scientific knowledge to the research, planning, design, and management of both natural and built landscapes.

Landscape architecture is only about a century and a half old and is one of the most interdisciplinary among professions. To practice today requires knowledge in multiple areas of study. These can include: art and history, architecture and engineering, technology of materials, natural and biological sciences, behavioral insights, and cultural perspectives. To apply these disciplines successfully requires an integrated and comprehensive design approach. Landscape architects not only bring their own expertise to the table, they must also be equipped to collaborate effectively with professionals in other disciplines. To achieve this end, the educational foundation of a landscape architect has to be broad.

In this Foundations of Landscape Architecture course, students will learn what landscape architects do and explore fundamental topics relevant to the profession today. Students will be encouraged to develop observational habits, record what they find in a field book, and apply the information they gather to solving problems. Through a series of assignments, students will learn the importance of perceiving each challenge from a variety of perspectives before coming to a conclusion. While a rational process for design is fundamental, students will find that the creative designer must also think intuitively.

This course is organized around three core topics:

- Design process and the language of composition
- Ecologically responsive and culturally attuned approaches to problem solving
- A perspective for the historic evolution of landscape design

The classroom is intended to be an active learning environment where students learn through discussing and observing, lectures, readings, demonstrations, critiques, and reflection. Assignments are intended to demonstrate an understanding of fundamental concepts. Students are expected to spend time on projects both in and out of class.
Upon completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Understand a framework for foundational concepts related to landscape architecture
2. Comprehend the interrelationships between design interventions, ecological functions, social impacts, sustainability, and stewardship
3. Develop an informed view toward beneficial change in site development practices
4. Apply a creative problem-solving process to design
5. Apply design principles to design solutions
6. Collaborate with peers to work toward resolution of assigned challenges

UD BSLA Learning Outcomes:

1. Awareness of the ecological and social implications to design practice
2. Critical thinking and problem solving
3. Conceptual design skills
4. A perspective on the history of landscape design
5. Oral, visual, and written communications experience
6. The habit of critical observation

SUGGESTED REFERENCES: All readings provided on CANVAS

Educational Platform

CANVAS found here: [http://www.udel.edu/canvas/](http://www.udel.edu/canvas/) (Not Sakai)

Please LOG IN to Canvas and set your preferences for how you would like to receive updates/announcements. The options include text message.

Required Tools and Materials

**Field book** – A sturdy blank *unlined* book used throughout the semester for documenting notes, observations, thoughts, reflections, ideas, etc.

**To keep organized notes in your field book** - Scotch tape, scissors, glue stick, paper or binder clips.

**12-foot Tape Measure**: to measure and record dimensions in your field book.
Course Policies

- Be present, be on time, and be prepared to engage. Be courteous and willing to participate in class discussions and critiques.
- Most classes will begin with a short quiz. **Quizzes will count as part of your final grade.**
- **No late work accepted.**
- **No electronic devices needed for the course.** Cell phones and laptops limit creativity in the field and studio; and therefore, are not allowed to be used during class unless student provides proper written documentation of need. **Cell phones should remain on silent mode while in class and only used at a break. Failure to adhere to this course policy will affect your grade for course contribution.**
- **Attendance** is part of your course contribution grade. You cannot contribute if you don’t attend. Check the distribution of assignments for understanding of importance of course contribution. You are expected to attend **every class.** If you must be absent, you are still responsible for the work due. If you know that you will be absent ahead of time, let me know, and make arrangements to get the work done ahead of time or to have it delivered to me on time. Consult the syllabus to see what is due following the class. Call classmates to find out what went on during class. Excused absences must be confirmed in writing. For example, if serious illness, family emergencies, or other crises occur during the term, you should contact the Dean of your college (Arts and Sciences, Engineering, etc.) as soon as possible. This person can assist you in notifying all of your faculty and in validating for your instructors what has happened. If you have more than a few unexcused absences, I will meet with you to discuss the situation. You should understand that your in-class grade will suffer as a result of unexcused absences, and of course your ability to do the work required in the course will also be impaired. Your grades on that work will naturally be lower.
- There are **group assignments** and frequent **group discussions.** You are responsible for engaging with your peers to increase everyone’s ability to participate. If I notice you are not participating during group time you are at risk of losing points on course contribution and relevant assignment

Course Assessment

- Students are graded on a point system. Each assignment, test, quiz and design has been assigned a point total.
- Some of the assignments require students to give brief oral presentations.
- A **field book** is used to keep notes in this class. Your field book will be graded and is a resource that you will use to reflect on the ideas and lessons learned in class.
- There will be no dropping of low grades. If I give extra credit, it will be posted to Canvas. Do not count on extra credit raising your grade significantly. If you start to struggle with assignments, come see me as soon as possible to develop a plan. If you do receive a low
grade on an assignment you may repeat the project/assignment if it is turned in within a one week time frame.

Assignments (and the percentage of your grade based on each activity):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>DUE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Assignments: include Projects #1 &amp; #2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Due dates in course schedule *dates may vary at the discretion of the professor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Quizzes</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Beginning of class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Field Book</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Last week of class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Design &amp; Creativity: Project #3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Last day of class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Class Contribution and Attendance</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>All the time!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **Assignments (30% of final grade):** These projects comprise activities in which you will be asked to work individually or in groups to highlight or enhance a concept presented in class. This variety of experiential activities will require work outside the course time. All assignments require your creative design mind and are enhanced through observations and notes collected in your field book in and out of class. Each assignment requires a final field book reflection including but not limited to a description of 1. what you learned (the BIG lesson), 2. what you did well or what went well, 3. what you would like to improve upon or would do differently, and 4. How you might apply this concept in the future.

2. **Quizzes (10% of final grade):** A short quiz will be given based on information given in the previous class or from a reading assignment.

3. **Field book (30% of your grade). What is a Field book?** – regular hand-documented collection of observations, readings, class activities and might include artifacts, photos, sketches, and insights that you encounter during the course. This includes academic content as well as your insights into interpersonal and group relations, the process of working on small assignments, and reflections on personal growth.
   a. Sometimes you will be asked to engage in specific explorations because you need a foundation of knowledge to maximize the time you spend ‘idly’ thinking and reflecting, which is as important as the time spent exploring. New ideas can come from anywhere, but they always end up in your head...and now they will end up in your field book, too!
   b. **Field book Summary** - At the conclusion of the course you should include a one-page summary that explicitly documents and highlights your beliefs and insights (based
on what you have learned) about foundational topics related to landscape architecture.

c. **Readings:** use your field book to reflect on readings. For each assigned reading, use your field book to document your 3-2-1 findings: 3 - After the reading, record three things you learned; 2 - Next, record two things you found interesting and that you’d like to learn more about; and 1 - record one question you still have about the material.

d. The Field book will be graded on both content and design. See rubric below.

**Field book Rubric:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Not present</th>
<th>Minimal</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content (20 pts)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>regular written reflection on and collection of the class activities and experiences</td>
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<tr>
<td>documenting your 3-2-1 finding of each assigned reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Inclusion of artifacts handed out in class, photos, sketches, and insights</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusion of insights into interpersonal and group relations, the process of working on small assignments</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Summary (5 pts)</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Field book Summary</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Design (5 pts)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall design aesthetic – is the book accessible to you? To professor?</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Table of contents (aligned with page numbers)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book – UNLINED notebook, stray items taped or pasted</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
4. **Design & Creativity Application (20%) – Written summary and presentation** – You will work to assess conditions and generate ideas for an actual project site to be assigned. In addition to working with a small group to apply a creative design thinking process, you will individually submit a 2-page summary reflecting on the project and your personal involvement including, but not limited to:
   a. Your process and contribution to the project – what did you do individually and as part of a team? What was your role on the team? (2 pts)
   b. What you learned from the assignment? – What key lessons will help you succeed? (1 pts)
   c. What you did well? – What part of the assignment were you most successful, provide examples and an explanation of why? (1 pts)
   d. What do you wish to improve? What part of the assignment still requires additional time and effort, iteration, or practice to enhance your understanding or skill set? (1 pts)
   e. Group Project & Presentation (15 pts)

5. **Course Contribution (10%)** - As adults responsible for your own learning, your attendance and participation are your decisions. You will learn more and contribute more to the learning of others, if you are present, involved, and engaged. Attendance and participation are expected in all facets and phases of the coursework, both in the meetings and in other experiences. Group project efforts will also count toward your individual participation grade – welcome to the real world.

**Grading Scale:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100-94</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>&lt;77-74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>&lt;94-90</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>&lt;74-70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>&lt;90-87</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>&lt;70-67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>&lt;87-84</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>&lt;67-64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>&lt;84-80</td>
<td>D-</td>
<td>&lt;64-60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>&lt;80-77</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;61-0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Weekly Schedule**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Read/Watch/Do for this class</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug 28 &amp; 30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>Elements of Composition, Language of Design, &amp; Process</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 4 &amp; 6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Introduction to course What is Landscape Architecture?</td>
<td>Acquire a field book and bring it to class each day</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 11 &amp; 13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Elements of Composition Space and Place Making Formative Landscape Experience</td>
<td>Observe &amp; record outdoor space on campus. Write narrative</td>
<td>Spatial mapping fieldbook check in class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 9 &amp; 11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>The Environmental Movement Ecologically Beneficial Solutions in Planning and Design</td>
<td>Visit an urban Park Functional/Behavioral Canvas: Design with Nature</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 16 &amp; 18</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Designing for People Class presentation</td>
<td>Prepare Conditions Assessment</td>
<td>Oct 4: Present Project #1 in class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 23 &amp; 25</td>
<td>9</td>
<td><strong>Evolutions in Thinking: Historic Perspectives</strong></td>
<td>Assign Project#3 Path Problem Project #3 Site Visit</td>
<td>25th: Poster due with 1-page printed report and 3 references</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Toward A More Environmentally Responsive Future**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Read/Watch/Do for this class</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept 25 &amp; 27</td>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>Systems Thinking Site Development Integrating Environmental, Aesthetic &amp; Cultural Components</strong></td>
<td>Formative experience: house and landscape. Assign Project #1: Conditions Assessment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 2 &amp; 4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Designing for People Class presentation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 12</td>
<td></td>
<td>Post midterm grades</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 9 &amp; 11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Promoting Biodiversity &amp; Sustainable SITES Initiative Guest Lecture: Habitat Restoration</td>
<td>Assign Project #2 SITES Poster Observe &amp; Record in fieldbook</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 16 &amp; 18</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Designing for Resiliency Landscapes Guest lecture: Resilient Shorelines</td>
<td>Resources on Canvas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Oct 30 & Nov 1 | 10 | The Renaissance in Europe  
Italian and French Gardens  
The English Pastoral Idyll | Continue: observe & record in fieldbooks  
Resources on Canvas |
| Nov 8 | 11 | American Landscape Movements  
Olmstead - City & National Parks  
Country Place Era, Cities Beautiful | Continue: observe & record in fieldbooks  
Resources on Canvas | Prepare base plan & conditions assessment |
| Nov 13 & 15 | 12 | Modernism: Rejecting Status Quo  
Burle Marx, California School  
Guest Lecture: Planting Design | Prepare for Desk Cuts | Identify Opportunities & Constraints |
| Nov 19 - 23 | 13 | Thanksgiving Break | Observe & record something during the break |
| Nov 27 & 29 | 14 | Historic Preservation  
Restore-Preserve-Conserve | Prepare for Desk Cuts | Nov 29 fieldbooks collected |
| Dec 4 & 6 | 15 | Final Review in Class | | Project #3 Presentations  
Fieldbooks returned |

*dates subject to change based on scheduling & pacing of material

**Group Design Culture**

It may be difficult to look at someone else’s design work and offer critical feedback. However, learning how to do so is a valuable skill and essential in a design profession. It will assist in building your self-confidence as well as developing the disposition to participate in collaborative circumstances. Always work on offering respectful constructive criticism while graciously receiving criticism from others. Defensiveness is not helpful in a creative environment.

**Giving Advice and Opinions**

Remember that you are stating an opinion about ‘the design’ and not about the person who created the design. Follow some of the guidelines listed below to make sure that your critique is well received:

- You might start with a positive before addressing the negative. Sometimes you can point out an issue simply by asking a question.
- Keep your critique short. Don’t belabor your point.
- Don’t be vague. Be specific so that others can understand your point.
- Be objective and avoid matters of personal taste.
- Listen carefully to others and try to understand from their premise.
- Do not engage in argument. If someone does not receive criticism graciously, move on. Sometimes group dynamics are involved. If so, you might offer advice in private.
Receiving Constructive Criticism

In order to receive constructive criticism, you must remind yourself that the person who is looking at your design work is trying to help you or trying to understand your motives. Here are some tips for receiving constructive criticism.

- Welcome feedback.
- Listen to the criticism.
- Maintain eye contact and open body language as you listen.
- Restate the criticism to make sure you understand it.
- View the criticism as an attempt to fix or to understand, not a personal attack.
- Focus on possible solutions to each criticism.

Additional Information

❖ Inclusion of Diverse Learning Needs: [http://www.udel.edu/DSS/](http://www.udel.edu/DSS/). This course is open to all students who meet the academic requirements for participation. Any student who has documented a need for accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss the specific situation as soon as possible. Disability Support Services in Alison Hall 130 and will coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Please note: The University of Delaware is committed to diversity and welcomes students with disabilities. If you have a documented disability related need for a modification or reasonable accommodation in this course, please contact the Office of Disability Support Services located at 325 Academy St, Suite 161, Perkins Student Center, email: dssoffice@udel.edu or call 302-831-4643

❖ Harassment: It is unacceptable and a violation of university policy to harass, discriminate against or abuse any person because of a person's race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, age or any other characteristic protected by applicable law. Such behavior threatens to destroy the environment of tolerance and mutual respect that must prevail for this university to fulfill its educational mission. Contact the Office of Equity and Inclusion (http://www.udel.edu/oei/) if you believe a violation has occurred

❖ Center for Counseling and Student Development (CCSD): x2141
http://www.udel.edu/counseling/ At times, personal problems, stress, or life circumstances can interfere with your academic functioning. UD’s Center for Counseling and Student Development provides a variety of services to support you in your academic work and be successful. The Center works with you on a confidential and individual basis; in addition, you may utilize assessment and counseling services, and referral to additional resources off campus. CCSD is funded by the student health fee and does not charge for services.

❖ Academic Integrity: [http://www.udel.edu/studentconduct/ai.html](http://www.udel.edu/studentconduct/ai.html) Please familiarize yourself with UD policies regarding academic dishonesty. To falsify the results of one’s research,
to steal the words or ideas of another, to cheat on an assignment, to re-submit the same assignment for different classes, or to allow or assist another to commit these acts corrupts the educational process. Students are expected to do their own work their own work and neither give or receive unauthorized assistance.

**FAQ:**

**Can I miss class?**

Attendance enhances your overall grade in this class. Fact: students who attend fewer classes receive lower grades. See Attendance (page 3) and Course Contribution (page 6).

**Do I need an excuse for missing class?**

See Attendance (page 3) and Course Contribution (page 6).

**Can I use my laptop to take notes?**

Notes for all aspects of the course are to be taken in a design field book. This is part of your creativity habit. If you have an official document from Disability Support Services in Alison Hall 130 documenting the need for a laptop, please inform me.

**Do you give extra credit?**

Sometimes, but don’t count on it. Focus on getting as many points as possible on the 4 measures outlined in the syllabus – Assignments; Field Book; Design and Creativity Application; Class Contribution and Attendance.

**When are your office hours?**

I do not have an office on campus, but am happy to meet to discuss assignments or course content. Email me to schedule a time to meet. rodneyr@udel.edu.

**I am taking this as an elective and I really want an A – will I get an A in this class?**

The course is based on 100 points. Your field book and course contribution contribute 40% of your grade (40/100 points). Make sure you understand the field book requirements and keep up with the field book from day one leaving a few pages blank at the beginning for a table of contents. Each week, add page numbers and add broad topics to the table of contents. Come to class and contribute while you are there.

**For more information about Landscape Architecture at UD visit:**

http://canr.udel.edu/plsc/undergraduate-majors/landscape-architecture/