

LARCH 3940 Design 04: Ecology & Planning

Instructor name: Jason Kentner
Year and term: AU 14
Meeting time: MWF 1:50-5:30
Meeting location: KN Studio

COURSE INFORMATION

DESCRIPTION

As a language landscape architecture is pluralistic, drawing without bias on the arts and sciences because as a medium itself, landscape is never isolated, static, or obvious. Engagement with the landscape requires its designer to possess both a breadth and depth of perspective that can at once consider both the scope of an urban region and the intricacy of the relationships between soil, water, vegetation, and climate. This course will introduce students to the language of landscape and challenge conventional roles for landscape within the urban environment. Once seen as simply a relief from the urban condition landscape has now come to define it; providing both a model for understanding the complexities of dynamic urban and living systems and most importantly offering new and sustainable models for how to live in and manage both the built and natural environment

OBJECTIVES

This course serves as an introduction to the processes and techniques of ecological analysis, planning and design. Students will be asked to develop critical as well as conceptual thinking skills along with a spectrum of skill-sets including graphic and oral communication that are critical to success in the program and profession of landscape architecture. Basic learning objectives for the course include but are not limited to:

- develop command of fundamental design principles of form, space, order and organization in relation to cultural precedents and environmental conditions;
- acquire awareness of natural systems and basic landscape ecology principles as a context for site analysis and concept development;
- provide introduction to material dynamics of soils, water, plants, and climate in relation to design process from site inventory through development of a legible design solution;
- demonstrate application of basic earthworks/plants/water skills and graphic techniques

PROJECTS

Intro Project - CONDITIONS & ATMOSPHERE: This introductory project asks students to look critically and creatively at the landscape around them toward the identification of the physical conditions that shape landscape systems and the atmospheric qualities that impact our memories and senses of place. The project will be approached in three specific exercises beginning with the development of conditional sections. These sections will serve as catalyst for the design of a surface using clay modeling. Finally, these surfaces will be rendered as atmospheric landscapes demonstrating potentials of materials, vegetation, and program.

Semester Project - SYSTEM DYNAMICS: This project will approach the analysis and design of dynamic urban systems through the lens of landscape ecology at a variety of scales. Working through a series of rotations, project teams will approach the analysis and design of the urban landscape at a variety of scales simultaneously; with each team member considering a unique scale or inquiry and intervention. Throughout each rotation the team will be asked to collaborate across scales demonstrating how strategies can and must be approached with a breadth of tactics. With each rotation project team members will change scales within the same project group allowing each team member to work at a given scale while keeping continuity between project concepts and strategies.