

Public Space experimental unit

SUNY ESF DEPARTMENT OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

LSA 496 sec. 5 #55218 | LSA 696 sec. 9 #55219 | Three (3) credit hours
M,W,F 10:35 -11:30 am | Marshall Hall Rm. 409 & occasionally in the field

Lead by: Assistant Professor Isabel C. Fernández | Office Hours:
Thursdays by appointment via Email: icf6@esf.edu or Text: 303.525.8563

Recognizing how different people use different places to fulfill the practical needs of living is one of the building blocks on which a distinctive sense of place can be enhanced in the urban landscape. Regional identity is connected with the peculiar characteristics of a location that tell us something about its physical and social environment. It is what a place has when it somehow belongs to its location and nowhere else. It has to do, therefore, with two fundamental criteria: first, with the natural processes—what people have put there. It has to do with the way people adapt to their living environment; how they change it to suit their needs in the process of living; how they make it their own. In effect, regional identity is the collective reaction of people to the environment over time...

source: Theory in Landscape Architecture P. 210 Michael Hough, knowing the place

COURSE DESCRIPTION, FORMAT & FRAMEWORK

This is a course about the production of public space. It will never be the same twice, hence its title: experimental unit. For more information on the origin of the course and the work completed by the previous course unit please visit pseu.org

Members of this course are called a unit and they shall be willing to engage THEORY, EXPERIMENTS, DESIGN & IMPLEMENTATION EXERCISES ON THE PRODUCTION OF PUBLIC SPACE.

Through the study and discussion of THEORY students' will develop a solid theoretical framework and understanding of:

1. the characteristics and the tangible and intangible qualities that comprise great public spaces
2. the key differences public spaces display as modified by geographical location, context, and user modification.

Through readings, formal, and informal discussion the unit will engage in an intellectual exchange about the past, current and future role of public space and its production methods.

Through the engagement of hands-on EXPERIMENTS, DESIGN & IMPLEMENTATION EXERCISES (on and off the field), students will:

1. engage in learning that gives back to the community
2. gain first hand knowledge of how drawings translate into a built product and the methods to facilitate and expedite construction.
3. generate new knowledge about public space



SUMMARY OF KEY DATES*

- Jan 13 . 1st day of class - introduction
- Jan 15 . Experiment 1 due - class discussion
- Jan 17 . 1st day theory work
- Jan 20 . NO CLASSES (Martin Luther King Day)
- Jan 29 . Last day theory work
- Jan 31 . Introduction Experiment 123
- Feb 3 - March 5 . Complete Experiment 123
- Thursday, March 6 . DEPART TO PR | 6-18 OPTIONAL (Design-Built Workshop with PUCPR)
- March . 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 SUNY ESF Spring Break
- March . 17 NO CLASS (in PR for installation)
- March 19 . Presentation on Experiment 123 Results and Introduction to Local Experiments
- March 28 . NO CLASS - CELA Conference
- April 4 - 6 . Washington, DC Field Trip
- April 7 . Resume Local Experiments
- April 18 - 25 | Final Project Presentations
- April 21 . Last day to withdraw from a class with penalty
- April 28 . LAST CLASS

* This summary of key dates is subject to change

All of the knowledge developed through this course is to be gathered, analyzed, distilled, and posted by the unit members onto our course website, hosted by weebly.com

Part 1 Theory

Part 2 Experiment 123

A cross-cultural and multi-disciplinary experiment requiring collaboration with architecture students from the Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico (PUCPR) in Ponce, PR with the purpose of re-designing the public plaza of the Hamlet of Castañer including the design some of its appurtenances, ie. benches, shade structures, planters, etc. for construction & installation over Spring Break.

Part 3 Field Trip | Construction & Installation (OPTIONAL)

Optional DESIGN BUILD SPRING BREAK (1 extra credit | sign for an independent study with Prof. Fernández . space for 6-10 students only . pre-requisite - enrollment on LSA496/696 sections 5 or 9 required) travel to Puerto Rico to investigate public space, fabricate our design proposals in the FAB Lab at the School of Architecture in Ponce, PR and install the interventions designed for either the plaza of Castañer in Lares, PR. (room & local transportation provided during working days - you pay airfare estimated at between \$350-\$600 and meals).

Part 4 Field Trip to DC | Required

Required field trip in conjunction with LSA 423. Students responsible for meals

Part 5 Local Experiments

Part 6 Final Presentations

Part 7 Website Construction

COURSE GOALS

1. To train amazing future landscape architects who fully grasp the characteristics and qualities of great public spaces and their importance in the promotion of a healthy and happy society
2. To train future landscape architects to engage in the study of theory, and the generation of practical research about the production of great public spaces
3. To affect positive change in our student body and society through the work completed in this course.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. By the end of the semester students should be able to intelligently discuss the primordial characteristics and qualities of great public spaces and how these can impact society in a positive way.
2. Through experiments students will develop by the end of the semester hands-on experience and knowledge about human engagement with public space and methods to alter the way we all engage and experience space.
3. Students should be able to generally describe the legal and ethical requirements for the generation of safe and inclusive public spaces.
4. By the end of the semester's field trips, theory discussions and lectures students should be able to demonstrate an improvement of their knowledge set about public spaces.
5. The work students complete in Syracuse, NY and Puerto Rico shall change each of the students trajectory towards a positive path and provide them with a general understanding of the many ways in which they can provide a service to society.
6. By the end of the semester students should be able to recognize major public spaces, their location and designers.

REQUIREMENTS & GRADING

Specific performance criteria/grading rubric will be included with each assignment/experiment brief. All assignment/experiment briefs will be distributed via the course web site. The final course grade will be evaluated and weighted as follows:

Class Attendance (10 points of final grade)

- 3-5 unexcused absences 8 out of 10 points
- 6-8 unexcused absences 5 out of 10 points
- 8+ unexcused absences 0 out of 10 points

Website construction and contribution with original material (45 points of final grade)

Student has uploaded all course work/assignment/experiments for the semester - aiding positively in the construction of a body of knowledge about the production of public space. Students work should reflect a high degree of care (excellent craftsmanship, and well written complete thoughts - pay careful attention to grammar). All work must be uploaded as assignments/experiments are due/completed. May 2, 2013 LAST DAY TO UPLOAD/REVISE/CORRECT CONTENT.

Assignments/Experiments/Participation and Engagement (45 points of final grade)

Student demonstrates a positive and respectful attitude and behavior towards the course material and those around them; Student actively and positively contributes to the progress of the overall group, collaborates and participates in all aspects of class. Student delivers all original assignments completed with utmost care as per assignment requirements in a timely manner.

GRADING GUIDELINES

- A and A-: Performance of superior quality; intellectually, formally and technically. There is clear evidence of genuine talent and landscape architectural insight. Reserved for work that is extremely sound and not merely flashy. Excels in all course requirements and has demonstrated excellent performance criteria.
- B+ and B: Performance of good quality that has aesthetic merit and technical competence, although some problems are noted. Work reflects a solid commitment to the learning process and an understanding of the issues. Meets all course requirements and has met optimal performance criteria.
- B- to C: Performance of acceptable quality that meets the basic goals of the exercise is presented in a complete manner and does not contain serious errors of judgment or omission. Meets most course requirements and has met good performance criteria.
- C- to D-: Performance of inferior quality that may reflect a conscientious effort on the part of the student, but contains many serious errors of judgment, lacks aesthetic skill and/or is incomplete in presentation. The work did not meet the instructional goals in several areas. Meets some course requirements and has demonstrated the ability to meet some of the performance criteria.
- F: Performance that is seriously deficient in merit and effort. Given to those projects that reflect a lack of class attendance, significant incompleteness and/or lack of interest in the subject material. Meets few or no course requirements and has failed to meet the performance criteria.

LOGISTICS

Required Textbook & Tools

Course reader (from ESF's copy center), a laptop or access to a computer on campus, digital camera, phone with camera or equal, drawing supplies (trace etc.), thumbdrive.

Pre-requisites

Knowledge of Auto CAD, Adobe InDesign and Illustrator. Will require the use of Google Maps, Bing Maps or equal.

References for Experiment 123

Geolocalizador: On line aerial map for Puerto Rico. Info. on parcel sizes and zoning.

<http://gis.jp.pr.gov/GeoLocalizador/index.htm?refresh=201>

Course web site

A weebly web site has been set up on which all course related documents, assignments, and notices will be posted. You are required to upload all your assignments to the web site as a .pdf file. This is where the course schedule will be kept and updated. Announcements will also be placed on this site.

Relevant Resources

It is highly recommended that each student become familiar with the following magazines and journals, available at Moon, Bird, and/or Architecture Reading Room in Slocum Hall:

Landscape Architecture Magazine
Journal of the American Planning Association
Architecture / Architectural Record
Garden Design
Landscape Journal
Metropolis
TOPOS

General Academic Expectations & Integrity

Attend all classes, care about your work, make progress, help and cooperate with your classmates, take risks, make mistakes, behave professionally, and come to each class with an open mind and willingness to learn.

Your final grade will be based on your willingness to achieve the above as well as the grades you obtain in the semesters assignments.

Academic Integrity is of the essence. Each of you must abide by the University's Code of Academic Integrity. Unless you are the sole care provider of a child no cell phone or other electronic equipment is allowed. Refrain from playing computer games and sending emails while in class.

Attendance

If you encounter a situation beyond your control in which you will be missing 3 or more days of classes, you can contact the Office of Student Life (110 Bray, 315-470-6658) and they will contact all your instructors for you. Supportive documentation may be required. Attendance counts for 20 points out of the 100 points for the course's grade.

Note for students seeking accommodations

SUNY-ESF works closely with the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at Syracuse University in assisting students with learning and physical disabilities.

If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, you may contact the ESF Office of Student Affairs, 110 Bray Hall, 315-470-6660, for assistance with the process. You may also contact ODS directly, Room 309 of 804 University Avenue, 315-443-4498, to schedule an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations. ODS is responsible for coordinating disability related accommodations and will issue students with documented Disabilities Accommodation Authorization Letters, as appropriate. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact ODS as soon as possible.

To learn more about ODS, visit:
<http://disabilityservices.syr.edu>

If you have any questions about class absences or disabilities, please contact your instructor and/or Counseling Services as soon as possible. All conversations will be confidential.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Catherine Dee | *Form & Fabric in Landscape Architecture A Visual Introduction* Spon Press Taylor & Francis Group . London & New York (2001)

Spaces P. 32-80

- Review of actions on a landscape.
- Establishment of a shared and consistent vocabulary of site elements.
- Catalog of examples of spaces. Thinking about small scale design.

Detail P. 188-196

- Talks about the elements of an experience of place from close up. All 5 senses.
- Gives quick overview of the elements of small scale design and how they might work together to create the total design.
- This reading is more abstract than "Spaces" and encourages readers to think on their own rather than establishing common terms/ideas.

Catherine Dee | *To Design Landscape: Art, Nature & Utility* Routledge Taylor & Francis Group London & New York (2012)

Sculpting time P. 14-23

- Temporal aspects of design

Nature, culture, both P. 36-47

- Manipulation of the boundary between culture and nature.
- Importance of establishing clear concepts of both and how they interact.

Utilitarian forms P. 98-109

- Quality over Quantity.
- Focus on meeting the needs of the user rather than the wants of the designer.
- Maybe read with "Hardly" p. 140-147.

Context is Everything P. 110-117

- Understanding context is fundamental to making sound utilitarian decisions.
- Impacts of surroundings on a site & site on surroundings.

Terry Clements | *Spectrum matrix*

Landscape Journal Vol.30 No.2

P. 241-260

- How multiple intelligences influence an individual's perception of a place.
- How to engage different types of users.

Cooper Marcus, Clare and Francis, Carolyn | *People Places 2nd Edition Design Guidelines for Urban Open Space*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 1998

Introduction Pages 6-11 | *Urban Plazas* P. 13-84 | Various Checklists P. 249, 307, 341

Forsyth, A., Lu, H., & McGirr, P. (2001). | *Plazas, streets, and markets: What Puerto Ricans bring to urban spaces in northern climates*. Landscape Journal, 20(1), 62-76.

E. T. Hall

The hidden dimension

New York: Anchor Books. (1966).

William H. Whyte

The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces.

Project for Public Spaces, New York, NY . (1980).

P16-75 and P90-101

The Life of Plazas | *Sitting Space* | *Sun, Wind, Trees, Water Food* | *The Street* | *The Undesirables* | *Effective Capacity* | *Smaller Cities and Places* | *Triangulation*

Harvard Design Magazine . Territories of Engagement

|Case Studies by:Claude Cormier + Associés P. 46-47 & Peg Office of Landscape + Architecture P. 48-49

Dew Point & Edaphic Effects by Peg Office of LA
<http://www.peg-ola.com/project.php?id=4>

From Pop-Up to Permanent . APA Mag Nov. 2012
Hester - User Needs Techniques
Lutz Katzschner - Thermal Comfort