

Landscape Architecture 617 • Winter 2018 • Professor Robert Ribe
ADVANCED THEORY SEMINAR

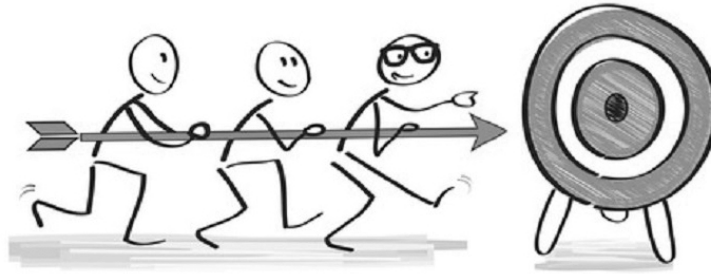


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This is a required course for first-year Ph.D. students in both departments. Other graduate students may enroll, with priority given to MLA and MSARCH students. Enrollment is limited to 12 students. Non-PhD students who wish to enroll should contact Dr. Ribe.

The seminar will meet for two 2-hour sessions each week – Tues/Thurs from 6:00 to 8:00.

OVERVIEW

The seminar is intended to introduce major currents of environmental design thought, put them into the context of their social, aesthetic, technological and philosophical contexts, and connect them to the design and planning of buildings, landscapes and cities that occurred as a result (or in spite of them). Emphasis will be upon contemporary issues like:

- Ideas about applied, normative ecology and idealistic norms of sustainability;
- Construction, craft and digital technologies;
- Political economy, urbanization and social equity;
- Sustainability seen from multiple points of view;
- Practice, expertise, and professional power; and
- Beauty and the affective attributes of places and buildings, and how these issues are manifested at different scales of region, city, landscape, building, and construction.

The seminar will use three kinds of discussions, all initiated and run by students:

- Analysis of critical or theoretical readings in architecture, landscape architecture and urban design as directed by students' diagrams of the arguments found therein;
- Presentations of students' 300-word short theory/position papers;
- Presentation of critical analysis and interpretation of case studies in light of class readings.

Four themes that may be explored to organize the class:

- Aesthetics, Meaning, and Sustainability
- Ecology, Context, and Sustainability
- Technology, Making, and Sustainability
- Social Sustainability, Use, and Whole Cities or Regions

REQUIREMENTS:

Students will be required to comprehend a set of individual and shared readings, actively participate in discussions, take part in leading certain discussions, write short theory position papers, and present case studies." PhD students will also write a final manifesto critiquing theories, and mainly their critical deficiencies, related to their prospective dissertation topics. Master's students will not.

Through the class, each PhD student will build a theory-tree related to his or her main research interest, consisting of argument diagrams and the linkages between them to form a grand argument.

GRADING

The class is pass-fail. Like any graduate seminar, to pass, students are expected to read all assignments, produce all products on time and present or employ them in class with due diligence, enthusiasm and attention to the collective intent of the class, albeit from their own perspectives.