

Fall 2019

LA 489/589

The OR Sequence: Contextualizing Coos Bay



Coos Bay
(looking south from the Coos History
Museum and Maritime Center)
2019

Time M, W, + F
1:00pm - 4:50pm

IMPORTANT NOTE:

There is a required field trip before Week 1, from Friday September 27 through Sunday September 29, 2019. Arrange your schedule so that you can attend this field trip. Accommodation at the Oregon Institute for Marine Biology (OIMB), transportation for the entirety of the field trip, and meals will be funded by the department. Additional details provided once enrollment is finalized.

Location tbd

Credits 6

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**Graduate Employee
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Oregon Sequence Description

This will be the first studio in the inaugural offering of the Oregon Sequence, a three-quarter sequence spanning the 4/589 studio series. Designed to build upon the design skills and techniques learned in the LA 289 and LA 4/539 series and to prepare students for the advanced LA 4/594 studio as well as their capstone projects, the Oregon Sequence explores a thematic and/or geographic focus for an academic year across a breadth of scales, allowing the student to explore each scale in depth over the course of a quarter. The Fall quarter studio focuses on contextualization; the Winter quarter studio focuses on site design, and the Spring studio focuses on design detailing (replacing and relocating the LA 4/589 Tech Studio). Each studio within the Oregon Sequence will build upon the work in the previous studio, so that information developed in the Fall and Winter studios inform the work in Winter and Spring studios, respectively. The Oregon Sequence is for those students who are interested in pursuing a thematic and/or geographic focus for more than one quarter; the Fall studio is for those students who want to build their skills in landscape inventory and interpretation (with greater emphasis on the latter), mapping, and research. Students are not required to take the Fall Oregon Sequence studio in order to take the Winter Oregon Sequence studio, nor are students required to take the Winter Oregon Sequence studio if they take the Fall Oregon Sequence studio.

Studio Description

As Elizabeth Meyer has argued, landscape architecture is necessarily a situated practice:

Grounding in the immediate, the particular, and the circumstantial—the attributes of situational criticism—is an essential characteristic of landscape architectural design and theory.¹

The site—the land—speaks prior to the act of design.²

As a situated practice, then, landscape architecture is necessarily research-based. To “ground” oneself in the landscape requires you to directly engage with that landscape in order to understand it—to see, hear, touch, smell, and even taste that landscape in both real and conceptual terms—as it has been, as it is, and as it might be. Additionally, any landscape cannot be understood as merely one, linear narrative, but as multiple narratives intersecting in time and space, sometimes in conflict with each other.

¹ Meyer, Elizabeth K. “The Expanded Field of Landscape Architecture,” In *Ecological Design and Planning*, eds. George F. Thompson and Frederick R. Steiner (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1997), 71.

² Meyer, Elizabeth K. “The Expanded Field of Landscape Architecture,” In *Ecological Design and Planning*, eds. George F. Thompson and Frederick R. Steiner (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1997), 71.

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This studio will explore a particular territory(ies)³ through two of three possible relationships between research and design: “research for design” and “research through designing”. Lenzholzer et al. define “research for design” as research that “informs design to improve the quality of the designed artifact and to increase its reliability,” and “research through designing” as “designing in research processes to generate new knowledge.”⁴ In this studio, inventory and analysis of a particular territory(ies) will form the foundation for future site-specific design work in later quarters in the Oregon Sequence (“research for design”). Building upon inventory and analysis, and through interpretation and synthesis, students will reframe/refine conventional understanding of that territory(ies) and make original contributions to knowledge (“research through designing”).

Adopting a *situated* approach to practice, actuated through *research*, students will communicate their work through *mapping*. Taking the greater Coos Bay territory(ies) as the studio’s landscape of/for enquiry, students will aim to explore, understand, and reveal the nodes, forces, networks, and systems operating in and through Coos Bay—in the past, in the present, and in the future—through inventory, interpretation, and analytic and synthetic mapping.

Prerequisites	LA 4/539 studio series or the equivalent (upon approval by instructor).
Curricular Context	This class is required for BLA and MLA (First Professional MLA only) students.
Class Format	Class meeting times are primarily structured around project work, critiques, class discussion, informal lectures, and possible guest presentations. Outside of class time, students are expected to analytically review selected readings, extensively research similar project typologies and methods both past and present, thoroughly understand the context of the territory, execute ad hoc site visits, and diligently prepare for all intermediate milestones and all reviews.
Grading	Consistent with all Department of Landscape Architecture studios, this studio is graded Pass/Marginal Pass/No Pass with formative and summative feedback throughout the quarter. In exceptional cases, a grade of “Pass with Distinction” will be awarded.

³ “A tract of land, or district of undefined boundaries; a region”; also, “An area of knowledge; a sphere of thought or action, a province” (OED Online, “territory, n. 1”, accessed 23 August 2019).

⁴ Lenzholzer, Sandra, Ingrid Duchhart, and Jusuck Koh. “Research Through Designing’ in Landscape Architecture,” *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 113 (2013): 121.