



A Landscape Maker Process. Design development (clockwise from top right) from Photoshop concept drawing, to scaled study-model with paint application test, to full-scaled tree guard prototype by MLA student Ian Vierck et al. at UO Lab Lab, Univeristy of Oregon, Sumer 2022.

LA 289: Landscape-Making at the Landscape Lab

As a foundational studio in the BLA sequence, this course introduces students to fundamental concepts and creative techniques of landscape architecture. Through a series of intensive workshops, critical reviews, and lectures, we will explore the UO's Landscape Lab (on campus site along the Willamette River), as an experimental place to study landscape in terms of creative process, conceptual design, design-narrative, and environmental communication. The process of hands-on "making" will be prioritized as the principle language of our iterative design process. The goal is for students to see, analyze, conceptualize, and communicate through the creation of 3D models and site-responsive landscape-inspired objects and installations. We will also employ basic drawing conventions such as measured section, plan, and elevation as well as hand-crafted collage. This studio will be rigorous in its intellectual requirements and demanding in terms of student time, effort and applied creativity.

Spring 2023

Time: MWF 9AM to 11:50AM

Location: Lawrence Hall 374 / 375

Instructor: [David Buckley Borden](#) (he/him/his)
dborden4@uoregon.edu

Teaching Assistant: TBD

Credits: 6

This Spring 289 studio is for undergraduate pre-landscape architecture students and landscape architecture minors. LA 289 (Winter) is a prerequisite requirement.

This studio is **Pass/No Pass**.

Studio Overview

The second LA 289 studio program consists of a series of short, intense projects, designed to engage a variety of fundamental and prototypical landscape architectural problems, involving site, spatial composition, hand-drawing, sketching, section drawing, design narrative, environmental communication and design process. This particular studio will foreground analog making as a critical creative means for design development.

Studio Objectives:

1. To teach students to think about, value and effectively use their past environmental experience and present sensibilities as design sources;
2. to introduce creative processes and basic design theories;
3. to build design vocabularies and an appreciation of well-designed places;
4. to engage a range of landscape design issues, scales, media and methods, in a series of distinct but interrelated processes;
5. to introduce students to the diversity of landscape architectural values, interests and responsibilities;
7. to build an appreciation and capacity for craft, a striving for the highest quality work, and an understanding that studio proposals are expected to be the very best the student can do at their particular level of development;
8. to introduce the processes of design criticism and the developmental and evolutionary nature of design iteration;
9. to begin learning to work creatively and responsibly in group situations.

Studio Format

The studio format will be organized around rigorous group-project work, one-on-one critiques, pin-ups, guided class discussions, presentations, and guest lectures actively engaged in design, creative exploration, ecology, and “transpecies” considerations.

The studio will *generally* follow a regular schedule as follows:

Monday: lecture, workshop, site visit, etc.

Wednesday: desk critique and discussion

Friday: group pin-ups and reviews

Studio Approach

This studio is organized around creative methods that actively employ maker-based creative workflows. The studio will foreground a variety of hands-on design methods that include the creation of drawings, models, and other intentional creative modes for concept development, form-making, and speculative design proposals.

Students will select their own sub-site within the study site and design inspirations in response to the place, research, community, and speculative future of the site. Final designs will vary in response to student interests and goals, and will likely manifest in a diversity of design products. Students will learn a variety of skills that will be transferable to a range of landscape architecture applications and scales.

Requirements

1. Attendance to all lectures and discussion sessions. Per mandate of the College of Design this course can not be taken as an asynchronous class. No exceptions.

2. Evidence of preparation through exercises/ assignments, prepared questions, and conversation during class, or by specific reference in the student’s individual projects throughout the term.

This studio is graded **Pass/No Pass**.

Exceptional effort, intellectual growth, skill development, and creative risk-taking will be rewarded in final grade. ***Minimal effort, tardiness in any capacity, and an unproductive attitude, will not be rewarded***

Assignments

Assignments are to be submitted digitally (PDF), per deadline stated in Canvas assignment page. Include last name and due date in file name. For example *Smith_09292023.pdf*. Late work will be penalized a grade/point step per day. All submitted work must be submitted on the Canvas course website; emailed work will not be accepted.

Week 1: Inspiration through on-site research and exploration

Week 1 Agenda:

- Introduction to the studio, faculty, students, and site
- Exploration of on-campus Landscape Lab site through drawing and secondary research, which is provided for student review and analysis
- Transect drawing and analog diagram workshop

Week 1 Deliverables:

- At least three scaled-site transect hand-drawings on 11 x 17 paper
- At least three digital diagrams/collages exploring ecological conditions of the site
- 300-word written narrative of ecological interests relative to site exploration
- Written list of six ecological interests based on site research materials on canvas plus a brief (2 to 3 sentences) explanation as to why you personally find these ecological topics of interest to you.

Week 2: Design Concept Development through Iterative Drawing

Week 2 Agenda:

Introduction to environmental communication through landscape design

Exploration of iterative hand drawing methods and diagrams for concept development

Concept sketching and diagram workshop

Week 2 Deliverables:

- At least one presentation-quality scaled transect site drawing
- At least one ecological condition/process diagram as representation of environmental communication interest
- At least six landscape installation concept drawings/sketches on paper that capture a singular ecological concept relative to the site

Week 3: Design Concept Iteration through physical modeling

Week 3 Agenda:

- Introduction to physical modeling tools in both woodshop and studio, and methods for design concept exploration
- Creative feedback loops between site research, drawings, and concept development
- Group workshop; sketch models for conceptual development and formal explorations

Week 3 Deliverables:

- At least six concept sketch-models in media of your choice (wood, cardboard, foam core, altered found objects, etc.)
- One sentence written exploration of each concept model
- 100 word report summarizing shop training, tools/technology, and key safety considerations

Week 4 Design narrative development for two landscape installation concepts

Week 4 Agenda

- Introduction to design narrative in terms of intention, site, form, material, and supporting details
- Group workshop; design narrative as iterative tool for articulating conceptual design

Week 4 Deliverables

- At least two landscape installation diagrams on paper to communicate on-site ecology
- At least three concept drawings and three sketch-models in media of your choice per each landscape installation proposal
- Written abstract and descriptive title for each landscape installation concept, minimum 100-words each

Week 5: Mid Term; Presentation-quality design development proposal for mid-term Presentation

- Students present two landscape installation concepts using printed 11x17 boards and physical models. Installation proposals can be two unique concepts, or two different variations of a single concept
- Based on review feedback, student selects one communication-driven landscape installation concept to develop in detail for final proposal

Mid-term Deliverables:

- TBD; exact mid-term deliverables in terms of drawings and models will be determined based on student progress leading up to mid-term review.

Assignment Grading

Weekly submissions are graded on a ten point system as follows:

- 3 pts - Evidence of effort
- 3 pts - Applied concepts/skills from class
- 2 pts - Creative iteration
- 2 pts - Individual voice + self-expression

Expectations

Despite being an introduction-level studio, I expect the highest professional standards to be maintained throughout the term. Active in-class participation, open communication, and consistent effort progress is very important. In addition, class participation also includes respecting the rights and property of others, working cooperatively, and completing assignments satisfactorily and on time.

Design research methods will be incorporated in all stages of the design process and include both indirect (literature, case study, and precedent review) and direct methods of design inquiry. Direct design research will include site inventory and analysis, but also employ research-by-design tools to drive concept generation and the application of concept to site. Beyond class meetings, students will be required to read selected publications. Optional readings are highly encouraged. Outside of studio, students are expected to complete exercises, develop work for intermediate submissions, and prepare for pin-ups. If students fail to prepare for desk crits/pin-ups, they forfeit their opportunity for direct one-on-one feedback and received a zero for the day's participation grade.

Grading Breakdown

- 20% Class attendance/participation
- 40% Desk Crits and weekly assignments
- 20% Mid Term
- 20% Final Project

Attendance, preparation, participation, and all assignments are mandatory. Unexcused absences, being late for class, or failure to submit assignments on time will lower your overall course grade. Students are permitted one grace absence (no questions asked) and one grace late-submission (no questions asked).



Educational Design. "Wildfire Sun Dial," by UO MLA student, Celia Hensey. Temporary environmental-communication installation developed as part of the Overlook Field School, Mt. Pisgah Arboretum, OR, 2021.



Community-Driven Design. "Tick Check Point" by David Buckley Borden. Temporary direct-action installation developed in response to Lyme disease concerns at the Harvard Forest, Petersham, MA, 2017.