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Image: "Amaze at Refugia," interactive  
community-education game by Jake Brotsis  
from Fall 2022 HJA Studio



## ***HJA Experimental Forest Studio Part I: Ecosystem Understanding through Play***

**Fall 2023**

**LA 4/589**

**Time:** Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. 1-5pm

**Location:** LA 308

**Instructor:** David Buckley Borden (he/him/his)  
Lawrence Hall, Room 381  
dborden4@uoregon.edu

**Curricular Context:** Required studio in the  
BLA and MLA degree programs.

**Studio Prerequisites:** Successful completion  
of LA 4/539 studios or the equivalent (upon  
approval by instructor).

**Office Hours.** Immediately following studio on  
Mondays and Wednesdays, or by appointment.

**Credits:** 6

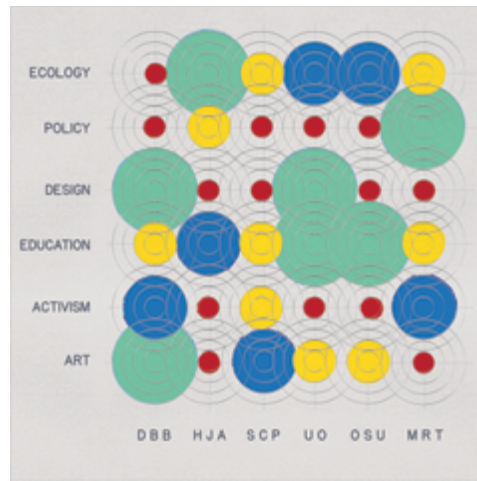
**Mid-term and Final Review:** TBD

### **Studio Brief:**

The HJA Landscape systems studio offers landscape architecture students an opportunity for deep research into ecological systems and critical skill development in terms of design-research methods, maker-based workflows, environmental communication, and articulated design-narrative through the medium of community engagement games.

The site, inspiration, and initial community partner for the studio will be the HJ Andrews Experimental Forest (HJA) and OSU College of Forestry.

A follow-up LA 4/589 Winter 2024 term studio will focus on applying student design-research knowledge to a site-design with an environmental-education program at one of several HJA sites. This two-term studio sequence is an opportunity for intensive research and high-craft portfolio products. An optional third design-build studio with HJA will be offered in the Spring of 2024 as the capstone studio for this three term sequence.



*HJA Design Research Drawings by DBB: Context map, inventory diagram as stakeholder research tool, and sci-comm installation concept drawing as community outreach (left to right).*

## Studio Description

This design-research studio is organized around research methods that actively employ maker-based creative workflows within a design process. Students will learn a variety of “research through design” skills that will be transferable to a range of landscape architecture applications and scales. The site, inspiration, and initial community partner for the studio will be the College of Forestry at Oregon State University and the HJ Andrews Experimental Forest (HJA) in Blue River, OR. This studio will explore the HJA and its ecological knowledge base at a range of scales as a means for research, design-narrative development, and environmental communication through community engagement “game” design and fabrication.

Students will select their own design research topic(s) in response to the place, research, and community of the HJA. Potential topics of inquiry include forest management, watershed stewardship, carbon dynamics, and natural and man-made disturbances, including wildfires. A list of HJA research programs can be found [here](#). Building off the HJA’s research efforts, successful studio projects will articulate pressing environmental challenges of the Anthropocene, in terms of both design-research and a compelling design-narrative. Final studio projects will vary in response to student interests, aptitudes, and goals, and will likely manifest in a variety of design products ranging from spatial maps, thematic diagramming, environmental systems communication, problem-space articulation, and other place-based, narrative-driven products including a community-engagement game.

This studio will build student capacity for critical design-thinking skills in terms of landscape analysis, mapping, narrative, and research-through-design. Design-research methods will be incorporated in all stages of the studio process and include both indirect (literature, case study, and precedent review) and direct methods of design inquiry. Direct design research will include traditional landscape inventory, mapping, and analysis, but also employ research tools to drive concept generation. The studio’s process aims to expose students to a diversity of design research approaches, and includes artistic, adaptive, analytical, and systematic methods. The studio will embrace an iterative maker-based approach throughout the entire course of the studio. Given the research demands, and physical making process (wood shop and fabrication time), **this studio will be very time-intensive.**



## Context

The [HJ Andrews Experimental Forest](#) (HJA) is a landscape of inquiry. Its mission is to support research on forests, streams, and watersheds, and to foster collaboration among ecosystem science, education, natural resource management, and the humanities.

The HJA is a center for ecosystem research in the Pacific Northwest. The research program has its roots in the establishment of the HJA in 1948 by the US Forest Service. The Andrews Forest became a charter member of the National Science Foundation's Long Term Ecological Research (LTER) program in 1980. Long-term measurement programs continued on experimental sites and watersheds with a focus on questions about climate, streamflow, water quality, vegetation succession, biogeochemical cycling, and effects of forest management.

HJA research is ongoing, and continues to reveal surprising and important information relative to landscape architects and other allied professions proactively engaged in environmental stewardship.

Also relative to the design research studio is the [Long-Term Ecological Reflections \(LTEReflections\)](#) project, an arts and humanities program that takes place at the HJA and will continue for 200 years (2003 to 2203). The mission of the Long-Term Ecological Reflections program is to bring together writers, humanists, artists, and scientists to create a living, growing record of how we understand the forest and the relation of people to the forest, as that understanding and forest both change over time.



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*HJ Andrews Experimental Forest Research: landslide simulation flume (top), stream gauge (middle), and heavily instrumented old growth tree (bottom).*



## Learning Objectives

By the end of this ecologic systems design-research studio, students should be able to demonstrate the following:

- An understanding and working knowledge of design-research methods and practices in transforming environmental research into an articulated design narrative;
- Knowledge of research-by-design methods including both direct and indirect modes of practice, including experimental workflows in both digital and analog media;
- The ability to clarify communicate your design-research in support of your final design project through effective graphic communication and written narrative;
- Proficiency in designing in a professional setting, including project organization, workflow, file preparation, and final presentation of a professional quality research-driven design project;
- Ability to balance the demands of a rigorous design-research project while simultaneously enjoying the creative process; specifically, have fun.

## Communication

Our class will communicate through our Canvas site. Announcements and emails are archived there and automatically forwarded to your UO email, and can even reach you by text. Check and adjust your settings under Account > Notifications. Canvas will also be the go-to platform to access Zoom links to “go to studio” and schedule “live” office hours. Please let me know if scheduled office hours do not work for you and we will schedule another time.

*Image: “Meandering Mycelium: Ancient Networks,” interactive community-education game by Mikayla Ngo from Fall 2022 HJA Studio.*





### **Studio Format**

The studio format will be organized around rigorous weekly project work, one-on-one critiques, pin-ups, peer reviews, guided class discussions, presentations, and guest lectures from HJA, OSU, Harvard Forest, UWLA, Rios, and other professionals engaged in design-research as part of their creative practice.

The studio will be organized around a variety of hands-on design research methods that include the creation of drawings, models, and props, as intentional research methods for concept development, community engagement, and design-research narrative

Beyond class meetings, students will be required to read selected readings. Optional readings are highly encouraged.

Outside of studio time, students are expected to complete exercises, develop work for weekly submissions, and prepare for periodic pin-ups, and reviews. All students are afforded one unexcused late submission (no questions asked) per term. An excused late submission grade will be reduced by one point per day. Otherwise, unexcused late submissions will not be accepted and will received a grade of zero.

The studio will generally follow a regular schedule:

- Monday: lecture and or workshop
- Wednesday: desk critique and discussion
- Friday: pin-up and reviews

Occasional guest lecturers will be scheduled as their professional calendars permit.

Zoom links to studio are available on Canvas and through an Outlook calendar invite. The same link will be reused for entire term.



### **Attendance and Preparation**

Preparation for all critiques, pin-ups, and reviews is essential. Preparation not only includes *organized* drawings/models for discussion, but also an investment of critical-thinking into the creative process and intellectual development of the work. Barring extenuating circumstances, if a student fails to prepare, they will forfeit one-on-one critiques with instructor and or guest critics. All students are afforded one excused critique (no questions asked).

If online options are required, students are expected to log in for the live lectures and desk crits for their entire duration. In case of technical difficulties related to “live” participation, you will need to watch the recorded sessions at a suitable time and demonstrate it through our future communication.

Beyond technical difficulties, barring extenuating circumstances, students are allowed one excused absence from studio meeting times. Otherwise, a student’s final grade will be reduced by two-points per unexcused absences.

### **Expectations**

I expect that the highest professional standards to be maintained throughout the term. Active in-class participation, open communication, and consistent 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.

### **Grading**

Consistent with all Department of Landscape Architecture studios, this studio is graded Pass/No Pass with formative and cumulative feedback.

Exceptional effort, experimentation, and creative risk-taking will be rewarded in final grade. Minimal effort, an unproductive attitude, missed submissions and tardiness will generally be rewarded with a failing final grade.





### **Specific Guidelines for Canvas Discussion**

1. Use subject lines that clearly communicate the content of your post
2. Write clearly and concisely and be aware that humor or sarcasm often doesn't always translate in an online environment.
3. Be supportive and considerate when replying to others' posts. This means avoiding use of jargon or inappropriate language, and it means disagreeing with respect and providing clear rationale or evidence to support your different view.
4. Keep focused on the topic and reference readings and other class materials to support your points (as applicable).
5. Use correct spelling and grammar and proofread your submissions. After submitting, use the edit feature to make corrections and resubmit (don't create a new or duplicate post that corrects your error).
6. Contribute and interact often, please and thank you.

### **Specific Guidelines for using Zoom**

1. Please test your video and audio prior to joining a live class session. You can learn more about testing your audio and video by visiting the Zoom Help Center at <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us>
2. Be on time when the meeting starts. It is distracting to have participants join late.
3. Be mindful that others can see you and your surroundings if your video is on. Find a quiet setting without lots of noise or busy activities in the background. Please minimize distractions like eating or multitasking.
4. Use a microphone or speak closely to your computer microphone so that others can hear you. If you have video on, try to look at your camera, not the screen, when you are contributing.
5. Mute your audio when you are not actively contributing.
6. Use chat to pose questions or offer insights "on the side" while others are contributing or use the option to "raise your hand".
7. If you prefer to use a static image instead of video, you can keep your video off. However, video use is highly encouraged during discussion sessions.
8. For help with Zoom, visit the Zoom Help Center at <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us>
9. Have fun.

## Technical Requirements

Log into [canvas.uoregon.edu](https://canvas.uoregon.edu) using your DuckID to access our class. Canvas will be used as the “administrative hub” of the course. Links to “live” studio meetings, desk crits, and office hours have also been made available, and the first two weeks of content has been uploaded so that you can get started while you download additional software. Please refer to the course “modules” for detailed agendas and assignments. If you have questions about accessing and using Canvas, visit the Canvas support page. Canvas and Technology Support also is available by phone (541-346-4357) or live chat ([livehelp.uoregon.edu](https://livehelp.uoregon.edu)) Monday–Sunday (6 AM –12 AM).

If you face Internet access challenges: computer labs are open for students at the Eugene campus. Some companies are offering free access during this challenging time. To learn more about options visit Information Services’ web page on going remote. All-class lectures will be organized as video conference calls using Zoom. Please refer to Best Practices using Zoom in the Course Policies section of the document. You will join the call using the link that I will share prior to the class. You don’t need to install Zoom to join a meeting (the link will prompt a download of a small application file just for the particular call on your laptop). I advise you to download the free application on your desktop to manage your calls easier. If you are joining from a mobile device, then it will simply prompt you to download the Zoom Cloud Meetings app.

We will use a course folder as a space to share assignments, recorded lectures, and other course resources. Students will create subfolders to upload weekly assignments and project updates.



## Academic Continuity

In the event of a campus emergency that disrupts academic activities, course requirements, deadlines, and grading percentages are subject to change. Information about changes in this course will be communicated as soon as possible by email, and on Canvas. If we are not able to meet face-to-face, students should immediately log onto Canvas and read any announcements and/or access alternative assignments. Students are also encouraged to continue the readings and other assignments as outlined on this syllabus.





### **Academic Resources**

The University's Teaching and Learning Center (TLC) provides various programs, workshops, courses, tutors, and mentors to aid you in your coursework at the University of Oregon. One of the services that may be of particular benefit for this class is the TLC's Writing Lab, which provides one-on-one feedback on writing assignments. You may visit the Drop-In Writing Lab at 72 Prince Lucien Campbell, M-F 9am-4pm, with or without an appointment (<http://tlc.uoregon.edu/subjects/writing/>).

### **Academic Integrity**

The University Student Conduct Code (available at [conduct.uoregon.edu](http://conduct.uoregon.edu)) defines academic misconduct. Students are prohibited from committing or attempting to commit any act that constitutes academic misconduct. By way of example, students should not give or receive (or attempt to give or receive) unauthorized help on assignments or examinations without express permission from the instructor. Students should properly acknowledge and document all sources of information (e.g. quotations, paraphrases, ideas) and use only the sources and resources authorized by the instructor. If there is any question about whether an act constitutes academic misconduct, it is the students' obligation to clarify the question with the instructor before committing or attempting to commit the act. Additional information about a common form of academic misconduct, plagiarism, is available at <http://library.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/index.html>.

### **Accessibility**

The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify the instructor if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. You are also encouraged to contact the Accessible Education Center (formerly Disability Services) in 164 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or [uoaec@uoregon.edu](mailto:uoaec@uoregon.edu).

### **Diversity**

The University of Oregon is dedicated to the principles of equal opportunity and freedom from unfair discrimination for all members of the university community and an acceptance of true diversity as an affirmation of individual identity within a welcoming community. This course is committed to upholding these principles by encouraging the exploration, engagement, and expression of distinct perspectives and diverse identities.

I will value each class member's experiences and contributions and trust everyone will communicate disagreements respectfully. Please notify me if you feel aspects of the course undermine these principles in any way.

You may also notify the Department of Landscape Architecture at 541.346.3634 or at [landarch@uoregon.edu](mailto:landarch@uoregon.edu). For additional assistance and resources, you are also encouraged to contact the following campus services:



**Office of Equity and Inclusion**

1 Johnson Hall  
541.346.3175  
<http://oied.uoregon.edu>

**Center on Diversity and Community**

54 Susan Campbell Hall  
541.346.3212  
<http://codac.uoregon.edu>

**Bias Response Team**

164 Oregon Hall  
541.346.1134  
[brt@uoregon.edu](mailto:brt@uoregon.edu)  
<http://bias.uoregon.edu>

**Emergency Information**

In Case of Emergency CALL 911. In case of non-emergency assistance: Call the UO Police Department at 541.346.2919

**Sexual Violence and Survivor Support Statement**

The UO is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence and gender-based stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences gender-based violence (intimate partner violence, attempted or completed sexual assault, harassment, coercion, stalking, etc.), know that you are not alone. UO has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.



**Schedule and Program** (*subject to change and adjustment based on student input and needs*)

**Week 1: Introduction to People, Place, and Practice**

**Wednesday (9/30)**

- Presentation: Studio Introduction and Syllabus Review
- Research topic exploration
- One-on-one interviews

**Friday (10/2)**

- Presentation : Research Forest Introduction
  - Research topic discussion
  - One-on-one interviews, continued
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**Week 2: In-Direct Design Research**

**Monday (10/5)**

- Presentation: Design Research Practice by DBB

**Wednesday (10/7)**

- Presentation: Design Research Practice, Catherine De Almeida, Department of Landscape Architecture at UW
- One-on-one checks-ins

**Friday (10/9)**

- Research Interests Presentation
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**Week 3: Direct Design Research, Digital**

**Monday (10/12)**

- Presentation: 1. Harvard Forest Sci-Arts
- 2. Direct Design Research Workshop Part 1

**Wednesday (10/14)**

- Desk crits

**Friday (10/16)**

- Pin-up
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**Week 4: Direct Design Research, Analog**

**Monday (10/19)**

- Presentation: Direct Design Research Workshop Part 2

**Wednesday (10/21)**

- Desk crits

**Friday (10/23)**

- Pin-up

**Week 5: Design Research Development, Hybrid**

**Monday (10/26)**

Presentation: Direct Design Research Workshop Part 3

**Wednesday (10/28)**

Desk crits

**Friday (10/30)**

Pin-up

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**Week 6: Design Proposal Development**

**Monday (11/2)**

Desk crits

***Wednesday (11/4)***

*Mid-term Review*

**Friday (11/6)**

Review reflection and discussion based on critique notes

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**Week 7: Design Development**

**Monday (11/9)**

Desk crits

**Wednesday (11/11)**

Desk crits

**Friday (11/13)**

Pin-up

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**Week 8: Design Development**

**Monday (11/16)**

Presentation: Design Proposal Presentation Workshop Part 1

**Wednesday (11/18)**

Desk crits

**Friday (11/20)**

Pin-up



**Week 9: Presentation Development**

**Monday (11/23)**

Presentation: Design Proposal Presentation Workshop Part 2

**Wednesday (11/25)**

Desk crits (*Effective Last Day of Classes*)

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**Week 10:**

**Review Week**

*Final Review TBD*

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