

## LARC 160 INTRODUCTION TO LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Landscape Architecture Program, University of Maryland

**SYLLABUS FIRST EDITION, January 26, 2009**

*Revised February 9, 2009*

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“I have all my life been considering distant effects  
and always sacrificing immediate success and  
applause to that of the future.”

*- Frederick Law Olmsted*

### **Class Time:**

M & W 10:00-10:50, Room 1140 Plant Sciences

**Discussion Groups:** (begin the week of February 2-6) Discussion Leaders to be determined

0101 M.....11:00am-11:50am (PLS 1111) Discussion TA: Nathan Origer

0102 W.....11:00am-11:50am (PLS 1111) Discussion TA: Nathan Origer

0103 F.....11:00am-11:50am (PLS 1164) Discussion TA: Xing Wei

0104 Th.....12:30pm- 1:20pm (PLS 1146) Discussion TA: Catherine Walsh

0105 Th.....11:00am-11:50am (PLS 1146) Discussion TA: Catherine Walsh



*U. S. Capitol Grounds, Frederick Law Olmsted, 1873*

### **Teaching Assistants / e-mail address:**

Nathan Origer / nporiger@gmail.com

Catherine Walsh / cwalsh13@umd.edu

Xing Wei / wxing@umd.edu

Contact teaching assistants directly for appointments.

### **Course Web Site:**

<http://www.larch.umd.edu/classes/larc/L160/pageone.html>

### **Scope and Objectives**

Landscape architecture addresses issues that range from the planning and the design of entire cities to the specific details pertaining to small gardens. The class examines the challenges that arise and the opportunities that are presented when human beings design on the land. It studies the wide-ranging efforts in the field of landscape architecture, which is the art and the science of designing, planning and managing the land.

While examining landscape architecture's influence upon places inhabited by people, students will become aware of the relationship between man and nature, and the potential for landscape architecture to transform the environments in which humans live, work, and play.

## Course Organization

The course has four major units of study. The course first introduces the primary elements of landscape architecture and examines the ways of looking at landscape based upon the individual's unique perspective. Second, the context and history of landscape architecture will be studied, with focus on the natural and urban design contexts of the Washington, D.C. and Chesapeake Bay region and several major works of landscape architecture will be highlighted. Third, the course studies the various venues of the profession of landscape architecture, including the city, the suburb, the site, and the garden. We will examine issues of land stewardship, urban design, garden design, community design, campus design, cultural landscapes, ecological design, and other such practice areas. Landscape architects with expertise in each area will supplement the regular lectures. Finally, the tools and methods of landscape architecture will be studied, including land analysis, modeling, drawing, and computer-assisted design. The materials and tools employed by the field of landscape architecture, including plants, paving materials, water, and other elements that structure and organize designed landscapes will be explored. Throughout the course, excellent examples of landscape architecture will be featured to coincide with the focus study areas.

### Students enrolled in this course will:

- Learn the breadth of issues addressed in the field of landscape architecture;
- Develop an understanding of the vocabulary of landscape architecture;
- Analyze and identify design principles and methods that structure and shape outdoor space;
- Understand the relationships between natural processes and human interventions;
- Observe, record and analyze designed landscapes, and identify the design organization of landscapes through keeping a personal Design Journal;
- Investigate the designed and natural settings of the Washington, D.C. region;
- Study historic precedents that inform landscape design;
- Examine humans' changing attitudes towards nature;
- Review current endeavors by regional landscape architecture professionals;
- Learn materials and tools employed by landscape architects in design.

## Textbook and Readings

Required text: John Ormsbee Simonds and Barry W. Starke, *Landscape Architecture, FOURTH Edition, A Manual of Environmental Planning and Design*, McGraw-Hill, 2006.

Additional readings are on **Blackboard** at [www.elms.edu](http://www.elms.edu) and on the **LARC 160 course web site** at <http://www.larc.umd.edu/CLASSES/LARC/L160/pageone.html>.



*Meridian Hill Park, Washington, DC*

## **Course Requirements and Expectations - READ ALL OF THIS CAREFULLY.**

The course requires students to attend two weekly lectures, to participate actively in a weekly discussion group, to prepare responses in advance of weekly discussion group, to keep a Design Journal, to prepare a Design Response and to complete two examinations.

### **Discussion Group (30% of grade: Participation *and* Responses)**

Discussion group allows time for further critical thinking about the course readings and topics presented in class, as well as to apply the theory to settings on the College Park campus and its environs. Students are asked to respond to readings, share observations, or make a presentation (with prior arrangement) during the sessions. Unless noted otherwise, advance preparation of each week's discussion questions is required. Some responses will be submitted to the discussion group leader for review. **No credit is earned for unexcused late work.**

Students earn the discussion group score as follows: one-half of the discussion grade is based on student's interaction in the group, and the other half is based on the student's prepared responses to the assignments. **Attending, but not speaking, will earn a student a score of "C" for participation.** Missing more than three (3) discussion sessions will result in a score of "F" for the participation portion of the discussion group grade.

### **Design Journal (20% of grade)**

The Design Journal documents the student's discovery of landscape architecture in his/her everyday settings. The Design Journal should be used as a place to reflect upon the benefits of and limits to landscape architecture. Each student's Journal should include entries that further his/her study of landscape architecture, including sketches, photographs with captions, magazine clippings, details of constructed landscapes (plants, paving, fountains, lighting, etc.), maps, photographs, post cards, rubbings, and other souvenirs of places visited that have informed his/her understanding of landscape architecture. Specific requirements of the Design Journal are posted on the website and students are expected to **make one journal entry each week.**

### **Design Response (15% of grade)**

Students will prepare a design response to a design problem for the hypothetical re-design of a place on the College Park campus. Students will respond based on readings, observations, and lectures from the semester. The Design Response will be evaluated for the integration of the design methods and principles discussed in the class, rather than for the quality of the student's design. Specific requirements of the Design Response will be posted on the Assignments tab of the course website.

### **Exams (35% of grade)**

Two exams will occur during the semester. Exams will cover material from both the lectures and from the readings. The final exam date is firm and is the only opportunity to sit for the exam. **Failing to appear for either the mid-term or the final exam will result in a score of "0".** There will be no make up exams given without a documented medical excuse. It is the student's responsibility to know the date, time, and place of the final exam, as these are established by the University of Maryland, and are not established by the professor.

**Course Schedule and Readings** All readings should be done prior to the lecture date listed.

Discussion worksheets and assignments will be posted to class website in advance. The website is <http://www.larch.umd.edu/classes/larc/L160/pageone.html>. *No password is required*

## **PART 1: Foundation and Discovery**

### **WEEK 1: No Discussion Group meeting**

**Monday, January 26**                      **Introduction and Course Objectives**

American Society of Landscape Architects ([www.asla.org](http://www.asla.org)). Look up information about the profession and be prepared to discuss what you have learned in the first discussion meeting during the week of February 2-6

**Wednesday, January 28**                      **Defining Landscape**

Simonds & Starke, Chapter 1 “The Human Habitat” and Chapter 2 “Climate”

### **WEEK 2: Discussion Session 1: Introduction**

**Monday, February 2**                      **Elements of Landscape: Land and Water**

Simonds & Starke, Chapter 3 “Land” and Chapter 4 “Water”

**Wednesday, February 4**                      **Landscape Character and Design Practice**

Simonds & Starke, Chapter 5 “Vegetation”, Chapter 6 “Landscape Character”, and Chapter 7 “Topography”

### **WEEK 3: Discussion Session 2: Landscape Architects as Stewards of the Land**

**Monday, February 9**                      **Landscape Practice and Reading Topography**

Simonds & Starke, Chapter 5 “Topography”, Chapter 6 “Landscape Character”, and Chapter 7 “Vegetation”

**Wednesday, February 11**                      **Perceiving and Assessing the Landscape**

D.W. Meinig, “The Beholding Eye: Ten Versions of the Same Scene.” E-Reserve.  
Yi Fu Tuan, “Thought and Landscape: The Eye and the Mind’s Eye.” E-Reserve.

## **PART 2: Contexts and History**

### **WEEK 4: Discussion Session 3: Interpreting Landscape: Considering The Chapel Landscape**

**Monday, February 16**                      **Landscape Architecture Trends and Movements, part 1**

Michael Laurie, “The Garden in History,” pp. 15-36. E-Reserve.

**Wednesday, February 18**                      **Landscape Architecture Trends and Movements, part 2**

Michael Laurie, “The Garden in History,” pp. 36-59. E-Reserve.

### **WEEK 5: Discussion Session 4: Reading the College Park Landscape**

**Monday, February 23**                      **Chesapeake Bay Watershed Challenges and Responses**

Tom Horton, Chapter 1 “The Bay Connects Us, The Bay Reflects Us” from *Turning the Tide*, pp. 28-43. E-Reserve.

**Wednesday, February 25**                      **Regional Focus: Washington’s Design Legacy**

John Reps, “Washington, The Founding and the Founders,” pp. 1- 25. E-Reserve.

### **WEEK 6: Discussion Session 5: The Cultural and Regional Landscape**

**Monday, March 2**                      **Sustainable Design: Plants and Low Impact Development**

**Wednesday, March 4**                      **Shaping and Forming Outdoor Space: Design Influences**

Simonds & Starke, Chapter 11 “Site Volumes” and Chapter 12 “Visible Landscape”

### **WEEK 7: No Discussion Group meeting**

**Monday, March 9**                      **Human Behaviors and Landscape Design**

Film Short: *Social Life of Urban Open Spaces*, William H. Whyte

**Wednesday, March 11**                      **Exam #1 (Midterm)**

WEEK 8: Spring Break: **Monday-Friday, March 16-20**

**PART 3: Designed Landscapes: Making Plans and turning them into Reality**

WEEK 9: Discussion Session 6: Behavioral Factors Exercise. **Meet in Hornbake Plaza.**  
**Bring felt tip marker or colored pencils.**

**Monday, March 23**                      **Site Analysis and Site Planning**  
Simonds & Starke, Chapter 8 "Site Planning"  
**Wednesday, March 25**              **Site Planning and Site Design**  
Simonds & Starke, Chapter 9 "Site Development"

WEEK 10: Discussion Session 7: Ordering Design Exercise - Part 1

**Monday, March 30**                      **Planning the Regional Landscape; Design with Nature**  
Ian McHarg, *Design with Nature* Introduction, pp. 1-5; The Plight, pp. 19-29. E-Reserve;  
Chapter 18 "Growth Management" and Chapter 20 "The Planned Environment"  
**Wednesday, April 1**                      **Urban Landscapes and the Living City**  
Simonds & Starke, Chapter 17 "Urban Design"

WEEK 11: Discussion Session 8: Site and Garden Design Exercise - Part 2

**DESIGN JOURNALS DUE IN CLASS ON MONDAY, APRIL 6**

**Monday, April 6**                              **Campus Planning and Design**  
**Wednesday, April 8**                      **Housing and Planned Communities**  
Simonds & Starke, Chapter 13, "Circulation," pp. 213-230, Chapter 14, "Structures", pp. 249-263,  
Chapter 15, "Habitations", pp. 265-275, and Chapter 16 "Community Planning", pp. 277-297.

WEEK 12: Discussion Session 9a: Community and Recreation Design, Part I

**Monday, April 13**                              **Arboreta and Botanical Gardens**  
**Wednesday, April 15**                      **Contemporary Garden Design**  
Simonds & Starke, Chapter 10 "Landscape Planting" and Chapter 21 "Perspective"

WEEK 13: Discussion Session 9b: Community and Recreation Design, Part II

**Monday, April 20**                              **Contemporary Landscape Architecture Practice**  
**Wednesday, April 22**                      **Sustainability in Landscape Architecture**

WEEK 14: Discussion Session 10: Sustainable Design in Landscape Architecture

**Monday, April 27**                              **Exploring Design: Digital Technology and Communication**  
**Wednesday, April 29**                      **Public Service in Landscape Architecture**

WEEK 15: No Discussion Section

**DESIGN RESPONSE DUE IN CLASS MONDAY, APRIL 27**

**Monday, May 4**                                      **Landscape Architecture and the Scholarship of Engagement**  
**Wednesday, May 6**                              **Education of the Landscape Architect**

WEEK 16: No Discussion Section

**Monday, May 11**                                      **Last day of class: Review for Final Exam**  
**Wednesday, May 13**                              **Exam Study Day**

**FINAL EXAM: WEDNESDAY, MAY 20, 2009, 8:00am-10:00am**

**Exceptional Local Landscapes:** The Washington region benefits from many well-designed gardens,

monuments, and sites that have been influenced by landscape architects. Over the course of the semester, students should visit several gardens and public spaces, and must include observations from at least one of these in their Design Journal. These are within 30-45 minutes of campus and most have no admission fee, unless noted.

- Dumbarton Oaks Gardens (check hours [www.doaks.org](http://www.doaks.org) , \$7/Georgetown)
- Franciscan Monastery (Quincy Street, N.E. near Catholic University)
- Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial (West Potomac Park at Tidal Basin, D.C.)
- Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden (National Mall)
- National Japanese American Memorial (New Jersey Avenue/D Street, N.W.)
- Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens (Anacostia Avenue, NE, DC)
- Meridian Hill/Malcom X Park (16<sup>th</sup> & W Street, NW, DC)
- Museum of the American Indian Grounds (4<sup>th</sup> and Independence Avenue, SW, DC)
- The National Arboretum (New York Avenue, NE, DC)
- National Cathedral Bishop's Garden and Grounds (Wisconsin Avenue, NW, DC)
- National Gallery of Art East Wing grounds (4<sup>th</sup> Street & Constitution Avenue, DC)
- National Gallery of Art Sculpture Garden (National Mall at 7<sup>th</sup> Street and Constitution Avenue, DC)
- Pershing Park (at Willard Hotel, Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, D.C.)
- Riversdale House & Gardens (open Fri/Sun only; \$2/Riverdale/College Park, MD)
- The National Zoo (Cleveland Park metro station)
- The Vietnam Veterans' Memorial (Constitution Avenue near 22<sup>nd</sup> Street)
- Women in Military Service Memorial (Arlington Cemetery metro station)

*Women in Military Service Memorial (below)  
View towards Washington across Memorial Bridge*



**E-Reserve Readings:** The required readings are from the following texts:

- Garvin, Alexander. *The American City, What Works and What Doesn't*, McGraw Hill, 1996.
- Horton, Tom. "The Bay Connects Us, the Bay Reflects Us" from *Turning the Tide, Saving the Chesapeake Bay*. Island Press, 2003.
- Laurie, Michael. "The Garden in History" from *Introduction to Landscape Architecture*. Elsevier Press, 1986.
- Lynch, Kevin and Gary Hack. "The Site" from *Site Planning*. MIT Press, 1986.
- McHarg, Ian. "Introduction" and "The Plight" from *Design with Nature*. Doubleday, 1969.

Meining, D.W. "The Beholding Eye: Ten Version of the Same Scene" from *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes: Geographical Essays*. Oxford U. Press, 1979.

Moore, Charles, William Mitchell and William Turnbull. "The Designer's Place" from *The Poetics of Gardens*.

Reps, John. "Washington: The Founding and the Founders" from *Monumental Washington: The Planning and Development of the Capital Center*. Princeton University Press, 1967.

Tuan, Yi-Fu. "Thought and Landscape: The Eye and The Mind's Eye" from *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes: Geographical Essays*. Oxford U. Press, 1979.

**Optional/Additional Readings:**

In addition to reading listed above, the following readings listed will give further insight into the issues and concerns of landscape architecture:

Birnbaum, Charles. *Pioneers of American Landscape Design*. McGraw Hill, 2000.

Corner, James, ed. *Recovering Landscapes. Essays in Contemporary Landscape Architecture*. Princeton Architectural Press, 1999.

Church, Thomas. *Gardens are For People*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, University of California, 1995.

Garvin, Alexander. *The American City: What Works, What Doesn't*. McGraw-Hill, 1996.

Jackson, J.B. *Landscapes*. MIT Press, 1980.

Newton, Norman. *Design on the Land*. Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1971.  
Pregill, Phillip and Nancy Volkman. *Landscapes in History*. Wiley and Sons, 1999.  
Rogers, Walter. *The Professional Practice of Landscape Architecture*, Van Nostrand, 1997.  
Rybczynski, Witold. *A Clearing in the Distance: Frederick Olmsted and America in the Nineteenth Century*, Scribner, 1999.  
Spirn, Anne Whiston. *The Granite Garden*. New York: Basic Books, 1984.  
Swaffield, Simon. *Theory in Landscape Architecture*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002.  
Thayer, Robert. *Gray World, Green Heart*. Wiley and Sons, 1994.  
Tishler, William, ed. *American Landscape Architecture*. Designers and Places, Preservation Press, 1989.

### **Attendance Policy (from University of Maryland web site)**

The University expects each student to take full responsibility for his or her academic work and academic progress. The student, to progress satisfactorily, must meet all of the requirements of each course for which he or she is registered. Students are expected to attend classes regularly, for consistent attendance offers the most effective opportunity open to all students to gain command of the concepts and materials of their courses of study.

It is the policy of the University to excuse the absences of students that result from the following causes: illness of the student, or illness of a dependent as defined by Board of Regents policy on family and medical leave; religious observance (where the nature of the observance prevents the student from being present during the class period); participation in university activities at the request of University authorities; and compelling circumstance beyond the student's control. Students claiming excused absence must apply in writing and furnish documentary support for their assertion that absence resulted from one of these causes.

The University provides students with excused absences the opportunity to reschedule significant assessments, except in cases where the nature of the assessment precluded the possibility of rescheduling, OR to perform a substitute assignment without penalty. An instructor is not under obligation to offer a substitute assignment or to give a student a make-up assessment unless the failure to perform was due to an excused absence, that is, due to illness (of the student or a dependent), religious observance (where the nature of the observance prevents the student from being present during the class period), participation in University activities at the request of University authorities, or compelling circumstances beyond the student's control. **Students claiming excused absence must apply in writing and furnish documentary support for their assertion that absence resulted from one of these causes.**

The make-up assessment or substitute assignment must be at a time and place mutually agreeable to the instructor and student, cover only the material for which the student was originally responsible, and be at a comparable level of difficulty with the original assessment. In the event that a group of students requires the same make-up assessment or substitute assignment, one time and place may be scheduled. The make-up assessment or substitute assignment must not interfere with the student's regularly scheduled classes or in-class final examination.

In cases of dispute, the student may appeal to the chair, the director or the dean of the department, non-departmentalized school or college offering the course within one week from the date of the refusal to schedule a make-up assessment. In those instances where the instructor is the chair, director or dean, the appeal shall be made to the next higher administrative officer, whose decision shall be final.

**The student must notify his or her instructor of the reason for absence as soon as possible.** Where the reason for absence from a scheduled assessment is known well in advance (for example, in cases of religious observance or participation in university activities at the request of University authorities), the student must inform the instructor by the end of the schedule adjustment period. Prior notification is especially important in connection with final examinations, since failure to reschedule a final examination before conclusion of the final examination period may result in loss of credits during the semester. Where

the reason is not known well in advance (for example, in cases of illness or compelling circumstances beyond the student's control), the student must inform the instructor as soon as the reason develops, or as soon as possible after its development.

**Religious Observance: Attendance and Academic Assignments (language verbatim from University's web site)**

The University System of Maryland policy "Assignments and Attendance on Dates of Religious Observance" provides that students should not be penalized because of observances of their religious beliefs; students shall be given an opportunity, whenever feasible, to make up within a reasonable time any academic assignment that is missed due to individual participation in religious observances.

In addition, faculty should take care to remind students in advance, preferably on the syllabus, that **it is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor of any intended absences for religious observances in advance.** Notice should be provided as soon as possible but no later than the end of the schedule adjustment period. Faculty should further remind students that prior notification is especially important in connection with final examinations, since failure to reschedule a final examination before the conclusion of the final examination period may result in loss of credits during the semester.

**Academic Integrity (first two paragraphs verbatim from University's web site)**

The University is one of a small number of universities with a student-administered Code of Academic Integrity and an Honor Pledge. The Code prohibits students from cheating on exams, plagiarizing papers, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization, buying papers, submitting fraudulent documents, and forging signatures. The University Senate asks instructors to consider requiring students to write the following signed statement on each examination or assignment:

**I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this examination (or assignment).**

Compliance with the code is administered by the Student Honor Council, which strives to promote a "community of trust" on the College Park campus. If you suspect academic dishonesty, you should contact Andrea Goodwin at Judicial Programs (4-8204) for guidance on how to proceed. For a description of the University's definition of academic dishonesty, suggestions on how to prevent cheating, and practical answers to frequently asked questions about the Code of Academic Integrity, consult the Student Honor Council's Resources webpage.

Students must familiarize themselves with the rules of conduct, located at [www.umd.edu/honorpledge](http://www.umd.edu/honorpledge).

## **Grading Policy**

**Late Work:** Late work will not be accepted unless it qualifies as Excused (See: guidelines provided in Attendance Policy). All assignments are due at the date and time indicated. Students should consult the course schedule to be aware of their responsibilities.

**Concerns about Grades:** Students with a concern about their grades are to schedule an appointment with the Teaching Assistant or the Instructor during office hours.

**Grade Scale:** For the purposes of internal course grade calculation, the following minimum grade values will be used:

- A+ = 100 (Extraordinary)
- A = 95.0 (Outstanding)
- A- = 91.5
- B+ = 88.5
- B = 85.0 (Above Average)
- B- = 81.5 (Minimum for Graduate Credit)
- C+ = 78.5
- C = 75.0 (Average)
- C- = 71.5 (Minimum for Undergraduate Credit)
- D+ = 68.5
- D = 65.0 (Below Average)
- F = Below 60.0 (Failing)
- I = Incomplete (See also: Excused Absences)

Further clarification:

XF- From the University web site: denotes failure due to academic dishonesty.

F- From the University web site: denotes failure to understand the subject and unsatisfactory performance. A mark of F is assigned a value of 0 quality points per credit hour.

"D" project (Below Average) Basic minimal requirements as outlined in the assignment are not met. From the University web site: D+, D, D- denotes borderline understanding of the subject. It denotes marginal performance, and it does not represent satisfactory progress toward a degree. A mark of D+, D, D- is assigned a value of 1 quality point per credit hour.

"C" project (Average) Basic minimal requirements as outlined in the assignment are met. From the University web site: C+, C, C- denotes acceptable mastery of the subject and the usual achievement expected. A mark of C+, C, C- is assigned a value of 2 quality points per credit hour.

"B" project (Above Average) Basic minimal requirements are met and are further elaborated upon and show a greater effort and level of sophistication in both content and form. From the University web site: B+, B, B- denotes good mastery of the subject and good scholarship. A mark of B+, B, B- is assigned a value of 3 quality points per credit hour.

"A" project (Outstanding) An outstanding assignment meets all requirements outlined above and demonstrates overall exceptional understanding of both content and form to include the highest level of synthesis and analysis of the material being presented. From the University web site: A+, A, A- denotes excellent mastery of the subject and outstanding scholarship. In computations of cumulative or semester averages, a mark of A+, A, A- will be assigned a value of 4 quality points per credit hour.