Landscape Architecture Courses for Spring 2014

LA 314/513 & ARCH 314/510—History of World Landscapes
3 credits undergrad/4 credits graduate course

Contact.
Professor M. Elen Deming, Department of Landscape Architecture <medeming@illinois.edu>
Office hours: TBA and by appointment
Graduate Assistant TBA: office hours: TBA

Meeting Times.
Lectures held T/Th 3:30-4:50 pm in 141 Wohlers Hall.
Undergrad discussion sections (select one) M 12:00 to 12:50 pm or 1:00 to 1:50 pm; OR F 1:00 to 1:50 pm. Rooms TBD
Graduate discussion section (reserved for Graduate students only) Fridays 12:00 to 12:50 am. Room TBD.

Texts.

Course Description. Analysis of the development of landscape architecture as a result of environmental and cultural influences. In SPRING 2014, this course satisfies the UIUC General Education Criteria for 1) History & Philosophy, 2) Western Comparative Culture, and 3) Advanced Composition.

This course is an analytical survey of intellectual and cultural history, historical projects and design processes, precedents, typologies and monuments of landscape architecture (principally in the western world, and principally since the Renaissance). In this course, students will examine designed landscapes as material artifacts resulting from a variety of human motives—power struggles, social orders, value sets, belief systems, areas of knowledge, even fear and prejudice—of particular cultures set within specific historical periods.

Course Framework. Projects considered in this course will range in scale from tiny domestic gardens to vast public landscapes, as understood in the context of several basic themes:
- History of Ideas: basic evolution of thought about humanity’s place in the world, especially the western world in the modern era. Gardens and cities will be analyzed as complementary and synthetic expressions of the history of ideas.
- Landscape Design Types: gardens, dwellings, palaces, sacred places, public open spaces, thoroughfares, ideal cities, parks, etc. Three types will be emphasized—the garden, the park, and urban open space.
- Design Theory: the development of schools of thought, a changing canon, and the primary literature of landscape architectural thought. Theories of allied fields of creative thought and technology will be integrated.
- Experiential Qualities: the material histories, social practices and affect of designed landscape. We examine the role of landscape in shaping people’s values, as well as in the formation and reformation of social structures.

Course Objectives.
By the end of this course, all students should be able to:
1. Identify major historical and theoretical movements in landscape architecture and relate each to its cultural, environmental, technological, intellectual, economic and political context.
2. Describe the main concepts of a number of designed landscapes—explaining the processes by which human creativity and agency invest capital resources and artistic expression into recognizable, meaningful places.
3. Diagram a clear framework of processes, ideas, elements, periods, and geographic regions in which the rich diversity of landscape and its history can be organized.
4. Recognize primary sources/authors in literature, philosophy, art and scientific theory that helped shape the intellectual history of landscape architecture.
5. Understand the continuity and periodicity of design discourse over time, especially the role that historical values, precedents, models, and typologies play in contemporary design theory.
6. Appreciate the role of critical inquiry and polemical practice in the evolution of all forms of design.

In addition, graduate students should be able to:
7. Speculate on the changing relationship between the notions of culture and nature in history, and forecast possible futures in terms of design methods and modes of representation.
8. Employ basic methods of primary historical research to develop a variety of research strategies and questions.