LA 314/513 & ARCH 314/510—History of World Landscapes
Spring 2015/3 credits undergrad/4 credits graduate course

Contact. Professor M. Elen Deming, Department of Landscape Architecture <medeming@illinois.edu>

Lecture (Tues/Thurs 3:00 to 4:50 pm) with Graduate Discussion Section (Fri. 11:30 am to 12:50 pm). Reserved for graduate students only, the section meets once weekly for review, with additional advanced readings and seminar-style discussion of course content, as well as graduate student presentations of extra material.


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

This course surveys the intellectual and cultural history, historical projects and design processes, precedents, typologies and monuments of landscape architecture from antiquity to the present (principally in the western world, and principally since the Renaissance). 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**: including 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.
- **Historical Process**: the way that historical desires, concepts, fears and modalities continue to emerge and are transformed through cultural and political processes of design expression and solutions. Contemporary projects will be analyzed in order to discover the threads of persistent and mutable ideas and values.