CITY, LANDSCAPE AND ECOLOGY
Barnard + Columbia Colleges Architecture Department
UN3120, Fall 2016

COURSE DESCRIPTION
City, Landscape, Ecology is a thematically driven course which examines issues and polemics related to landscape, land settlement and ecology over the past two centuries. The course is made up of discussion sessions and lectures. The purpose is to better understand the role that territorial and ecological organization plays in the construction of social practices, human subjectivities, and technologies of power.

City, Landscape, Ecology is divided into three parts:

Part 1 (Landscape), explores important episodes in the history of landscape: Picturesque garden theory, notions of “wilderness” as epitomized in national and state parks in the United States, Modern and Postmodern garden practices, and the prevalence of landscape in the work of artists in the 1960s and 70s.

We will turn to ecology and related issues of climate, urbanization and sustainability in Part II. Here we will examine the rise of ecological thinking in the 1960s: approaches to the environment that were largely based on the systems-thinking of the era. We will look at the work and theories of John McHale, Buckminster Fuller and Stewart Brand and place these approaches within a larger context of environmental awareness advanced by such pioneers as Rachel Carson, Gregory Bateson and Murray Bookchin. We also will examine ecological innovative approaches to building developed from the 1970s until today.

The course concludes with Part III (Hybrid Landscapes). At this important juncture in the course, we will ask the timely question: What is to be done today? We’ll examine the work of contemporary theorists, architects, landscape architects, policy makers and environmentalists who have channeled some of the lessons of the past in proposing lasting solution to our land management and ecological crises of the present and future.
LECTURE SUMMARY

1. INTRODUCTION

PART I: LANDSCAPE
2. THE INVENTION OF WILDERNESS
3. MODERN AND POSTMODERN LANDSCAPES
4. TECHNOLOGY, TERRITORY AND POWER
5. LAND ART AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCULPTURE

PART II: ECOLOGY
6. FROM CONSERVATION TO ENVIRONMENTALISM
7. THE RISE OF ECOLOGICAL CONSCIOUSNESS
8. RADICAL AND DEEP ECOLOGIES

PART III: HYBRID LANDSCAPES
9. CONTEMPORARY ECOLOGIES
11. URBANIZATION AND LANDSCAPE FUTURES
12. Thanksgiving Holiday
13. Presentations
14. Presentations

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance: Attendance to all course meetings is mandatory. An attendance sheet will be distributed at each meeting. More than two unexcused absences will lead to a reduction of one letter grade. More than four unexcused absences will lead to an automatic failure in the course. If you have a good reason for missing class, please inform the professor by email beforehand. If you do not have good reason for missing a class, inform the professor nonetheless.

Readings: There will be approximately 50-80 pages of reading a week. The readings will be posted online. All readings must be completed the night before the relevant seminar.

Course Assessment and Grading:
Participation and Attendance ................................................................. = 10%
Weekly Reading Responses ............................................................... = 10%
Reading Presentation ........................................................................... = 10%
Term Paper Presentation ..................................................................... = 15%

Term Paper Midterm Submission (1000 words) ......................................................... = 15%
  - Deadline: Tues. Oct. 18: 1 paper copy to the writing fellow. 1.5 line spacing.
  - Deadline: Thurs. Nov. 3: Revised copy to me. Emailed as MAC pages or MS Word document.

Term Paper Final Submission (~3000 words) ....................................................... = 40%
  - Deadline for final paper. Submission to writing fellows: Nov. 17.
  - Deadline for final revised paper (approx. 3000 words) submission to me: Dec. 15.

Discussion Participation
Students are expected to attend all Tuesday lectures and Thursday seminars, to do all seminar readings, to wisely and consistently contribute to the weekly seminar discussions. Discussions will cover explicit and implicit questions concerning landscape and ecology in modern culture, and should be used as an open forum for questioning. The discussions are also intended to foster student responsibility for self-directed learning.
Weekly Reading Responses
Weekly Reading Responses are due Wednesday nights at midnight. I will set up online discussion boards for each week on courseworks. You will be able to see your classmates’ responses only once you have added your own response to the forum. Once you have added your response, I recommend that you read some of the other responses on the forum.
For each of the 10 weeks of the course, you are asked to:

• write a 200-300 word response (no less, no more) to issues and polemics encountered in the readings for that week. In responding to the readings, you will need to briefly summarize the arguments that you feel are central to the week's theme.
• End your response with one question. The question should not seek a factual answer (how much..., when did.... etc.) but should address what you see as the main points of debate in the readings.

The purpose of weekly responses is three-fold:

• to demonstrate that you've read the assigned readings for the week.
• To show that, beyond simply reading the texts, you've thought about the central arguments and themes, that you've been able to draw connections between that week's various readings (and possibly, the readings from previous weeks), and finally, that you've been able to scale-up your thinking and consider some of the larger social / political / personal … stakes involved.
• To prepare you for the Thursday seminar discussions. This is especially the case for the questions that I'm asking you to include at the end of your reading response. In seminar, I may ask you to read your questions to the class.

Your responses don’t need to discuss all of the week’s readings, although they should address most of them (at least two or three of the readings). The responses will be graded on a total of 1 point. In order to get a full 1 points, your response needs to demonstrate that you've read the readings and been able to focus on the main issues and arguments they present. For summaries that are poorly written, incomplete or do not demonstrate an adequate grasp of the material, students will get an R for the first couple of weeks, meaning that they'll need to resubmit the response within a week’s time.

Late responses cannot be accepted.

Reading Presentations
Each of you will be required to present once during seminar over the term. Depending on class size, there may be two presenters per seminar. Presenters for a given week will have to meet together and divide up the reading material in an equal and coherent way. Furthermore, as presenters you must each choose at least one building, urban scheme, or visual project to illustrate the main themes and questions addressed in the readings. You and your co-presenters will prepare a common powerpoint presentation that will integrate all material that might help foster a better class discussion and better dramatize the theories and ideas presented. You should provide comprehensive visual material (sketches, plans, maps, elevations etc...) for the building, urban scheme or visual project that you choose to present. Presentations should last a total of 15-20 minutes (for all presenters).

Presentations will be graded qualitatively according to this set of criteria:

• Clarity of thought: how well you can describe some of the more difficult and nuanced ideas and arguments in the readings. It is absolutely essential to gain a good grasp of the main themes elaborated in the readings. You'll probably need to read some essays twice and do additional research in order to get a proper handle on the material. Please take a look at the list of additional readings at the end of the syllabus. You may want to read some of them before your presentation.
• Visual presentation: Your presentation needs to be organized in a coherent way. You'll be marked on how well you can connect the ideas elaborated in the readings with the projects you choose to present.
• Originality and Unity of Thought: Your presentation should not follow the pace and narrative of the readings too strictly. In other words, you should identify the main themes and arguments
(thesis) of each reading and state them at the onset of your presentation rather than tediously going through every element of the author’s argument. A great presentation will have clearly stated the main themes, arguments and will have identified the stakes of such arguments (Why is this important? What is the context? How does this argument/idea differ from other possible interpretations?).

**Term Paper and Term Paper Presentations**
Each student will prepare a 12 page term paper (approx. 3000 words) based on the theme or topic of the student’s choice. You must use footnotes following the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 16th edition. You must all set up an individual appointment with me to discuss your paper topic ideas before Oct. 8.

Term Papers and Term Paper Midterm Drafts will be graded qualitatively according to this set of criteria:
- 1/3 of the grade will be based on the strength of the writing (grammar, sentence structure, spelling, proper citation format etc.)
- 1/3 on the paper structure: Clear thesis statement / thesis argument, clear flow of argumentation from one paragraph to another.
- 1/3 of the grade will be based on strength and persuasiveness of argumentation, originality of topic, originality of introduction and conclusion.

**Some writing problems to avoid:**
1. **Use of Quotations:** The most common issue has to do with the use of quotations. Students often use quotations in order to avoid explaining a point or making an argument themselves. They often will insert a quotation directly into a paragraph without context and without mentioning the source. Many students will use quotations that are two to three sentences long without any analysis. As a general rule, quotations should be used sparingly and need to be explained and discussed by the student. It is often preferable to paraphrase a quotation in the student's own words and add a footnote citing the source.
2. **Thesis Statement:** All final papers must have a clearly articulated thesis statement (1-2 sentences long). Your thesis statement should focus on the larger stakes (why is this important? How does it add to or dispel some of our assumptions about subject X) and connect it to an existing discourse (this can be a discourse that we’ve examined in class or not…). A strong thesis statement will help structure your essay and give the reader a better sense of the purpose of each paragraph in the overall argument.
3. **Run-On Sentences:** Often, students will try and cram too many ideas into one sentence. This tends to lead to grammatical problems. Good writing often alternates between a short, declarative sentence, and longer descriptive sentences.

**Writing Center:** I strongly recommend that students with even minor difficulties with writing set up an appointment with the Barnard Writing Center before handing in assignments. http://writing.barnard.edu

**GRADING SCALE**

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<thead>
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<th>Grade</th>
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<th>Range</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>97.5 - 100</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87.5 - 89.9</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77.5 - 79.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>92.5 - 97.4</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>82.5 - 87.4</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>72.5 - 77.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90.0 - 92.4</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80 - 82.4</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70 - 72.4</td>
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Below 60 = F

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**
Upon successful completion of this reading and writing intensive course, the student will be able to:
1. Develop a critical understanding and awareness of some of the decisive ideas, theories and debates relating to landscape and ecology over the past two centuries.
2. Understand the role that territorial, landscape and ecological organization play in the construction of social practices, human subjectivities and political awareness.
3. Understand the way that discourses traditionally seen as external to the discipline of architecture inform and elucidate its practice and production.
4. To understand the ideological shifts in history that have shaped our notions of nature, landscape, and ecology.
5. Demonstrate the ability to read texts critically and to relate issues encountered in these texts to contemporary architectural discourse and practice.
6. Develop research, writing, and critical thinking skills through the research and writing of a series of reading summaries and a term paper that use textual and visual evidence to state a meaningful thesis.

FILMS ON LANDSCAPE, ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY AND ECOLOGY
- On Netflix:
  - *Eco-Pirate: The Story of Paul Watson*. Directed by Trish Dolman, USA, 2011
- On Vimeo:
- On Amazon Prime:

RELEVANT MUSEUMS, VISITS AND EXHIBITIONS
- Storm King Art Center, New Windsor, NY
- Dia Beacon, Beacon NY
- Ford Foundation Atrium. Design by Daniel Urban Kiley. 320 East 43rd Street, NY, NY.

RELEVANT EVENTS AT GSAPP THIS SEMESTER
TBA

INFORMATION ABOUT THE WRITING FELLOWS PROGRAM
One of the requirements of this course is working with a Barnard Writing Fellow. The Barnard Writing Fellows Program (founded in 1991) is designed to help students strengthen their writing in all disciplines. We believe that writing is a process; it happens in stages, in different drafts. Often the most fruitful dialogues about your writing occur with your peers, and the Writing Fellows are just that. They are not tutors or TAs; they are Barnard undergraduates who participate in a semester-long workshop in the teaching of writing and, having finished their training, staff the Barnard Writing Center and work in courses across the disciplines. It is not their role to comment on the accuracy of the content of your papers, nor to grade your work. They are not enrolled in your course. You will probably know more about the course’s specific material than they do, and your papers must therefore be written clearly enough so that the non-expert can understand them.
Two dates are listed for each piece of writing assigned. You will hand in your first draft to your instructor on the first date, who will pass it on to your Writing Fellow. The Writing Fellow will read it, write comments, and conference with you on it for half an hour, after which you will have a week to revise the paper and hand in a final version on the second date.

Sign up for your Writing Fellow conference in class when you first hand in your paper. Conference locations will be indicated on the sign-up sheet. Please make a note of when and where you have scheduled your conference. Also, please make sure to record your Writing Fellow’s email and phone number when you sign up for your conference in case you need to contact her.

The Head Writing Fellow for your course is Eva Dunsky (esd2129@barnard.edu; 310-488-3071).

CLASS SCHEDULE

- = required reading
- = recommended reading

WEEK 1

INTRODUCTION

Tues. 9/6

Thurs. 9/8

PART I: LANDSCAPE

WEEK 2

THE INVENTION OF WILDERNESS

Tues. 9/13

Thurs. 9/15
WEEK 3

Tues. 9/20


Thurs. 9/22

WEEK 4

Tues. 9/27


Thurs. 10/29


WEEK 5

Tues. 10/4


Thurs. 10/8

**Deadline:** You must have met with me to discuss your essay topic before Oct. 8

City, Landscape & Ecology
PART II: ECOLOGY

WEEK 6

Tues. 10/11
Thurs. 10/13

WEEK 7

Tues. 10/18
Thurs. 10/20
Due: Draft version of first 1000 words of your term paper to your writing fellow.


WEEK 8

Tues. 10/25
Thurs. 10/27
PART III: HYBRID LANDSCAPE

WEEK 9

Tues. 11/1

Thurs. 11/3

Due: Revised version of first 1000 words of your term paper to me.

WEEK 10

Tues. 11/8
No Classes: Election Day

Thurs. 11/10
Guest Lecture: Andreas M Benzing on Passive House Construction

Sat. 11/12
Field Trip: Tour of a Passive House Project in NYC.

WEEK 11

Tues. 11/15

Thurs. 11/17

Due: draft of complete version of the term paper submitted to your writing fellow

WEEK 12

Tues. 11/22
TBD

Thurs. 11/24
No Classes - Thanksgiving Holiday

WEEK 13

Tues. 11/29
TERM PAPER PRESENTATIONS

Thurs. 12/1
TERM PAPER PRESENTATIONS

WEEK 14

Tues. 12/6
TERM PAPER PRESENTATIONS

Thurs. 12/8
TERM PAPER PRESENTATIONS

Thurs. 12/15

Due: Final version of the term paper submitted to your instructor.
THE INVENTION OF WILDERNESS

CASE STUDIES: [ Buttes de Chaumont, Greenwood Cemetery, Central Park, Gertrude Jekyll, F.L. Olmsted ]

ADDITIONAL READING:

- Simon Schama, Landscape and Memory (Vintage Books, 1995).

MODERN AND POSTMODERN LANDSCAPES

CASE STUDIES: [ Le Corbusier, Luis Barragan, Burle Marx, Christopher Tunnard, Garret Eckbo, Daniel Urban Kiley, Lawrence Halprin, Bernard Tschumi, P. Eisenman / J. Derrida, R. Koolhaas ]

ADDITIONAL READINGS:


TECHNOLOGY, TERRITORY AND POWER

CASE STUDIES: [ Yangtze River dam;

ADDITIONAL READINGS


Neeraj Bhatia and Mary Casper, eds., The Petropolis of Tomorrow (Actar, 2013).


Kate Orff, Petrochemical America (Aperture, 2012).


Mike Hodson and Simon Marvin, Urbanism in the Anthropocene: Ecological Urbanism or Premium Ecological Enclaves? City: analysis of urban trends, culture, theory, policy, action 14, no. 10 (2010).


LAND ART AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCULPTURE

CASE STUDIES: [ G. Kepes; R. Smithson; N. Holt; M. Heizer; W. De Maria; R. Serra; Christo and Jeanne Claude; R. Long; M. Lin; J. Turrell ]

ADDITIONAL READINGS:

Rosalind Krauss, "Sculpture in the Expanded Field," October 8 (Spring 1979), 30-44.


PART II: ECOLOGY

FROM CONSERVATION TO ENVIRONMENTALISM
CASE STUDIES: [ National and State Parks, Love Canal,

ADDITIONAL READINGS:

THE RISE OF ECOLOGICAL CONSCIOUSNESS
CASE STUDIES: [ R.B. Fuller; John McHale; Reyner Banham; Stewart Brand, Biosphere 2, The Eden Project . . . ]

ADDITIONAL READINGS:
• Peter Sloterdijk, excerpt from “Introduction: The Allies; or, the Breathed Commune,” in *Bubbles: Spheres, volume I: Microspherology* (Semitext(e) / Foreign Agents, 2011), 17-28.
RADICAL AND DEEP ECOLOGIES
CASE STUDIES: [1970s off-the-grid eco-houses, contemporary eco-experiments, especially those that suggest a new social/political framework...]

ADDITIONAL READINGS:
- Peter Kropotkin, Mutual Aid: A Factor in Evolution (McClure Phillips, 1903).
- Felicity D. Scott, " Revolutionaries or Dropouts," in Architecture or Techno-Utopia (MIT Press, 2010), 151-184.
- Lloyd Kahn, Shelter I (1973) and Shelter II (1978).

PART III: HYBRID LANDSCAPES

CONTEMPORARY ECOLOGIES
CASE STUDIES: [ MVRDV, Pig City; B. Ingels; P. Rahm; Terreform One . . . ]

ADDITIONAL READINGS:


• Allenby Braden, "Complexity- the New Frontier," in Reconstruction Earth: Technology and the Environment in an Age of Humans

• N. Katherine Hayles, "Simulated Nature and Natural Simulations: Rethinking the Relation between the Beholder and the World," in Uncommon Ground- Rethinking the Human Place in Nature


URBANIZATION AND LANDSCAPE FUTURES

CASE STUDIES: [ Ian McHarg, Robert Irwin, Field Operations and Diller and Scofidio, the High Line; Downsview Park Competition; Fresh Kills Competition; Weiss/Manfredi]

ADDITIONAL READINGS:
• Ian L. McHarg, Design with Nature (Doubleday / Natural History Press,1971).


• Kate Orff, Petrochemical America. (Aperture, 2012).


• Neeraj Bhatia and Mary Casper, eds., The Petropolis of Tomorrow (Actar, 2013).


• Stan Allen and Marc McQuade, Landform Building: Architecture's New Terrain (Lars Muller, 2011).
