Course Objectives

A landscape “happens not by chance but by contrivance, by premeditation, by design.” –John Stilgoe, *Common Landscape of America*

This course is designed as an advanced reading seminar in the history of American landscapes and architecture. The course will introduce you to a variety of methods developed by architectural and cultural historians to interpret buildings and landscapes as cultural artifacts with historically specific meanings that must be understood in particular context over time. An important objective of the course is to go beyond classroom reading and discussion to application of specific scholars’ arguments and methodologies through analysis of particular buildings and landscapes.

By the end of the semester you should be able to do the following:

- Identify and evaluate major periods in the development of the American landscape from the colonial era through the mid-twentieth century.

- Demonstrate an understanding of the ways that buildings and landscapes document cultural and social change over time.

- Define particular architectural styles, use specialized architectural vocabulary/terminology, and explain the differences between vernacular and academic building traditions.
• Compare and contrast the methodologies developed by a variety of scholars to interpret landscape and architecture as historical evidence.

• Develop a meaningful research bibliography.

• Use different interpretive approaches to evaluate a particular landscape or building in historical context.

**Evaluation**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Midterms</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Methodology Analyses</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Bibliography/PowerPoint Presentation</td>
<td>30%</td>
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All written assignments should be typed, with appropriate citations in Turabian style [http://library.uncg.edu/depts/ref/handouts/turabian.html](http://library.uncg.edu/depts/ref/handouts/turabian.html). You will submit your written assignments electronically to my email address on the appropriate due date. Late assignments will be penalized. Communication is essential …you should make arrangements in advance if you are unable to meet a course deadline.

**Participation (10%)**

This assessment will be based on three criteria:

1. **Consistent attendance**—this is a seminar, not a traditional lecture course. We will be critically evaluating the content of the readings and practicing the application of analytical skills during each class period. You will not be able to make up for your absences by copying someone else’s notes. Consistent attendance is essential to your learning in this course. Therefore, beyond the part attendance plays in the overall participation grade, **there will be a 3% reduction of your final grade for each absence after the first 1**. Beyond even this penalty, a student who seriously neglects attendance and preparation risks failing the course.

2. **Thorough preparation** for class—readings must be completed before class and assignments must be turned in on time.

3. **Regular contributions to class discussions**—the success of this course for your learning depends on active intellectual engagement with your peers.

**Midterms (30%)**

You will complete two take-home midterms consisting of a choice of essay questions. The questions will be distributed 1-2 weeks in advance of due dates. All midterms should be typed and double-spaced, 7-10 pages long, with appropriate citations in
Turabian style [http://library.uncg.edu/depts/ref/handouts/turabian.html]. You will submit your essays electronically to my email address: lctolber@uncg.edu on the due dates identified in the course schedule below.

**Methodology Analyses (30%)**
You will complete at least two assignments that require you to evaluate the methodology of specific scholars in the assigned reading. If you complete more than two exercises your final grade in this category will be based on your two best scores. Your analysis will be based on a form posted on Blackboard. Analyses will be due on the date of the assigned reading. You must choose at least two different scholars working with different kinds of architectural evidence in different historical periods.

**Reading Landscape: Research Bibliography and PowerPoint Presentation (30%)**
The primary goal of this assignment is to practice reading a specific landscape or building using interpretive strategies developed by scholars whose work you’ve encountered in the course and through independent research. You will analyze visual evidence, put your building/landscape in appropriate historical context, create a meaningful research bibliography useful for understanding your subject, and present your analysis of the subject to the class in a PowerPoint presentation at the end of the semester.

**Course Readings**

**Books** (Available at the UNCG bookstore)


Book Chapters/Journal Articles  (Available on electronic reserve or online as noted.)


de Miranda, Cynthia. National Register Nomination. Wachovia Building, Greensboro. [ereserves]


Course Schedule

15 August Introductions

17 August Form and Style: Learning to Look at Architecture
American Architectural History Reader, Introduction / Keith L. Eggener –

Colonial Worlds

22 August Early America influences
Gelernter:
1. First civilizations 12,000 BC-AD 1500
2. Cultures transformed and transplanted 1500-1650
3. Colonial culture 1650-1763
American Architectural History Reader:
2. “Modifying factors” in Native American architecture / Nabokov and Easton
3. Church design and construction in Spanish New Mexico / Marc Treib

24 August Architecture and Region: Southern Enlightenment
Gelernter 4. The age of revolution 1763-1820
American Architectural History Reader:
4. Space : parish churches, courthouses, and dwellings in colonial Virginia / Dell Upton –

29 August Urban Atlantic
31 August  Urban Atlantic
[methodology analysis due]

5 September  Architecture and Region: New England Enlightenment
[methodology analysis due]

7 September  Workshop: Reading Landscape
National Register nomination form 201 N. Elm St., Wachovia Building, [ereserves]

**Romanticism and the Market Economy**

12 September  Form, Style, and National Identity
Gelernter, 5. *Culture realigned 1820-65*

*American Architectural History* Reader:
1. National design: mercantile cities and the grid / John R. Stilgoe –
7. The Greek revival: Americanness, politics and economics / W. Barksdale Maynard –

14 September  Architects and Builders in the Market Economy
*American Architectural History* Reader
6. The first professional: Benjamin Henry Latrobe / Mary N. Woods

[methodology analysis due]

19 September  Domestic Ideals
*American Architectural History* Reader:
5. The plantation landscape / John Michael Vlach –
8. Independence and the rural cottage / Gwendolyn Wright –

[use journal finder]
Victorians and Industrialization

21 September  Defining Public and Private Space
Gelernter, 6. Enterprise and turmoil 1865-85

*American Architectural History Reader:*
11. Creating New York’s nineteenth-century retail district / Mona Domosh –

Brucken, Carolyn. “In the Public Eye: Women and the American Luxury Hotel.”

26 September  Housing Workers in an Industrial Economy

28 September  Housing Workers in an Industrial Economy
[methodology analysis due]

3 October  Redesigning Urban Space
Gelernter 7. The age of diversity 1885-1915

*American Architectural History Reader:*

5 October  Research Presentation Workshop
Midterm I due.

10 October  Fall Break

12 October  [No Class] Presentation Topic Description and Preliminary Bibliography due
Modernisms

17 October  Modernism and National Identity
Gelernter, 8. Between the World Wars 1915-45

*American Architectural History* Reader: 16. The search for modernity: America, the international style, and the Bauhaus / Margaret Kentgens-Craig –

19 October  Modernism and Domesticity
*American Architectural History* Reader:
14. The prairie house / James F. O'Gorman –
15. Wright, influence, and the world at large / Anthony Alofsin –


24 October  Suburban Contexts


26 October  The Role of the Developer

31 October  The Role of the Developer

2 November  No class

7 November  Main Street
9 November  Main Street

14 November  Modernism and Consumer Society
Gelernter, 9: Modern Culture, 1945-1973

American Architectural History Reader:
17. People who live in glass houses: Edith Farnsworth, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, and Philip Johnson / Alice T. Friedman –
18. Mirror images: technology, consumption, and the representation of gender in American architecture since World War II / Joan Ockman –
19. The Pruitt-Igoe myth / Katharine G. Bristol –


16 November  [No class] Midterm II due.

21 November  Postmodernism

American Architectural History Reader:
20. Robert Venturi and "the return of historicism" / Neil Levine
21. The battle for the monument: the Vietnam Veterans Memorial / Mary McLeod
22. Introduction: variations on a theme park / Michael Sorkin
23. Fortress Los Angeles / Mike Davis
24. Planes of existence: Chicago and O'Hare International Airport / Marc Spiegler

23 November  Thanksgiving Holiday

28 November  Presentations

30 November  Presentations