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.

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

Evaluation

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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]. 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.

Essay Tests (60%)
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 below.

Due dates:
23 October    midterm
4 December    final

Methodology Analyses (30%)
You will complete three assignments that require you to evaluate the methodology used by specific scholars in the assigned reading. I have selected scholars whose work exemplifies the methodological problems associated with architectures produced in different historical contexts. Use the form posted on Blackboard to complete your analyses.

Due dates:
18 September   Nora Pat Small, Beauty and Convenience: [agricultural vernacular in the early republic]
9 October      Kingston Heath, The Patina of Place [turn-of-the-century urban industrial]
13 November    Carolyn Loeb, Entrepreneurial Vernacular [20th century suburban landscape]

Course Readings

Books (Available at the UNCG bookstore)


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


**Course Schedule**

21 August  Introductions

28 August  **Colonial Worlds: 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

4 September  **Workshop on Form and Style: Learning to Look at Architecture**

*American Architectural History* Reader, Introduction / Keith L. Eggener –


11 September Architecture and Region: Southern Enlightenment
Gelernter 4. The age of revolution 1763-1820


18 September Architecture and Region: New England Enlightenment

25 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 –


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


2 October Nineteenth-Century Domestic Ideals
*American Architectural History* Reader:
  5. The plantation landscape / John Michael Vlach –
  8. Independence and the rural cottage / Gwendolyn Wright –


Defining Public and Private Space: Gendered Approaches to the Study of Landscape
*American Architectural History* Reader:
11. Creating New York’s nineteenth-century retail district / Mona Domosh –


9 October  Housing Workers in an Industrial Economy
Gelernter, 6. Enterprise and turmoil 1865-85


16 October  Fall Break

23 October  [No Class] midterm due

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

American Architectural History Reader:
12. Architecture and the reinterpretation of the past in the American renaissance / Richard Guy Wilson


6 November  Modernism and National Identity
Gelernter, 8. Between the World Wars 1915-45

American Architectural History Reader:
14. The prairie house / James F. O’Gorman
15. Wright, influence, and the world at large / Anthony Alofsin
16. The search for modernity: America, the international style, and the Bauhaus / Margaret Kentgens-Craig
13 November   Suburban Contexts and the Role of the Developer

20 November   Main Street

27 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


4 December   Final due. Summations and Evaluations.