Cities have been the places where individuals and their cultures developed. ... The art of environmental design is properly directed to that end... We could go further and consider the effect of the man-made environment on the growth and development of other living species... The ideal is enticing, but unfortunately its meaning is uncertain. For the time being, we must speak for ourselves.

K. Lynch, Enciclopedia Italiana, 1973

We have proposed ‘landscape realism’ as a philosophy that requires an honest appraisal of human relationships with other forms of life. This does not require the elevation of other species’ needs above human needs. But it does require a careful mapping of the relationships among humans and among species, and emphasizes the importance of choosing to act ethically within those relationships. Perhaps the greatest challenge of bringing ecology and design into a closer working relationship is that it forces us to confront the question of whether humans can successfully share their current living environments with the other forms of life that evolved in those places.


COURSE OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this course is to introduce the use of natural processes in design as a basis for design language and as a source of site- or landscape-scale design strategies. The contemporary “non-equilibrium” theoretical model of ecology provides part of the intellectual foundation of the course, drawing on theories and examples from conservation biology and landscape ecology. The other major theoretical foundation is design theory itself, as presented by the instructors.

The central idea of this course is that designed landscapes can perform ecological functions whether or not they use naturalistic forms. A wide variety of formal geometries may be used to achieve the same functional goals. The question is, what functions can be achieved, and what meaning can be conveyed using different types of forms? The goal of design in this course will be to establish ecological functions that support characteristic regional biodiversity, while also acting as a vehicle for other functions and expressions. Formal vocabularies will be introduced which have different associated meanings derived from historical cultural uses. These formal vocabularies will be used to both explore opportunities to increase environmental sustainability and to develop a culturally-meaningful aesthetic of dynamic change and human adaptability.

The project this year will explore urban landscape changes at McCurdy Park/Union Bay Waterfront under the future scenario of 520 expansion. While examining ways to mitigate the impact of the freeway on the bay ecosystem, the project will also explore how design provides meaningful expressions of both ecological and recreational functions on the site and how they may transform through time.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be encouraged to:
(1) develop a design vocabulary that allows you to structure landscapes to achieve particular functional goals, with an emphasis on ecological functions;
(2) gain a basic understanding of the variables that are currently considered critical to the sustainability of Puget Sound ecosystems, especially as these are affected by urbanization;
(3) apply concepts and contemporary understandings of ecology in the design of urban landscape; and
(4) explore contemporary modes of representation to articulate design ideas and landscape processes.

**COURSE SEQUENCE**

The projects in this studio are designed to be cumulative; in other words, they are meant to “add up” to a set of final presentation materials. You will be asked to save the product of each exercise to be used as part of your final presentation materials. The term is divided into units, during which we will use a variety of exercises to focus on particular themes:

**Unit 1** (weeks 1 - 3)  On-site exercises; site mapping and representation through GIS

**Unit 2** (week 4)  Forms and function 3-D modeling exercise

**Unit 3** (week 5)  Initial design investigations, mid-term review
  Graphics exercise: representation of change

**Unit 4** (weeks 7 - 10)  Re-visiting site scale organization and interventions
  week 7: schematic design & design development
  week 8: design development
  week 9: graphic representation
  week 10: final studio reviews

**Planting design** (weeks 6 - 8)  As part of the studio sessions, there will be weekly planting design sessions led by Iain Robertson on Fridays in weeks 6 through 8.

There will be weekly pin-ups in studio (in different formats) to review the products of the exercises associated with that unit. The final design exercise will require you to use the exercises you have done before, and your final presentation will include the products of all of the previous units of this course. So don’t throw anything out!

**EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS**

In addition to the studio exercises, all students are encouraged to keep a design sketchbook for this term. This should include drawings of places, diagrams of possible designs, axons and sections of possible design ideas, pasted-in photocopies or prints of design precedent ideas, drawings and information about plants and materials used in the design ideas, and notes from reviews and pin-ups. The faculty will provide feedback for those who submit sketchbooks for review.

Everyone in this course is expected to participate in pin-ups (which mean presenting your own work and discussing the work of others), sign up for group or individual crits from the instructors, participate in scheduled field trip(s), and participate in the final presentation of the course. Student work will be evaluated based on its completeness as well as on the conceptual fluency it represents, as judged by the instructors.

**READINGS**

The studio will be supported by readings introduced in LA 363, which is offered at the same time as a theory course. Additional readings will be made available through e-reserve (see course website): Students are also encouraged to obtain copies of the following recent books on design in addition to the required reading of LA 363:

*Downsview Park, Toronto / CASE series, Prestel publishers, ed. Julia Czerniak*
*Recovering Landscape / ed. James Corner*
*Ecological Design and Planning / Wiley and Sons, eds. William Thompson and Frederick Steiner*
*The Big Book of Environmental Design*
*The Language of Landscape / Anne Spirn*
*Landscape Ecology Principles in Landscape Architecture and Land-Use Planning / Dramstad, Olson, and Forman*
There are also a number of academic journals that will be helpful for life-long learning in this area of design. The following are particularly useful:

*Praxis*
*Landscape Journal*
*Landscape and Urban Planning*
*Conservation Biology*
*Ecological Applications*
*Ecological Monographs*
*Landscape Ecology*
*Ecological Engineering*
*Restoration Ecology*

**STUDIO WEB-SITE:**

[http://courses.washington.edu/unionbay](http://courses.washington.edu/unionbay)

All assignments, tutorials, additional resources, data, and other pertinent studio information will be uploaded to the web-site on a frequent basis. Please check this site for new information.

**COLLECTION OF STUDIO WORK**

The Department policy requires all students to submit a CD that include documentation of drawings and graphic work produced in the studio. The CD must include all completed class assignments and graphics and images of models created as you develop the final project. Images can include both work created digitally and scanned images of hard copy drawings. Clearly label the CD with the following: your name, class name and course number, instructor’s name, and date. You need to submit the CD to the instructors in order to receive your grade.

**GRADES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GIS Mapping</td>
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<tr>
<td>3-D Model</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final project</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
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**IMPORTANT:** Class will meet during scheduled final exam period for reflections and evaluations.
# COURSE OUTLINE/schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Fri</th>
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</table>
| 1    | 3/27 Course Introduction  
On-site exercise 1: functions and forms | 3/29 Pin-up: on-site exercise 1 | 3/31 GIS session  
1:30-5:20 (Rm 007F) |
|      | 4/3 GIS session  
3:00-4:30 (Rm 007F) | 4/5 GIS tutorial                  | 4/7 GIS session  
1:30-5:20 (Rm 007F) |
| 2    | 4/10 GIS session  
3:00-4:30 (Rm 007F) | 4/12 Pin-up: GIS maps             | 4/14 Site Intro/Field trip: McCurdy Park -- on-site exercise 2 |
| 3    | 4/17 Pin-up: on-site exercise 2  
Discussion: Model study | 4/19 Model study: desk crits      | 4/21 Model study: desk crits |
|      | 4/24 Pin-up: Model study  
Intro to conceptual design  
Discussion: scenarios & representation  
In-class exercise: 5/20/100 | 4/26 Conceptual design: desk crits | 4/28 Conceptual design: desk crits |
| 5    | 5/1 Midterm review: conceptual design | 5/3 Schematic design: desk crits | 5/5 Planting module |
| 6    | 5/8 Pin-up: Schematic design | 5/10 Design development: desk crits | 5/12 Planting module |
|      | 5/15 Pin-up: design development | 5/17 Design development: desk crits | 5/19 Planting module |
| 10   | 5/29 Holiday       | 5/31 Final presentation           | 6/2 Final presentation     |