

UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO / SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

ARCH 293 DESIGN STUDIO: DESIGNING WITH SITE

CLASS MEETING TIMES

Mondays

9:30 AM – 12:30 PM

1:30 PM – 5:30 PM

Thursdays

9:30 AM – 12:30 PM

1:30 PM – 5:30 PM

TEACHING TEAM

Studio Instructors

Rick Andrighetti (co-coordinator, reandrighetti@uwaterloo.ca)

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Office Hours: By Appointment

"Historically, pandemics have forced humans to break with the past and imagine their world anew. This one is no different. It is a portal, a gateway between one world and the next. We can choose to walk through it, dragging the carcasses of our prejudice and hatred, our avarice, our data banks and dead ideas, our dead rivers and smoky skies behind us. Or we can walk through lightly, with little luggage, ready to imagine another world."

– Arundhati Roy, "The Pandemic Is a Portal" in *Azadi: Freedom. Fascism. Fiction.*

"'Nature' isolated from its twin sister 'culture' is a phantom of Western anthropology. What we are dealing with instead are distributions of agencies with which we are all entangled..."

– Bruno Latour, *Fifty Shades of Green*

"One of our responsibilities as human people is to find ways to enter into reciprocity with the more-than-human world."

– Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teaching of Plants*

"We need to make kin sym-chthonically, sym-poetically. Who and whatever we are, we need to make-with—become-with, compose-with—the earth-bound..."

– Donna Haraway, *Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Plantationocene, Chthulucene: Making Kin*

"The landscape does not sit silent awaiting the arrival of an architectural subject. The site—the land—speaks prior to the act of design. [...] The designer, then, allows the site to speak more clearly through the design interventions he or she makes. The site and the designer are collaborators."

– Elizabeth Meyer, *The Expanded Field of Landscape Architecture*

1. OVERVIEW

The architect's scope is often considered as building "from the ground up." The assumption that site is a *tabula rasa*, or blank slate, is quickly disproved through an engagement in the unpredictable processes of designing and constructing. Design necessitates a complex engagement with the site and the forces embedded within it. In landscape design, where the site serves as both the material and context for design, this relationship is particularly complex. Site is shaped by

more-than-human forces over time: rivers flood, slopes erode, vegetation regenerates, and stone weathers. Site is simultaneously altered by human forces: water is channeled, land is appropriated, vegetation is burned, and rock is quarried. Site is inextricably related to time; it bears witness to human and more-than-human histories and actively participates in their futures. Design provides an opportunity to support and leverage these dynamic forces. How can we design *with* the complex entanglement of natural and social forces that make up a site?

A conceptual divide between nature and culture has shaped relationships with the land in North American Settler culture.

¹ Within this framework, humans are separate from the environment: resources are extracted; energy is harnessed; property is divided; wilderness is delineated and conserved.² Contemporary scholarship across disciplines has begun to erode this binary, reconceptualizing the environment as a meshwork of human forces and biophysical systems. Emerging scientific and social theories such as the “Anthropocene” and “Capitalocene” have acknowledged the impact human forces have had on geologic and biosphere processes.³ At the same time, many human communities are attempting to adapt to shifting climates and landscape hazards, underscoring the impact natural forces have on human ways of life. While the “environment” can be defined as our “physical surroundings”, it can also be understood as an entangled web of relationships.⁴ This messy co-mingling provides an unstable ground from which to reconsider hybridizations of architectural, landscape, and ecological systems that build upon relationships grounded in site and its complex entanglement of human and biophysical forces.

2. SITE

Within the framework of this inherited nature-culture-dualism, natural forces are often perceived as “other” and as such are perceived to be isolated to ideological landscapes such as the “pristine North”.⁵ Within contemporary discussions in the disciplines of architecture, landscape architecture, and urbanism, there is a growing acknowledgement of the entanglement of these forces with the built environment everywhere.

A core aim of this studio is to develop a meaningful engagement with the site. This requires paying attention to a place over time. Each student will study the environment around them and is expected to spend time on site dwelling, documenting, and attuning yourself to its forces over time. Instructors will suggest analogue and digital methods tailored to students’ specific capacities to safely physically access their site. This field research will be supplemented by remote digital technologies such as Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping to gather baseline site data. An additional layer of information will be overlaid through the use of sources such as archives, scientific literature, and local stakeholder projects to understand the social and cultural relationships embedded in your site.

3. STUDIO STRUCTURE

The studio is comprised of three consecutive projects that each allow for a different engagement with site:

PROJECT 01: Site and biophysical process (individual work, 3 weeks)

In this initial project, you will observe, document, and draw an ecological transect through your site. You will then re-draw this transect to communicate a particular biophysical process present on your site based on fieldwork, observations, and additional research.

¹ See for instance Bruno Latour, *Fifty Shades of Green* and William Cronon, *The Trouble with Wilderness; or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature*

² For a critique of this isolation see Vine Deloria Jr., “Civilization and Isolation,” *The North American Review* 263, no. 2 (1978): 12–13. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25118003>.

³ See for instance the use of these terms by Andreas Malm, Alf Hornborg, Donna Haraway, and Zoe Todd.

⁴ See for instance the work of Tim Ingold, Donna Haraway. See also “environment, n.” OED Online. March 2020. Oxford University Press. <https://www-oed-com.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/view/Entry/63089?redirectedFrom=environment>.

⁵ See for instance Mirko Zardini, “After the environment,” in *It’s All Happening So Fast: A Counter-History of the Modern Canadian Environment*, ed. Lev Bratishenko and Mirko Zardini (Montreal: Canadian Centre for Architecture and Jap Sam Books, 2016), 24.

PROJECT 02: Site and social process (individual work, 2 weeks)

In this second project, you will examine how human land-use and occupation shape the environment. Research, document, and draw these social processes at work.

PROJECT 03: Designing from site (individual work, 6.5 weeks)

In this final project, you will address the program requirements of your particular site by engaging the specific biophysical forces you examined in Project 1 and the human forces you researched in Project 2. You will begin the design process by designing a detail that works *with* these forces. You will then expand this method of ecological design thinking to the scale of the territory.

Workshops

Workshops are organized to provide an introduction to resources and tools that will be useful for each of the projects, see Schedule.

ARCH 225

This studio is closely coordinated with ARCH 225: *Theory and Design of the Contemporary Landscape*. ARCH 225 lectures, readings, and precedent studies will be geared towards supporting the studio process while also providing a broader introduction to the discipline of landscape architecture.

SCHEDULE

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Wk 1	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u> AM: Course Introduction + P1 Introduction + Lecture PM: Workshop	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>14</u> AM/PM: Group Crits	<u>15</u>	<u>16</u>
Wk 2	<u>17</u>	<u>18</u> Victoria Day	<u>19</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>21</u> 9:30 1.1 Draft complete AM: Lecture AM/PM: Desk Crits	<u>22</u>	<u>23</u>
Wk 3	<u>24</u>	<u>25</u> AM/PM: Desk Crits	<u>26</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>28</u> AM/PM: Desk Crits	<u>29</u>	<u>30</u>
Wk 4	<u>31</u> P1 Due 10 PM	<u>1 June</u> P1 Reviews	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u> AM: P2 Introduction + Lecture PM: Group Crits	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>
Wk 5	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u> AM/PM: Desk Crits	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u> [225: A1 Due]	<u>11</u> AM/PM: Desk Crits	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u>

Wk 6	<u>14</u>	<u>15</u> AM/PM: Desk Crits P2 Due 10PM	<u>16</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>18</u> P2 Reviews	<u>19</u>	<u>20</u>
Wk 7	<u>21</u>	<u>22</u> AM: P3 Introduction + Lecture PM: Group Crits	<u>23</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>25</u> AM/PM: Desk Crits	<u>26</u>	<u>27</u>
Wk 8	<u>28</u>	<u>29</u> AM: Workshop + Desk Crits PM: Desk Crits	<u>30</u>	<u>1 July</u> Canada Day	<u>2</u> AM/PM: Desk Crits	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
Wk 9	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u> AM/PM: Desk Crits	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u> [225: A2 Due]	<u>9</u> AM/PM: Desk Crits	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>
Wk 10	<u>12</u> P3 Interim Due 10PM	<u>13</u> P3 Interim Reviews	<u>14</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>16</u> AM: Lecture + Desk Crits PM: Desk Crits	<u>17</u>	<u>18</u>
Wk 11	<u>19</u>	<u>20</u> AM/PM: Desk Crits	<u>21</u>	<u>22</u> [225: A3 1/2 Due]	<u>23</u> AM/PM: Desk Crits	<u>24</u>	<u>25</u>
Wk 12	<u>26</u>	<u>27</u> AM/PM: Desk Crits	<u>28</u>	<u>29</u> [225: Last day; A3 Due]	<u>30</u> AM/PM: Desk Crits	<u>31</u>	<u>1 August</u>
Wk 13	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u> Civic Day	<u>4</u> P3 Final Due 10PM	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u> P3 Final Reviews	<u>7</u> P3 Final Reviews	<u>8</u>

4. OBJECTIVES + OUTCOMES

Students in this studio are expected to:

- + Understand the role of research (site research, precedent research) in generating ideas about landscape, site, program, and tectonics.
- + Develop and articulate a critical position relative to site and program.
- + Demonstrate analytic and representation skills in relation to landscape and architecture systems.
- + Engage site history and conditions as subject and context of design, including microclimate.

- + Develop a basic understanding and application of landscape processes, topographic contours, and ground materials.
- + Develop a basic understanding of the spatial form and ecological role of vegetation (trees, shrubs, and perennials) in design.
- + Develop an understanding of landscape interventions and how they change over time.
- + Develop a project across a range of scales, from site strategy through to structural and tectonic considerations.
- + Develop an understanding of materials and how they are assembled whether tectonic, stereotomic, or live (vegetation, water) materials.
- + Demonstrate the ability to work in groups and communicate verbally and graphically within a small group and more public setting.
- + Actively participate and attend all desk crits, pin ups, reviews and lectures (or address asynchronous learning strategies with the co-coordinators).
- + Upload curated process work to specified digital platforms.

5. EVALUATION, SUBMISSIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, FEES

Assignment

Project 1	1.1	10%
	1.2	10%
Project 2		10%
Project 3*		
	Mid-Review	20%
	Final	40%
Participation		10%

* You must receive a passing grade in Project 3 in order to pass the course.

A detailed breakdown of project components and specific requirements will be included in project handouts.

Grading Scheme

The following is offered as a guide to numerical grade assignments:

>=90	Consistent exemplary work that exceeds expectations. Work is holistically thought provoking and executed at a very high level.
85-89	Some elements of work are exceeding expectations and executed at a high level but this level of achievement is not maintained throughout all project elements
80-84	Work is consistently above average and student is actively participating and actively engaging the course material
77-79	Average work. Student is completing work in a timely manner and participating in the course. No attendance issues. Shows expected levels of competency in course materials.
70-76	Work is complete and meets expectations on some points while operates below expectations on others.
50-69	Work is incomplete or completed with minimal comprehension and effort.
< 50	Work is unacceptable and does not fulfill the requirements.

While detailed sets of expectations and requirements will be included with each project description, the following criteria is used consistently throughout the term when assessing work:

- + Intellectual Clarity: Enquiry and extension of the course material will be essential to producing successful explorations. Students must be able to clearly articulate their design ambitions, intellectual underpinnings and all design work in discussions, desk crits, group crits and reviews.
- + Independent Enquiry: Students are expected to advance their projects through self-motivated and self-framed agendas and pursuits. Projects are seen as offering students a framework through which to explore and exercise architectural skills.
- + Technique: All work must be executed with intent and care where the precision and craft of artefacts created are continuously valued.
- + Attendance + Steady Progress: Attendance is expected for all scheduled hours of the studio. If you are unable to attend studio during class hours, please discuss asynchronous participation options with the co-coordinators. Work should be developed over the entire phase of a project. Iteration and incremental development is paramount.
- + Completion: Timely completion of work is expected

Things To Do To Support Your Success

Be curious

Be open-minded and adaptable

Be prepared to iterate

Be organized and manage your time

Ask good questions

Take notes for each other during reviews

Work consistently throughout the term

Maintain an open dialogue with your Instructors

Take risks and push your abilities and limits

Ask thoughtful questions

Find a way to be passionate about your work

Build healthy habits with food, friends, exercise, and sleep

Office Hours

Office hours are by appointment. Email individual instructors and TAs to arrange appointments.

Participation and Attendance

Your online presence is requested all day on studio days. (Breaks for lunch, coffee, library or lab use are permitted.) If you fail to attend studio without prior agreement from your instructor or a valid personal or medical reason, with appropriate documentation, a 2% penalty will be applied to your final grade for each day missed. Missing three or more desk-crits, reviews, lectures, without a satisfactory explanation and documentation will also result in a 0 in your participation grade.

Sketchbook

Students should maintain a sketchbook for personal use and informal development of project ideas.

Desk Crits

Students should prepare for desk crits by organizing their work and their thoughts. Presentation of informal sketches and rough notes should be kept to a minimum. Students will be signed up for their meeting time each desk crit day. All material to be discussed during desk crit must be uploaded to LEARN at least a half hour before each desk crit.

Reviews

Reviews are not evaluations but rather the opportunity for a public discussion of your work. Evaluation will take place in confidential sessions by the studio faculty working as a group, in which all critical aspects of each project will be considered. It is important for each student to participate not only in the review of their own work, but in the reviews of the work of fellow students. Participation in class reviews is mandatory.

Hand-in and Digital Submissions

You are required to submit a digital submission for all formal reviews. Last minute problems, lost or corrupt files will not be accepted as an excuse for late project submissions. You are required to upload a digital record of your work at the end of the term. Details outlining the structure and format of this submission will be provided. For all digital upload

submissions, it is the students' responsibility to verify that the upload worked, that the size and preview of the upload are correct.

Communication

LEARN will be used as a communication and dissemination tool. You will receive general communications from the teaching team regarding studio business. It is expected that you check your email address regularly and that you ensure proper enrollment in ARCH 293's LEARN site.

Any correspondence regarding studio matters should be addressed to studio coordinators Rick Andrighetti (reandrighetti@uwaterloo.ca) and Kat Kovalcik (kkovalcik@uwaterloo.ca).

Studio Environment

In order to maintain the atmosphere of a shared workspace, we will be asking you to share your process work through online platforms that will be identified early on in the term. This will count towards your participation grade.

Course Time Zone

All dates and times communicated in the document are expressed in Eastern Daylight Time (EDT, GMT-4).

Spring 2020 COVID-19 Special Statement

Given the continuously evolving situation around COVID-19, students are to refer to the University of Waterloo's developing information resource page (<https://uwaterloo.ca/coronavirus/>) for up-to-date information on academic updates, health services, important dates, co-op, accommodation rules and other university level responses to COVID-19.

Late Work

Assignments that are handed in late will receive an initial penalty of 20% on the first calendar day late and a 5% penalty per calendar day thereafter. After 5 calendar days, the assignment will receive a 0%.

Only in the case of a justified medical or personal reason will these penalties be waived, and only if these have been officially submitted to the Undergraduate Student Services Coordinator and accepted by the Undergraduate Office.

Students seeking accommodations due to COVID-19, are to follow Covid-19-related accommodations as outlined by the university here: (<https://uwaterloo.ca/coronavirus/academic-information#accommodations>).

6. READINGS

Note that many course readings from ARCH225 will be applicable to this studio. There is no official textbook required for the course. Specific recommended readings and references will be distributed with each project handout.

Reference material will be provided in electronic formats via LEARN. We encourage all students to actively use the Musagetes Library online collection and the recommended readings. Our Architectural Librarian Evan Schilling has put together a collection of online resources that can be accessed [online](#).

7. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY, GRIEVANCE, DISCIPLINE, APPEALS, AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Academic integrity

In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. [Check [the Office of Academic Integrity](#) for more information.]

Grievance

A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70. Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4](#). When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department's administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

Discipline

A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. [Check [the Office of Academic Integrity](#) for more information.] A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the undergraduate associate dean. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71. Student Discipline](#). For typical penalties, check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](#).

Appeals

A decision made or penalty imposed under [Policy 70. Student Petitions and Grievances](#) (other than a petition) or [Policy 71. Student Discipline](#) may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to [Policy 72. Student Appeals](#).

Note for students with disabilities

[AccessAbility Services](#), located in Needles Hall, Room 1401, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with [AccessAbility Services](#) at the beginning of each academic term.

Turnitin.com

Text matching software (Turnitin®) may be used to screen assignments in this course. Turnitin® is used to verify that all materials and sources in assignments are documented. Students' submissions are stored on a U.S. server, therefore students must be given an alternative (e.g., scaffolded assignment or annotated bibliography), if they are concerned about their privacy and/or security. Students will be given due notice, in the first week of the term and/or at the time assignment details are provided, about arrangements and alternatives for the use of Turnitin in this course.

It is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor if they, in the first week of term or at the time assignment details are provided, wish to submit the alternate assignment.