

FAQ

Q. Do I need approval for a comp project?

A. No, no approval is necessary. This is your project and your choice. The instructor will, however, try to help you scope your project so that it can be successfully accomplished in a quarter-length studio. For larger scale projects, this will mean developing a strategy to show significant and key resolutions at appropriate scales. He would also, no doubt, question your judgement - and try to get you to think about it - if you were to choose a project called, The Oregon Coast, or The World's Center for Everything.

Q. What makes a good comp project?

A. Generally, a place-oriented rather than a research question-oriented project. This experience is intended to be an advanced design and design-development oriented opportunity in the landscape design curriculum. A design project may require some research to accomplish it, but the comp project is primarily focused on place transformation and expression, changing an existing situation into one that overcomes its present challenges and does so with imagination, style and grace.

Q. When should I choose my project?

A. During the summer before you return to school. If you are still looking for a project in the fall you won't be able to take full advantage of the Comp Prep class, which is designed to help you develop your project programmatically.

Q. What resources will I need?

A. Since comp projects are place-oriented projects, it will be important to have already chosen a site where your project will take place and have gathered as much site information as possible. You will, as always need a good site map at a scale related to the work you intend to pursue. An air photo(s) will especially useful as always. Data in digital form will allow you to change scales in your work easily and rapidly, etc., but then you know all this from past design studio projects.

Project precedents are especially useful as background for the kinds of knowledge you will need to gather and become more expert at for your work. Precedents will also help you to begin thinking about project qualities that will make your proposals special.

Q. Do I need a client for this project?

A. No, but many students have found it helpful to have someone to talk to and advise them outside the school environment, someone who knows their needs and can respond to project ideas and proposals as they develop - and come and clap and be amazed at your final presentation.

Q. Who are you anyway?

A. I'm the guy who originated this class (pre-Liska) and taught it for over twenty years. Since retirement, I've been practicing and writing columns for the Eugene Weekly entitled, Design Matters, because I think it does.

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Q. I want to do a project in my home town (country). Is it OK to choose a site at a distance? I recognize that this will make it harder to visit and visualize the project in place as it develops.

A. Yes, but as you realize, it does complicate matters related to gathering information and needed resources. It works best if you can go there during the summer before coming back to school, take photos, talk to people, and gather up reports, plans, and other resources relating to the project. It's especially helpful if there are resource people in your home town (country) who can answer your questions as they come up and also who are able to send you the things that you discover that you need.

Q. Is it OK if I have an actual client and can get the client to pay for or furnish some of the resource materials for the project? What about actually receiving a fee for the work?

A. We've had many Comp "clients," people, agencies and private offices, who have helped support the Comp experience financially as well as providing personal attention to the student and their work. This is a private matter between you and your "client." You should make it very clear, however, and you should be professionally and ethically clear, that your work is still student work.

Q. Can Comp be a team project?

A. We've done this before, but without too much success. The faculty will expect twice as much product, and team work, as you know, can use up a lot of time making important decisions and managing human relations. It's true, you'll soon be working on design teams professionally. But this is an opportunity for you to be in charge and manage your own educational development, so my advice is to do this one yourself.

I'll post more questions and answers as they come up that I think are generic.

Jerry