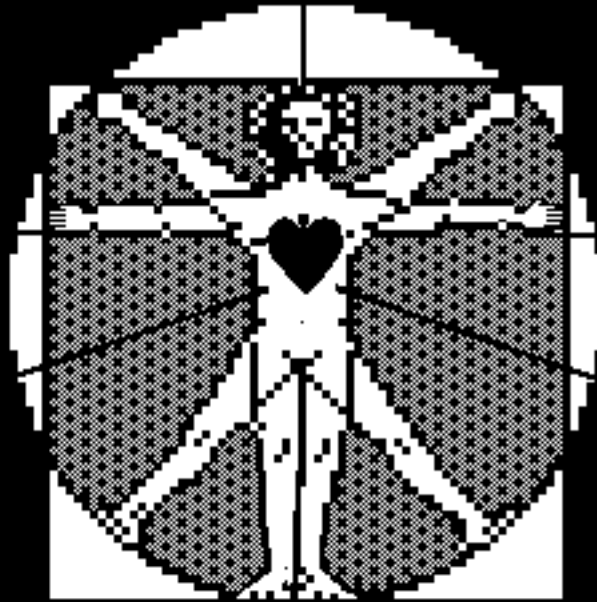


Ways of Thinking About Design



COMPREHENSIVE PROJECT SYLLABUS

LA 490 & LA 499 Fall 1997-98 • Department of Landscape Architecture • Jerome Diethelm

Comprehensive Project is an important part of the fifth year planning and design studio experience. Students who have finished their fourth year studio requirements choose an independent project over the summer prior to their fifth year and return to fall term ready to explore their projects through **LA 490 Preparation for Comprehensive Project**, a class intended to help them think about their project and more consciously about the process of designing.

The object of the Prep. class is to get each student organized and designing so they are well under-way and well-positioned to do further developmental work in either winter or spring **LA499 Comprehensive Project Studio**.

The successful completion of LA 490 is required for entry into these advanced studios.

5th Year Program Requirements

For 5th year students the normal planning and design program requirement is two studios + Comp. Prep. Typically a 5th year student will take LA 4/594, the “planning” studio in the fall term while taking Comp. Prep. and then Comp. Studio in the winter or spring. This year Jerry will teach Comp. in the winter term and Kenny will be the spring instructor.

As always the Prep. class will be thoughtfully and carefully divided at the end of the fall term in order to equalize the teaching load, access to faculty and other important class resources. Neither studio will exceed 16 students which experience has show to be a carrying capacity limit. Students with the best fall work will get preference in their choice of studio.



Two Classes Make A Whole

It's important to understand at the beginning that **LA 490 + LA 499 = Comprehensive Project.**

The two classes are conceived together as a continuum - as a whole and interconnected educational experience. The intent is to move beyond the conception of programming as a activity somehow separate from designing, something done at the beginning and then set aside as finished, and to reintegrate the experience of thinking about designing with more traditional formative exploration and expression.

LA 490 emphasizes the early stages of designing, a creative process which includes: a widening and deepening of awareness, expansion of relevant experience, environmental problem formation and articulation, evaluating environmental situations and places, imagining and probing possibilities, establishing promising directions and projecting early planning and design resolutions which set an **“intending toward-forming out of”** design developmental cycling process into full motion.

LA 499 emphasizes the continued development of design thinking, i.e., design ideas, feelings, qualities, relationships, needs, wants, aspirations... and the creative ways that these are reintegrated into planning and design proposals for the physical transformation of places.

A more general way of saying this is that Comp. Prep. emphasizes **“attentional and intentional”**

realms of designing, which naturally includes early **“formative”** work through schematic design.

Comp. Studio emphasizes **formative development: i.e., progressively more specific, integrative planning and design proposals for policy and physical transformations; planning and design rehearsals and expressions; design communications and presentations.**

At the same time, there is a continuing expected growth in people/problem/place awareness and the inevitable expansion, reconfiguration and shifts of emphasis in the project's programmatic agenda.

Class Objectives:

Fullfilling personal needs:

Comprehensive Project is an important opportunity to take more personal responsibility for a whole design experience. For some, it is a perfect time to concentrate on an aspect of the planning and design process that still needs work. For others, it is a unique opportunity to work on that favorite place or type of project that captivates the imagination and so obviously needs your skillful attention. What better chance to apply your new, hard won insight and rapidly improving planning and design abilities?

Putting together an exemplary set of planning and design documents: well-written materials and a beautiful set of drawings that show (mom & dad, some prospective employer, your significant other, yourself...) what you can do has always been a common objective. But of course, the number of personal objectives are at least as great as the number of people who take the class, and these are understood as an educationally important part of the experience which deserves support and respect.

Fullfilling design program objectives:

Comprehensive Project is by intention and tradition about the following:

• INDEPENDENCE • PROJECT MANAGEMENT • RESPONSIBILITY

...a project that you choose and develop yourself, with lots of conversation and advice of course, but essentially it is a project in which you take the lead and bear the major portion of project management responsibility.

• COMPREHENSIVENESS • EXPRESSIVE FORM • COMMUNICATION

...a more complete multi-scaled and multi-valued project than the usual one term studio allows, with better developed and expressed ideas and products and an effective rehearsal of the ways that people will experience the changes being proposed.

• DESIGN THEORY, PROCESS AND METHODS

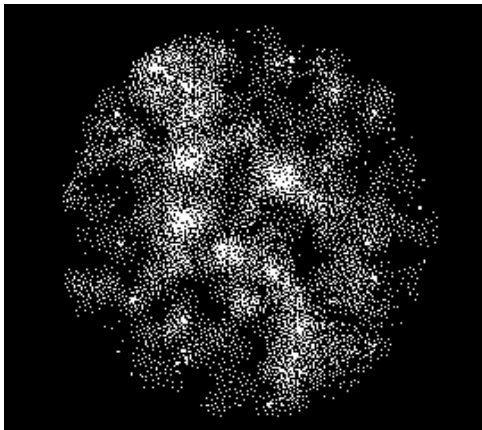
...an opportunity to develop your working methods as a planner/designer by paying more conscious attention to designing as a process of environmental valuing which covers many scales of landscape time, place and interest.

• DESIGN DEVELOPMENT • CONSTRUCTION PROCESSES AND MATERIALS • CONSTRUCTION COMMUNICATION

...an opportunity to explore the nature of materials and the construction processes that fundamentally affect the realization of your design ideas.

• BEAUTY • ELEGANCE • APTNESS • ELOQUENCE • PROFUNDITY • POETRY • ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

...an occasion for your most wonderful and mature



work in the planning and design program.

• PROJECT PRESENTATION • EFFECTIVE GROUP COMMUNICATION

...that project that you proudly present to your many friends and colleagues in the department and your invited guests.

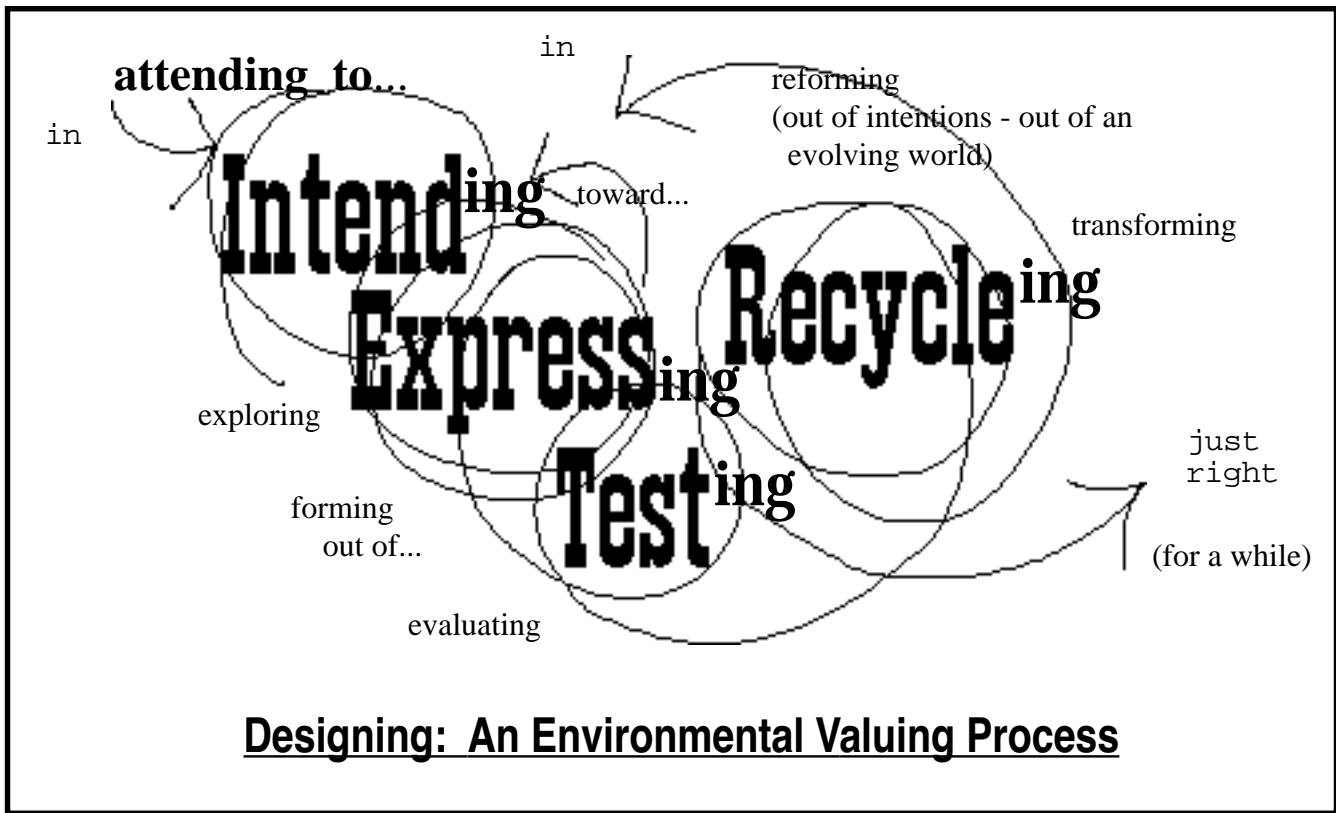
Comprehensive Project Requirements:

LA 490: Class attendance, participation, the successful and timely completion of all assignments, and the completion of a satisfactory and useful **Project Report** by the end of fall term.

LA 499: Completion and presentation of Comp. Project work to the students, faculty and guests of the Department of Landscape Architecture at the end of the term in which the studio portion of the work is accomplished. **A set of original, rendered drawings (not duplicates) must be turned in in a labeled storage tube (unless the format of your work requires otherwise) to the studio instructor** after presentation in order to receive credit for the class and to be cleared for graduation. The department requests that you also include a copy of your presentation script with your other materials and any slides of presentation models or other materials that will help to keep an adequate and expressive record of your work for future generations.

CHOICE OF PROJECT: The choice of project is left up to the student and requires no formal approval, although the instructor of LA 490 will provide project guidance and advice in order to help scale the work to the time available.

Since experience with **design development** is a major educational objective for this class, all projects **must include a central element of work which is resolvable in the 1/8" - 1/4" scale range or larger**. Students should also expect to propose specific processes and materials and include at least some strategic design development detail in their work.



Since increased **comprehensiveness** is also a central objective, projects are expected to propose resolutions to environmental problems at all relevant scales and, in general, **to be multi-valued, multi-scaled, multi-timed and well placed in their comprehensiveness.**

resources available, including word processing; page layout; image processing; graphic design and printing; CAD; and GIS. There is also some special software written for the class, including Designer PiE 97: Ways of Thinking About Design which is available to students without cost.

Fall '96 Comp. Prep. Meets:

M-W-F from 10:00-11:50 AM

- M & W in Room 405a or larger review room as needed. One hour for lectures, two for reviews and discussion days. Most lectures this term will be in the Millrace lab.
- Scheduled lectures in the new Millrace Computer Lab are from 11:00-11:50 exploring class content through class software.
- Fridays are reserved for individual project consultations by appointment. Sign up sheet outside 216 La.

The Millrace Computer Lab, 113MR3, has been reserved for the Comp. Prep. class from 11:00-12:00 on M-W-F this term. Students are encouraged to take advantage of the electronic

Avuncular Comp. Advice:

Regularly relate your growing understanding of your project, the people and the place, to what you propose to do and the renewed framework for human experience that your proposals bring into the world. Try to imagine what it will be like and worry in a positive sense about its environmental equity and sustainability.

Remember, designing is a faster, more effective and more satisfying experience for all concerned when it is understood as a valuing process and practiced developmentally. Like every child, a project must crawl and walk before it can dance. The growth of understanding in a project is probably a direct function of how many bad proposals you are willing to make, especially in the beginning. Projects thrive on the feedback of tentative physical resolutions and their testing. They grow rapidly in the garden of trial and error. **How glorious are the flowers of better.** If you allow yourself the time to do your project over many times you will get it **just right.**

Final Proposal Requirements:

1. **General:** a well-organized, useful, working tool. It should be possible to excerpt portions of this report to give to your “client”, classmates and critics so that they are clear about your project, your intentions and the current state of your proposals. Think of it as an intentional narrative.

2. **Proposal Sections:**

- a. Project title and short synopsis.
- b. **Main program narrative: a thorough, (20 pages), well-written and appropriately illustrated & diagrammed description of your project telling what and where it is and what you intend to do.**
- c. a set of image-map (cognitive maps) diagrams of (at least) three appropriate scales and related diagnoses.
- d. slides, photographs, maps, air photos and other images which help to explain the place of the project.
- e. a well-developed set of project **issues, questions and your intentions**; diagram and discuss important project processes;
- f. resources: background information and materials needed for each key project part.
- g. project methodology; bar chart: schedule of tasks, time and proposed products in as much detail as possible so you can plan your time and efforts.
- h. a well-drawn “BAD” (i.e., a first try) schematic design proposal to scale.

Note: Don't include the class exercises except the schematic in your final report. Use them to help create a more readable, well-illustrated project narrative and in general to develop project content.

LA 490 Expected Outcomes:

At the end of the fall term, students will have completed a series of six class exercises designed to assist with project development and will have folded in any insights they have gained into a well-illustrated (i.e., maps, drawings, diagrams, images...) and well-written project narrative. The project narrative will have grown from the very brief introductory description of Assignment No. 1, Project On A Page, and will have been rewritten at least two more times - for the mid-term submission and the final notebook version at the end of the class. (All the more reason to develop it electronically.)

The narrative, synopsis, and other materials listed

above, including a useful preliminary design proposal in schematic form will have been professionally packaged and turned in on time. Students will have preferred for winter or spring Comp. Studio and Jerry will have worked out an equitable, meritorious and fair distribution.

Reflections On Comp. Preps Past

Past experience underscores the importance of regular progress throughout the term and successfully reaching a schematic level of project development. The more stressful Comp. experiences of past years can all be traced to poor initial preparation in Prep., a too casual approach to the intentional report, and an unwillingness to try to make an early, imperfect proposal to recycle and expand.

Project On a Page

The first assignment is to put together a paragraph or two about your proposed project, or the project you are thinking about. Summarize your project and include an image which helps to further convey something about the work or place and turn one well-composed page in at the beginning of class next Monday Oct.2. Note the two stars on the class schedule. These denote something is due.

Usual questions:

What if I am considering more than one project at this time?

Do a page for each of them. If you keep it to a page, I think you will find that it is possible to focus on the essential and not be burdened by more work than is necessary.

Can I talk to you about the project?

Of course, but do your Project On a Page first. It helps you to formulate your thoughts, and it will be much easier to discuss what you have in mind after you have done some preliminary work.

I'll ask each one of you for about a five minute report on what you think you'll be doing in class on Monday. If you keep your reports brief and to the point, we can hear from everyone and get a good idea of what people are planning to do this year.

Project On a Page is the first submission of a description of your project (1 page w/ illustration); mid-term is the second (10+ pages); and end of term the third (20+ pages).