

COURSE SYLLABUS: MASTERS COMPREHENSIVE EXAM

The University of Texas at Arlington
School of Architecture
Graduate Program in Landscape Architecture

LARC 5294: Masters Comprehensive Exam, (2 credits)

Fall Semester 2014

Class Time: Th 3:00 pm - 3:50 pm (May be revised in the first day of the class)

Classroom: School of Architecture, 405

Instructor: Taner R. Özdil, Ph.D., ASLA,

Office: Architecture 417, Telephone: (817) 272-5089

Email: tozdil@uta.edu;

Office Hours: T-Th 4:45pm to 5:45 pm, or by appointment.

Prerequisites: LARC 5665, Thesis candidacy status must be attained, or Instructor's permission

I. Course Description:

LARC 5294 is an organized class that focuses on the final preparation of the thesis defense presentation and the thesis document of the graduate students in the Landscape Architecture program. Although thesis research, preparation and scheduling are mainly defined and shaped by the thesis advisor, the thesis committee and the candidate student, the class will also review the program, school, and UTA policies, procedures and guidelines that are relevant for all thesis students in the program. The primary objectives of the course are; the preparation of thesis defense presentation, the review of important dates and policies for thesis submission and graduation, and the preparation of final thesis documents.

II. Student Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to:

- Learn to prepare and deliver effective thesis defense presentation,
- Gain greater knowledge of preparation and presentation of a research document,
- Learn to communicate effectively with faculty and peers in scholarly environments,
- Learn about timeline, schedule, policies, and important dates for thesis preparation, and submission for graduation,
- Finalize thesis presentation, proposal, thesis document, and thesis defense materials that reflect university, procedure and guidelines.

III. Course Expectations and Student Responsibilities:

All students are required to do the following:

- Rehearse thesis defense presentations with PowerPoint and other visual aids,
- Practice speaking and delivery styles, and the presentation of data for public audiences,
- Prepare thesis presentation flyer,
- Keep a thesis schedule for the duration of the class,
- Participate in class research and thesis topic discussions actively, and interact with classmates,
- Prepare and submit thesis proposal,
- Let the instructors know of thesis related questions, suggestions or concerns in a timely fashion.

IV. Suggested Readings:

Although there is no required textbook for this course following texts are strongly suggested:

- Landscape Architecture Program Thesis Manual ('Research Methods' reader, see Dr. Pat Taylor)
- Deming, M. E., & Swaffield, S. R. (2011). *Landscape architecture research: Inquiry, strategy, design*. Hoboken, N.J: Wiley
- Cone, John D. & Foster, Sharon L. (2006). *Dissertations and Theses from Start to Finish: Psychology and Related Fields*. American Psychological Association: Washington DC
- Dillman, Don A., & Smyth, Jolene D., & Christian, L. Melani (2008). *Internet, mail, and mixed-mode surveys: The tailored design method*. New York: John Wiley & Sons
- Murphy, M. D. (2005). *Landscape architecture theory: An evolving body of thought*. Long Grove, Ill: Waveland Press
- Additional books, articles, document and white papers will be shared during the course.

V. Required Deliverables:

Deliverables of the class will be dress rehearsals of thesis defense presentations, with critiques of PowerPoint and other visual aids, speaking and delivery styles, thesis schedule, thesis announcements, thesis draft proposal, thesis flyer, and the thesis draft presentation review and techniques for public audiences.

VI. Grading & Attendance:

This course is graded on satisfactory/ unsatisfactory basis. Students must provide all required deliverables (such as, thesis proposal submission, thesis schedule submission, and thesis dry-run presentation and submission), attend all scheduled classes, and complete the assignments during the class in timely manner. Keeping up with deadlines is an integral part of being a Landscape Architect. Incomplete work by the given deadlines and/or unexcused absence(s) will be considered incomplete or unsatisfactory grade for the course. If you have a university excused absence and are unable to turn in your completed work you must consult with your instructor, and turn in all work completed up to that time to be eligible for an extension on your assignment and/or project. If student have a university excused absence and are unable to turn in their completed work they must consult with your instructor, and turn in all work completed up to that time to be eligible for an extension. Students must be present and attentive in the classroom during the time of the class.

At The University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required. Rather, each faculty member is free to develop his or her own methods of evaluating students' academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance. As the instructor of this section, I have established following attendance policy: Attendance is required for LARC 5294: Masters Comprehensive Exam. Two late attendance or early departure from the class will be considered and counted as one full absence. Not attending 2 or more of the classes throughout the semester may result in unsatisfactory grade in the class. Attendance will be recorded by the instructor. Each unexcused absence will result in a reduction of half a letter from grade from the final grade for the course.

This course can only be taken in the final semester of the landscape architecture student's degree plan. Student must complete the remaining requirements of the thesis and/or degree requirements within the same semester with the class, otherwise expected to retake the class in the following semester.

VII. Make-up Exams

There are no make-up exams for this class.

VIII. Rules, Regulations and Projects

Grade Grievance: Any appeal of a grade in this course must follow the procedures and deadlines for grade-related grievances as published in the current graduate catalog. For graduate courses, see <http://grad.pci.uta.edu/about/catalog/current/general/regulations/#grade-grievances>.

General Attendance, Submission, and Late Policy: (See also section.VI above) Attendance is required, unless excused by the instructor. Attendance is mandatory as each class builds upon those that precede it, and interaction with other students in the studio is a fundamental dynamic of the course. Keeping deadline commitments is an integral part of being a Landscape Architect. All studio projects will be submitted instructor both as hard copy and digital copy by the due date. No project will be accepted for credit after the class period that it is due.

Drop Policy: Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance. Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (<http://www.uta.edu/ses/fao>).

Americans with Disabilities Act: The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by the staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

Title IX: The University of Texas at Arlington is committed to upholding U.S. Federal Law "Title IX" such that no member of the UT Arlington community shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. For more information, visit www.uta.edu/titleIX.

Academic Integrity: Students enrolled in this course are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington's tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.

I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.

UT Arlington faculty members may employ the Honor Code as they see fit in their courses, including (but not limited to) having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System *Regents' Rule* 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university's standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student's suspension or expulsion from the University.

"Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts." (Regents' Rules and Regulations, Part One, Chapter VI, Section 3, Subsection 3.2, Subdivision 3.22).

Student Support Services: UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to resources@uta.edu, or view the information at www.uta.edu/resources.

Electronic Communication: UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

Student Feedback Survey: At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as "lecture," "seminar," or "laboratory" shall be directed to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student's feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington's effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

Final Review Week: A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

Emergency Exit Procedures: Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit, which is located both

north and south end of the architecture building. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist handicapped individuals.

Landscape Architecture Mission Statement: The mission of the program in Landscape Architecture is to educate for ultimate leadership in the landscape architecture profession. This mission requires fostering rigorous scholarly inquiry of the discipline, and the preparation of knowledgeable practitioners.

Ownership of Student Work: All student work submitted for evaluation is under the proprietorship of the Program (Excluded are such works that may be protected by copyright or patent rules). A representative collection of student work is essential for accreditation and is to be archived on campus for a period of six years. Therefore, it is suggested that students maintain photographs or reproductions of all work submitted, displayed in a cumulative portfolio reflecting student progress while completing the MLA at UT Arlington.

Writing Center: The Writing Center, 411 Central Library, offers individual 40 minute sessions to review assignments, *Quick Hits* (5-10 minute quick answers to questions), and workshops on grammar and specific writing projects. Visit <https://uta.mywconline.com/> to register and make appointments. For hours, information about the writing workshops we offer, scheduling a classroom visit, and descriptions of the services we offer undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty members, please visit our website at www.uta.edu/owl/.

Librarian to Contact: The following is a list of commonly used library resources in this course:

- Library Home Page <http://www.uta.edu/library>
- Subject Guides <http://libguides.uta.edu>
- Subject Librarians <http://www.uta.edu/library/help/subject-librarians.php>
- Database List..... <http://www.uta.edu/library/databases/index.php>
- Course Reserves..... <http://pulse.uta.edu/vwebv/enterCourseReserve.do>
- Library Tutorials <http://www.uta.edu/library/help/tutorials.php>
- Connecting from Off- Campus..... <http://libguides.uta.edu/offcampus>
- Ask A Librarian <http://ask.uta.edu>

IX. Tentative Semester Schedule: To be determined during the first class with the students, and may be distributed separately.