

**RESEARCH METHODS IN LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE  
for SENIOR & CAPSTONE PROJECTS  
WINTER QUARTER 2015**

**LDA 102 (4 units, letter grade)  
Fridays 8am – 12pm  
Hunt Hall 142**

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION & FORMAT**

This required course prepares landscape architecture students for the senior project or the capstone studio, both of which will be completed in the following quarter. It provides an overview of methods that will be used to undertake self-directed design research projects. Through lectures, in-class exercises, and outside assignments, students will learn how to design a research project from concept to documentation. They will also initiate their research projects and continue to refine their research proposals.

**PRE-REQUISITES**

Must be senior LDA students having successfully completed LDA 170, 171, 172, & 180.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

At the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Determine the appropriate research methods and approaches
- Design a research project: select a topic, organize the research, create a schedule, determine deliverables
- Write a compelling and clear proposal
- Conduct a literature review and case studies
- Conduct an interview and set up a survey
- Select a site and conduct a site analysis
- Present visual information effectively
- Format a research document

**EVALUATION**

Students will be graded on the quality of their work, creativity, by their graphic and verbal communication skills; effort; punctuality; and their pursuit of their own intellectual curiosity. Grades will be based on the following percentages:

Participation & Exercises (ongoing)	20%
Initial Proposal (1/23)	10%
Midterm Proposal & Presentation (2/6)	25%
Revised Proposals (2/20)	10%
Final Proposal & Presentation (3/13)	35%

## ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to be present and attentive for all class times, lectures, and presentations. Please be respectful of everybody's time by arriving punctually and by avoiding distractions (no personal communication or using class time for other work). Regular attendance is required; grades will be penalized for frequent absences.

## COURSE MATERIALS

Required readings will be available on SmartSite or provided in person. In addition, the following books are recommended as references:

- Booth, Wayne C., Colomb, Gregory G., & Williams, Joseph M. (1995). *The craft of research*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Creswell, John W. (2009). *Research design : qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications.
- Deming, M. Elen, & Swaffield, Simon R. (2011). *Landscape architecture research : inquiry, strategy, design*. Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley.
- LaGro, James A. (2008). *Site analysis : a contextual approach to sustainable land planning and site design*. Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley & Sons.
- Zeisel, John. (2006). *Inquiry by design : environment/behavior/neuroscience in architecture, interiors, landscape, and planning*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co.

## ACADEMIC HONESTY

In line with University of California at Davis policy, students are expected to maintain high standards of academic honesty. This means that all work that you present as your own must in fact have been done by you, and that all sources must be properly cited. Graphics must be credited as well as text. There are a number of possible ways to cite information; please refer to standard reference books such as the Chicago Manual of Style or online citation resources available through <http://www.lib.ucdavis.edu/dept/instruc/research/cites.php>. If you have any questions about either citation procedures or academic honesty, please ask the instructor. Academic dishonesty may lead to the student failing the course or other more serious measures. Please refer to the UC Davis Code of Academic Conduct for additional information: <http://sja.ucdavis.edu/cac.html>

## COUNSELING & WELLNESS

At times, we can all use help with our mental health. Your instructor is available to help but other professionals are better equipped to assist you. Please take advantage of the confidential campus services through Student Health and Counseling Services: <http://shcs.ucdavis.edu/>

If you are in crisis and need urgent care, come to Student Health and Wellness Center. Student Health and Counseling Services (SHCS) offers both medical and mental health urgent care services on the [first floor of the Student Health & Wellness Center](#) during [normal hours of operation](#). For urgent needs (24 hours/day) you can call or walk in to speak with an [advice/triage nurse \(530\) 752-2349](#). The nurse will discuss your concerns and determine if urgent care is appropriate.

## **CLASS SCHEDULE & READINGS**

### **Week 1 - 1/9:**

Introduction: What is Research? The Senior & Capstone Projects

Read: De la Peña, *Research Methods in Landscape Architecture*;

Zeisel Ch 1 – Design: Images, Presentations ...

Due: In-Class Exercise: Review of senior projects

### **Week 2 - 1/16**

Selecting a Topic; Elements of a Proposal

Read: Booth, *The Craft of Research* pp 37-55;

Booth, *Titles and Abstracts* pp 219-221

Due: In-Class Exercise: Topic Brainstorm

### **Week 3 - 1/23**

Literature Reviews, Case Studies

Read: Creswell Ch 2 – Lit Reviews;

Francis, *A Case Study Method* ...

Due: Initial Proposals

### **Week 4 - 1/30**

Refining the Proposal

Read: Booth Ch 14 – Introductions & Conclusions;

Cresswell Ch 4 & 5 – The Introduction; The Purpose Statement

### **Week 5 - 2/6**

Midterm Proposal Presentations

Due: Midterm Proposals

### **Week 6 - 2/13**

Site Research: Site Selection, Site Analysis, Background, Context, Analysis

Read: Review LaGro, *Site Analysis*;

Zeisel Ch 8 & 9 – Observing Physical Traces; Observing Environmental Behav.

### **Week 7 - 2/20**

Working with People: Surveys, Interviews, Focus Groups, Community Engagement

Read: Zeisel Ch 10 & 11 – Focused Interviews; Standardized Questionnaires;

Additional tbd.

Due: Revised Proposals

### **Week 8 - 2/27**

Communicating Visually

Read: Booth Ch 15 – Communicating Evidence Visually Tufte, excerpts

### **Week 9 - 3/6**

Work Day

Pecha Kucha preparation

Due: 20 presentation slides

### **Week 10 - 3/13**

Final Presentations

Due: Final Proposals & Presentation