COURSE DESCRIPTION

ARCH541b prepares students to design projects in urban settings with an emphasis on landscape continuities as well as the development of integrative schematic proposals and detailed open space design.

This course will build upon the skills acquired in ARCH 541a furthering the ability of students to think spatially and design at multiple scales. Students will not only investigate physical conditions but also become familiar with the less tangible aspects of our urban environment – including but not limited to social, cultural, and economic issues – and how they effect the urban environment. Students will develop their skills through a series of tasks that will culminate in a comprehensive proposal for a strategic urban intervention.

COURSE INTRODUCTION

This semester, we will develop a hypothetical design proposal for the Climate Resilience Environmental Education Center (CREEC) on the site of the former Oak Grove Ranger Station of the U.S. Forest Service. Located in between La Cañada Flintridge and Altadena (unincorporated), our site is a part of Hahamongna Watershed Park (HWP) – a 1,300 acre park in the City of Pasadena which encompasses the area north of Devil’s Gate Dam into Arroyo Seco Canyon. The park is a component of a larger system of
open space in Pasadena associated with the Arroyo Seco, an important tributary to the Los Angeles River.

Although the site is a part of an existing master plan, we will utilize this opportunity to think freely and unconstrained about the possibilities for the site. The Hahamongna Watershed Park Master Plan was adopted in 2003 and revised in 2010 with the adoption of the HWP Master Plan Addendum for the Hahamongna Annex. The HWP Master Plan and Addendum are in turn a part of a larger vision for the Arroyo Seco within the City of Pasadena and comprises the Arroyo Seco Master Plans. We will spend some time familiarizing ourselves with these plans merely as a source of background information and context and not necessarily the basis for our strategies and design.

Throughout the semester, we will be engaging the input and feedback of the core group of community organizations backing the creation of CREEC, which include Arlington Gardens, Arroyo Seco Foundation, Outward Bound Adventures, Pasadena Audubon, and Trust for Public Land. The outcome of the studio may contribute to the proposal to be submitted to the City of Pasadena by the CREEC team.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
By the end of this course, students will be able to:

+ Conduct a precedent analysis of a designed landscape in an urban context
+ Analyze an urban site relative to its physical and historical context
+ Use sketch/study models to investigate multiple formal approaches of the same concept
+ Develop a list of objectives and parameters to serve as the basis for the design of a new site specific landscape
+ Produce precise drawings and contour models
+ Design a site specific landscape in an urban context

TASKS DESCRIPTIONS
PRECEDENT ANALYSIS
Design precedents provide us with ideas and strategies on how past designers have dealt with similar site conditions, programmatic requirements, and/or historical contexts. By distilling what our predecessors have developed to basic principles and projecting them onto our own site, we are able to imagine many more approaches to the same problem than if we were trying to develop them on our own. What are distilled from precedents are not forms but approaches to form. Thus, even if one is inspired by a particular precedent for their own site, the design should result in dramatically different forms based on the idiosyncratic conditions of the site, programmatic requirements, and the sensibilities of the designer. Each student will be assigned a designed landscape to analyze in both drawing and model. The assignment will end in a presentation to the class. Outcome will be assessed on the level of completion, accuracy of the information presented, quality of craft, and clarity of the verbal and visual presentations.

SITE INVENTORY
In order to develop meaningful design ideas for any site, one must learn what they can about the site and identify its various conditions. The aim is for us to become experts of the site. Students will seek out relevant issues – cultural, political, economic, ecological, and sociological - through internet and archival research, and iterative diagrams. Students will also be asked to consider the site and its surrounding through the lens of “weak” land tenure. "Weak" land tenure is a tactic that expands the possibilities of land use through creativity and opportunism. "Weak" land tenure is both process and perception. As a process it is an act of appropriation that allows often excluded populations access to land’s use values without exchange values. As a perception, it is the status of land’s exchange value either diminished or suspended due to changes affected by time, circumstances, or through sheer social force ("weak" land...
tenure as verb) that consequently warrants uses outside of land’s “highest and best use” as a form of commodity (real estate). Outcome will be assessed on the depth of research and the clarity of the verbal and visual presentations.

SCENARIOS & STRATEGIES
Our role as landscape architects is to initiate change. We are uniquely equipped to understand any site – large or small – as part of a broader regional and even global context. Moreover, it is not just that we are capable but rather our duty to conceive each and every project with a strategic approach that effects contexts and systems beyond the boundaries of our site at multiple scales. Based on the research and analysis conducted in the preceding task, each student will develop a scenario based on a strategy that somehow incorporates the concept of “weak” land tenure. The exercise will allow us to consider ways to expand the notion of public space in and around our site utilizing a tactic already common within the urbanism of greater Los Angeles. Outcome will be assessed equally for the uniqueness of the ideas explored and the logical basis of the strategy.

FORMAL STRATEGIES
Utilizing sketch models, we will develop a repertoire of formal strategies based on topography. The studies will simultaneously provide students the freedom to innovate and challenge conventions while reflecting on the implications that each formal approach may have on accessibility, the movement of water, and planting. The assignment will culminate in an conversation of the models generated. Outcome will be assessed on the level of completion, variations produced, and quality of craft.

STRATEGIC INTERVENTION
Each student will develop a physical design for the site utilizing the information and skills that have been developed this semester. Students will be required to study and convey the form of their strategic intervention in the form of drawings and physical models. The set of deliverables required will include a hand drawn contour plan, which will in turn be utilized to generate a contour model. The outcome of this assignment will be assessed on the level of completion, accuracy of the representation as it aligns with intention, satisfaction of requirements, level of creative input to solve technical challenges, and quality of craft.

CREATIVE VISUALIZATION
How one abstracts existing realities can influence the emergence of new realities. Building upon ARCH 541a and the skills acquired in the media courses, the studio will focus not just upon the representation of ideas but also how they are generated and explored through the use of media. Each semester of studio is an opportunity to rigorously develop your own methodology and style. The more obsessive and compulsive you are about developing these skills, the better off you will be moving forward in not just your academic career but also in practice. Each student will be required to generate and visualize their site design utilizing the skills acquired in past and concurrent media courses. Outcome will be assessed based on level of completion, accuracy of the representation as it aligns with intention, quality of craft, and willingness to challenge conventions.

PARTICIPATION
Participation will be evaluated based on contributions made in class throughout the semester. Please be ready to contribute to our discussions (pin-ups, lectures, reading discussions, etc.). We are a small class. Our discussions will only be as lively and productive as each of our discussants.

PREREQUISITE
ARCH 541a Landscape Architecture Design
ARCH 539 Media for Landscape Architecture
CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT
ARCH 548 Media for Landscape Architecture: 3D Design
ARCH 534 Landscape Construction: Topographic Design

TECHNOLOGICAL PROFICIENCY AND HARDWARE/SOFTWARE REQUIRED
Adobe Creative Suite (in particular Photoshop, Illustrator, and InDesign)
AutoCAD or equivalent CAD software

REQUIRED READING

REFERENCE

RESOURCES
*Architect's Corner*
1324 S. Flower St Los Angeles, CA 90015
Tel: (213) 663-1400

*Graphaids Art Supplies*
3051 La Cienega Blvd Culver City, CA 90232
Tel: (310) 204-1212
Other locations: Westchester, Agoura Hills, Long Beach

*Blick Art Materials*
7301 West Beverly Boulevard Los Angeles, CA 90036
Tel: (323) 933-9284  
Other locations: Pasadena, West LA, Santa Monica, Fullerton

**Artist & Craftsman Supplies**  
1660 S. La Cienega Blvd, Los Angeles, California, 90035, US  
Tel: (310) 274-8000

**Art Supply Warehouse**  
6672 Westminster Blvd Westminster, CA 92683  
Tel: (714) 891-3626

**GRADING BREAKDOWN**

Final grade evaluations will be based on the following breakdown:

- **5%** Participation  
  + Attendance  
  + Punctuality  
  + Contribution to discussions  
  + Providing feedback during pin-ups and reviews  

- **10%** Precedent Analysis  

- **10%** Site Inventory  

- **25%** Scenarios & Strategies / Mid-Term Project Review  

- **10%** Formal Strategies  

- **40%** Strategic Intervention / Final Project Review

**GRADING SCALE**

Course final grades will be determined using the following scale:

- A 95.0 - 100  
- A- 90.0 - 94.9  
- B+ 87.0 - 88.9  
- B 83.0 - 86.9  
- B- 80.0 - 82.9  
- C+ 77.0 - 79.9  
- C 73.0 - 76.9  
- C- 70.0 - 72.9  
- D+ 67.0 - 69.9  
- D 63.0 - 66.9  
- D- 60.0 - 62.9  
- F 00.0 - 59.9

Please note that earning an "A" in this course is difficult and requires a great deal of effort. Students must revise their work after each meeting based on the feedback received. Assignments must be completed on time and be of exceptional craft. Designs must be guided by strong ideas and critical
thinking. Students must contribute regularly to class discussions and pin-ups and in general, be an active participant in all aspects of the course.

COURSE ATTENDANCE

1. Attendance is mandatory. Students are expected to arrive on time and be present for the full duration of studio.

2. An excused absence is not easy to come by and requires documentation such as a doctor’s note for an illness or a medical emergency, a letter explaining a family emergency, or published dates for a religious holiday. For the latter, please notify the instructor of the scheduled absence at the BEGINNING of the semester.

3. Sometimes, occasions arise that compete with course attendance or that make attendance difficult. Things like job interviews, problems with public transit, a regular doctor's appointment, not feeling well, etc. may seem like they should qualify as reasons for an excused absence. They do not. If you choose to miss all or a portion of the studio meeting unexcused, please do so cognizant of your obligations and accepting the consequences of your absence.

4. If you miss a studio meeting, please arrange to meet with the instructor as soon as possible. Come to the meeting with the work you were expected to have on the day of your absence to receive feedback and to discuss how to proceed.

5. See SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE ATTENDANCE POLICY below.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

1. Come to each studio session prepared. Do not depend on studio time to produce new work for desk crits and pin-ups.

2. Show respect to your colleagues and be present - awake and alert - during pin-ups and reviews. Provide feedback and comments as you would like your colleagues to do for you.

3. Work will NOT be reviewed on screen. Work must be printed or drawn on paper to be reviewed for desk crits and pin-ups. NO EXCEPTIONS.

4. Drawings and models produced over the course of the semester must be kept in studio. They will be referenced throughout the semester in pin-ups and desk crits. They are important tools for learning and should not be taken home.

5. Smartphone use is prohibited during studio hours. Please do not text or take/make calls.

6. Do not stream movies and television programs during studio hours.

7. Internet use is strongly discouraged during studio hours unless it is necessary for course-related research.

8. Please refer to SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE STUDIO CULTURE DOCUMENT for school-wide studio culture norms.
## COURSE SCHEDULE*

### WEEK 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 09</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>STUDIO KICK-OFF</td>
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<td>PRECEDENT ANALYSIS</td>
<td>Course Overview</td>
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<td>Introduction</td>
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<td>Jan 11</td>
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<td>Jan 18</td>
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<td>PRECEDENT ANALYSIS</td>
<td>** Final Pin-up **</td>
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<td>SITE INVENTORY</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
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<td>READING ASSIGNMENT</td>
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<td>Jan 25</td>
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<td>**** SITE VISIT (tentative) ****</td>
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<td>Feb 01</td>
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<td>SITE INVENTORY</td>
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<td>READING</td>
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<td>Kaijima, M., Kuroda, J., Tsukamoto, Y., Made In Tokyo.</td>
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<td>Atelier Bow-Wow, “Combined Orientation” in Bow-Wow from Post Bubble City, pp. 144-255.</td>
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<td>Feb 08</td>
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<td>SCENARIOS &amp; STRATEGIES</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 10</td>
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<td>SCENARIOS &amp; STRATEGIES</td>
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### WEEK 6

- **Feb 13 / M**  SCENARIOS & STRATEGIES
- **Feb 15 / W**  SCENARIOS & STRATEGIES
- **Feb 17 / F**  SCENARIOS & STRATEGIES

### WEEK 7

- **Feb 20 / M**  HOLIDAY / NO CLASSES
- **Feb 22 / W**  SCENARIOS & STRATEGIES
- **Feb 24 / F**  SCENARIOS & STRATEGIES

### WEEK 8

- **Feb 27 / M**  SCENARIOS & STRATEGIES
- **Mar 01 / W**  **** MID-TERM REVIEW **
- **Mar 03 / F**  FORMAL STRATEGIES
- **Mar 03 / F**  Site Model
- **Mar 03 / F**  Introduction
- **Mar 03 / F**  Introduction

### WEEK 9

- **Mar 06 / M**  FORMAL STRATEGIES
- **Mar 06 / M**  Site Model
- **Mar 08 / W**  FORMAL STRATEGIES
- **Mar 08 / W**  Site Model
- **Mar 10 / F**  FORMAL STRATEGIES
- **Mar 10 / F**  **Pin-up Part I**

### SPRING RECESS

- **Mar 13 / M**  SPRING RECESS / NO CLASSES
- **Mar 15 / W**  SPRING RECESS / NO CLASSES
- **Mar 17 / F**  SPRING RECESS / NO CLASSES

### WEEK 10

- **Mar 20 / M**  FORMAL STRATEGIES
- **Mar 20 / M**  Site Model
- **Mar 22 / W**  FORMAL STRATEGIES
- **Mar 22 / W**  Site Model
- **Mar 24 / F**  FORMAL STRATEGIES
- **Mar 24 / F**  Site Model
### WEEK 11
- **Mar 27 / M**  FORMAL STRATEGIES
  - SITE MODEL
  - **Final Pin-up**
- **Mar 29 / W**  STRATEGIC INTERVENTION
- **Mar 31 / F**  STRATEGIC INTERVENTION

### WEEK 12
- **Apr 03 / M**  STRATEGIC INTERVENTION
- **Apr 05 / W**  STRATEGIC INTERVENTION
- **Apr 07 / F**  STRATEGIC INTERVENTION

### WEEK 13
- **Apr 10 / M**  STRATEGIC INTERVENTION
- **Apr 12 / W**  STRATEGIC INTERVENTION
- **Apr 14 / F**  STRATEGIC INTERVENTION

### WEEK 14
- **Apr 17 / M**  STRATEGIC INTERVENTION
- **Apr 19 / W**  STRATEGIC INTERVENTION
- **Apr 21 / F**  STRATEGIC INTERVENTION

### WEEK 15
- **Apr 24 / M**  STRATEGIC INTERVENTION
- **Apr 26 / W**  STRATEGIC INTERVENTION
  - **Classes End**
- **Apr 28 / F**  LAST DAY OF CLASSES
  - STRATEGIC INTERVENTION

### FINAL REVIEW
- **May 08 / M**  ***FINAL REVIEW***

*Course schedule subject to change.*
USC & SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE POLICIES

School of Architecture Attendance Policy

A student may miss the equivalent of one week of class sessions (in this case, two EXCUSED absences are permitted) without directly affecting the student’s grade and ability to complete the course. An excused absence is a confirmed personal illness, family emergency, or religious holiday. **For each absence over the allowed number, your grade will be lowered by 1/3-letter grade (i.e. B+ to B; B to B-).**

If additional absences are required for a personal illness, family emergency, pre-approved academic reason/religious observance, you must discuss the situation with your faculty member immediately.

Any student not in class within the **first 10 minutes** is considered tardy. If a student is tardy **three times**, the day of the third tardy will be marked with an absence. Any student absent (in any form including sleep, technological distraction, or by leaving mid-class for a long bathroom/water break) for **more than 1/3 of the class** time can be considered fully absent. If arriving late, a student must be respectful of a class in session and do everything possible to minimize the disruption caused by a late arrival.

**Being absent on the day a project is due can lead to an “F” for that project** (unless the faculty concedes the reason is due to an excusable absence for personal illness/family emergency/religious observance).

A midterm or final review is to be treated the same as a final exam as outlined and expected by the University. Students must understand that days allocated for their studio final in the syllabus are considered an examination period. If they are absent or tardy on any review day and miss their opportunity to present, this is considered equal to missing a final exam.

**Religious Holidays**

The University of Southern California recognizes the diversity of our community and the potential for conflicts involving academic activities and personal religious observation. The University provides a guide to such observances for reference and suggests that any concerns about lack of attendance or inability to participate fully in the course activity be fully aired at the start of the term. As a general principle, students should be excused from class for these events if properly documented and if provisions can be made to accommodate the absence and make up the lost work. Constraints on participation that conflict with adequate participation in the course and cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the faculty and the student need to be identified prior to the add/drop date for registration.

After the add/drop date the University and the School of Architecture shall be the sole arbiter of what constitutes appropriate attendance and participation in a given course.

**STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

**SUPPORT SYSTEMS**

Counseling and Mental Health
(213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call
studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call
suicidepreventionlifeline.org
Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP)
(213) 740-9355 (WELL), press “0” after hours – 24/7 on call
studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault
Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)
(213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298
equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu
Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment
(213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298
usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report
Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity |Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs
(213) 740-0776
dsp.usc.edu
Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Campus Support and Intervention
(213) 821-4710
campussupport.usc.edu
Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC
(213) 740-2101
diversity.usc.edu
Information on events, programs and training, the Provost’s Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency
UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call
dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu
Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety
UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call
dps.usc.edu
Non-emergency assistance or information.