**USC School of Architecture**

**ARCH 465: The Landscape Imaginary**

4 units
Tuesdays 12:00-3:50

Professor: Vittoria Di Palma
Office: 324 Watt Hall
Office Hours: Monday 1-3
Contact Information:
  phone: 213 821 5879
  email: dipalma@usc.edu

**Course Description**

This seminar offers a cross-cultural introduction to ideas of nature, landscape, and the environment. For our purposes, "environment" is to be understood its widest sense as that which surrounds us, whether given (by nature) or invented (by culture). By focusing on "the landscape imaginary," this course is primarily interested in excavating the mental constructs and cognitive mappings that have shaped attitudes toward the environment in a variety of cultures (European, Islamic, American) at a number of discrete historical moments, from antiquity to the present. The seminar makes use of primary sources (both written and visual) to analyze, compare, and contrast an array of key concepts including arcadia, paradise, forest, mountain, villa, landscape, wilderness, land, system, ecology, wasteland, and matter. Our aim will be to develop a critical understanding of categories that have shaped and continue to shape the ways in which we perceive, understand, react to, and design our surroundings at a variety of scales, from the local to the global (and beyond).

As a seminar, this course requires the completion of a substantial amount of reading each week. Class meetings will consist of a lecture followed by a discussion of that week’s assigned reading. It is very important that you come to class prepared to participate in discussion. Not doing so will affect not only your final grade but also (and much more importantly) your enjoyment of the course.

**Course Requirements and Grading**

- Attendance and Participation: 10%
- Presentation: 15%
- Midterm Exam: 20%
- Paper: 30%
- Final Exam: 25%

Students are required to attend class every week and to complete all required reading before each class session. Most readings will be posted on Blackboard. When entire books are assigned, they will either be accessible online through HOMER or be placed on reserve in the library. They will also be available for purchase from the USC Bookstore.

Students will be asked to write one paper (12-15 pages) on a topic related to the themes of the course. Specific information about possible paper topics will be distributed later in the semester.

There will be two essay-based exams: a midterm, and a final.
No late work is accepted—i.e. no partial credit will be given for work that is turned in late. Being absent on a day that an exam, presentation, paper, or final is held or due can lead to a student receiving an "F" for that assignment.

The School of Architecture’s attendance policy allows a student to miss the equivalent of one week of class sessions (in our case, that means ONE class session) without penalty. If additional absences are required for medical reasons or a family emergency, a pre-approved academic reason, or religious observance, the situation should be discussed, in advance if possible, with me. For each absence above this number, the final grade may be lowered by 1/3 point (i.e. from A to A- for one unexcused absence, from A- to B+ for two; from B+ to B for three, etc.).

Any student not in class after the first 10 minutes is considered to be tardy. Three late arrivals constitute one unexcused absence. Students who are physically present but mentally absent (whether because they are asleep, or distracted by technology) will be marked as absent. Leaving class before it ends, or taking an extended bathroom or water break that lasts 1/3 of the class time or longer, will be considered as an unexcused absence.

Course Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>January 13</th>
<th>Introduction: The Landscape Imaginary</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 20</td>
<td>Airs, Waters, Places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 27</td>
<td>Arcadia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 3</td>
<td>Paradise</td>
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<td>February 10</td>
<td>Mountain and Forest</td>
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<td>February 17</td>
<td>A New Atlantis</td>
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<td>February 24</td>
<td>Villa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 3</td>
<td>The Sublime, the Beautiful, and the Picturesque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 10</td>
<td>MIDTERM EXAM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 17</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 24</td>
<td>Wilderness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 31</td>
<td>Land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 7</td>
<td>System</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 14</td>
<td>Wasteland</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 21</td>
<td>Ecology</td>
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<td>April 28</td>
<td>Vibrant Matter</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 12</td>
<td>FINAL EXAM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
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<th>Required Reading</th>
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  Alexander Pope, "Epistle to Lord Burlington," available online through ECCO |
  Uvedale Price, *Essays on the Picturesque, as compared with the sublime and the beautiful; and on the use of studying pictures, for the purpose of improving real landscape*, 3v. (London: 1810), chapter III, pp. 34-75 |
| March 10   | MIDTERM EXAM            |                                                                                                                                                  |
| March 17   | SPRING BREAK            |                                                                                                                                                  |

Further Reading:


**March 31**

**Land**

Required Reading:


Further Reading:

**April 7**

**System**

Required Reading:


Further Reading:

**April 14**

**Wasteland**

Required Reading:

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<td><strong>Further Reading</strong></td>
<td><em>Further Reading: Becher, Bernd and Hilla. Typologies</em>. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004</td>
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<td><em>Antoine Picon, &quot;Anxious Landscapes: From the Ruin to Rust,&quot; Grey Room</em> 1 (Fall 2000): 64-83</td>
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<td>April 28</td>
<td><strong>Vibrant Matter</strong></td>
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<td><em>April 28 Vibrant Matter</em></td>
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<td>May 13</td>
<td><strong>FINAL EXAM</strong></td>
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**Selected Bibliography**


Chambers, William. *A Dissertation on Oriental Gardening…second edition, with additions. To which is annexed, an explanatory discourse by Tan Chet-Qua, of Quang-Chew Fu, Gent..* London: 1773, reprinted Los Angeles, 1978, with an introduction by R. E. Quaintance


Price, Uvedale. Essays on the Picturesque, as compared with the sublime and the beautiful; and on the use of studying pictures, for the purpose of improving real landscape, 3v.. London: 1810


Williams, Raymond. Keywords. New York: Oxford University Press, 1983


**Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems**

**Academic Conduct**

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 Section 11, Behavior Violating University Standards. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information on scientific misconduct, [http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/](http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/).

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the Office of Equity and Diversity [http://equity.usc.edu/](http://equity.usc.edu/) or to the Department of Public Safety [http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us](http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us). This is important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. The Center for Women and Men [http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/](http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/) provides 24/7
confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage sarc@usc.edu describes reporting options and other resources.

**Support Systems**
A number of USC’s schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the American Language Institute http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. The Office of Disability Services and Programs http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, USC Emergency Information http://emergency.usc.edu will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.