Texas A&M University

Core Curriculum

Initial Request for a Course Addition to the Fall 2014 Core Curriculum

Foundational Component Area: Language, Philosophy and Culture

In the box below, describe how this course meets the Foundational Component Area description for Language, Philosophy and Culture. Courses in this category focus on how ideas, values, beliefs, and other aspects of culture express and affect human experience. Courses involve the exploration of ideas that foster aesthetic and intellectual creation in order to understand the human condition across cultures.

The proposed course must contain all elements of the Foundational Component Area. How does the proposed course specifically address the Foundational Component Area definition above?

LAND 240 – History of Landscape Architecture I meets the Foundational Component Area description for Language, Philosophy, and Culture by specifically focusing on how the ideas, values, beliefs, and philosophical positions of a particular set of historical people are reflected in the visible landscape. It takes the assumption that as humans interact with nature the write their unwitting autobiography. The tastes, styles, behaviors, and philosophies of particular persons within a given time period, within a given region are then directly reflected through the design of the built and natural environments.

Core Objectives

Describe how the proposed course develops the required core objectives below by indicating how each learning objective will be addressed, what specific strategies will be used for each objective and how student learning of each objective will be evaluated.

The proposed course is required to contain each element of the Core Objective.

Critical Thinking (to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information):

The ability to engage in reflective and independent thinking is a key component to LAND 240. Learning objectives for the course which help achieve this are (see syllabus for complete list):

- L.O.3. Be able to distinguish the distinctive, stylistic, and functional periods of landscape design
- L.O.4. Recognize and explain the significance of outstanding historical works of landscape architecture and how they fit into a particular design period
- L.O.5. Differentiate the philosophies of each primary era of landscape design and describe how they have impacted the layout of different countries, cities, and gardens.

Strategies used to create/assess an atmosphere of critical thinking are:

1. In class questioning and answering within lectures
2. Pre-lecture outline knowledge exposure/ Post-lecture knowledge obtainment discussions
3. Procedural learning questioning (assessing the "how" something was applied rather than the "what") embedded within quizzes and tests

Communication (to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication):

Being able to communicate clearly and effectively – orally, visually and in writing – underpins much of the lecture material, the cinematic material, and the extra credit option for the course. Learning objectives within the syllabus which seek to enhance student communication skills are:

- L.O.6. Identify renowned landscapes, the work of renowned designers, and the key philosophers of
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differing design styles

L.O.7. Know key facts and interpretations regarding significant historical works of landscape architecture

Strategies used to create/assess an atmosphere of communication skill enhancement are:

1. Key lecture materials are outlined at the end of each slide show. Students are questioned on this material and are asked to stand up and state their answers to the entire class

2. The extra credit assignment affords students the opportunity to draw a plan view of a landscape design covered in class and describe the style, philosophies, and importance of the design creatively

3. “Team” questioning is utilized to answer questions from quizzes which were missed by large portions of the course

4. Quizzes and tests include many visual images as questions which must be recognized according to the designer (in some cases), location, and site.

Social Responsibility (to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities):

The contribution of the people to the welfare of their communities is covered through many facets of the course, primarily in lecture form. While direct application to College Station is not necessarily made, the classes of people of each period of time covered and the contributions of these persons, there struggles and/or prestige are embedded within the layout description and philosophical debates of the design itself. Learning objectives within the syllabus which aid in exposing the social responsibility of people to their communities are:

L.O.1. Develop and better understand the nature and depth of the discipline of landscape architecture

L.O.8. Become well versed in historical multicultural nomenclature used by historical designers and the meanings of this terminology

Strategies used to create/assess an atmosphere of social responsibility are:

1. Emphasizing and quizzing/testing students on the role landscape architects can play in designing spaces for public good and the promotion of social justice

2. Showing cinematic screening of movies which expose historical injustices during historical times and testing on the materials covered in these screenings

Utilizing design nomenclature which has roots in different countries and classes and explain the meaning/significance/origins of these terms.

Personal Responsibility (to include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making):

Students are exposed to issues of personal responsibility related to the course’s focus on aspects of the interaction of nature and culture and how this interaction impacts the human experience. Diverse religious concepts, concepts of sustainability such as hydrological sensitivity, natural resource conservation, and energy responsive behavior, and periodic campus field trips to areas displaying aspects of particular historic design styles all help to provide students a better vista as to life lived in each epoch of history covered. Other typical responsibilities in class such as strict deadlines, no make-up examinations, attendance policies, and reflections on the impacts humans have had on the environment promote personal responsibility within LAND240. The learning objective within the syllabus which aids in promoting personal responsibility is:

L.O.2. Understand the impact that human alteration has had on natural systems through time

Strategies used to create/assess an atmosphere of personal responsibility are:

1. Class meetings at buildings on campus which display characteristics of historic design styles in lieu of typical
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lecture meeting rooms

2. The exposure of students to concepts of environmental ethics, cultural diversity, and sensitivity to different life outlooks

3. Concepts covered are also covered in relation to the consequences and outcomes resulting from particular historic actions in an effort to help make students better decision makers.

4. Discussions on the loss of ecological habitat in lieu of built form

5. Strict deadlines and no late/missed work accepted without a doctor’s note

6. Credit for attendance given and zeroes given for missed quizzes and examinations

Please be aware that instructors should be prepared to submit samples/examples of student work as part of the future course recertification process.