# LA 260

**Understanding Landscapes**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>M/W 12:00 pm - 1:50 pm</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Global Scholars Hall 123</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>Michael Geffel</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dept. of Landscape Architecture</td>
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<td>Lawrence Hall, Room 214</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:mgeffel@uoregon.edu">mgeffel@uoregon.edu</a></td>
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<td>Credits</td>
<td>4</td>
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**Course Description**

The goal of this course is to expand your understanding, perception and interpretation of landscape as a design medium. This is a project-based course, centered on making works that seek to break the surface of the visual landscape and understand the actors that create these environments. Invisible processes, histories, culture, people, animals, politics, and events help shape our physical experience of a place - understanding these unseen characteristics allows us to gain a deeper understanding of sites. Readings and lectures will draw from landscape architecture, geography, art theory, and psychology to inform our work and practice. We will explore “ordinary” landscapes as well as designed ones: from the yard to the street, the garden to the farm, the park to the city.

LA 260 is a required course for the Bachelor of Landscape Architecture degree, and serves as an Arts and Letters Core Education elective.

**Eligibility**

This seminar is open to all undergraduate students. No prerequisites.
Class Format

Class meeting times will be organized around lectures and presentations. Outside of class time, students are required to review readings, conduct site research and complete their projects.

Attendance Policy

Due to the potential for unexpected changes in class format, we will not be keeping attendance this term.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course you should demonstrate:
1. An educated way of perceiving the landscape
2. A broad understanding of the interplay of culture and nature in landscapes
3. An ability to make graphically and visually engaging works that help to shift your own and others’ sense of a place

Readings

Required textbooks:


Additional readings will be provided digitally on Canvas.

Grading

This class may be taken for a letter grade or Pass/No Pass. Please consult your departmental curricular requirements regarding classes that may be taken P/NP.

Assessment

20% Environmental Autobiography
20% Lonely Landscape
10% Mid-Term Exam
20% Field Guide
30% Final Exam

Deadlines, Extensions, Incompletes

Assignments are due on or before the beginning of the class period of their due dates, unless otherwise noted. Late assignments are automatically penalized 10% per day, including weekends and holidays. Assignments not submitted after 10 days earn 0 points for the assignment. Exceptions to these policies are rare and must be arranged well before the deadline; email the GE’s as soon as you can if anything may prevent you from meeting a deadline as scheduled.

Expectations

Highest professional standards will be expected and maintained throughout the term. Plagiarism in this class is extremely obvious and will not be tolerated.