The Overlook Field School

The summer field school at Overlook offers students a unique opportunity to study and live on an evolving cultural landscape. With faculty and a visiting artist in residence, students examine the enduring connections between landscape, culture, and production.

Students earn 8-10 University of Oregon credits, while living and learning for four weeks at Overlook, a 400-acre property in northeastern Pennsylvania designed by the Frederick Law Olmsted firm in the early twentieth century and currently being reimagined by the fourth-generation owners and landscape architecture firm Nelson Byrd Woltz.

The program includes multi-day site visits to New York and Philadelphia. Weekly activities include design charrettes, fieldwork, seminars, expert speakers, and site visits to regional cultural and productive sites.

Program Overview

In 2016, the program focuses on the topic of how animals interact with, and shape, the landscape. This topic will be explored through three thematic courses:

**LA 4/507 Field Seminar: Animals as Agents of Change** (2 credits)
Animals constantly shape the landscape, browsing undergrowth, rooting for seeds, building dams. They speed up some ecological processes, slow down or halt others, disperse seeds or suppress plant growth. Often the actions of these landscape agents of change go unnoticed, although the effects can be dramatic. The sheep-grazed hills of Scotland or New Zealand; the empty seed banks along pig drover routes; the wetlands of beaver-dammed streams – all are landscapes actively shaped by animals. This seminar will study the spatial reach of key species, their physical and temporal interaction with the local landscape, and their interactions and conflicts with human use of the land. Through field visits, research and guest lectures, students will develop a landscape architectural typology of human-animal interventions that will inform designs in the charette course.

**LA 4/550 Media: Design Charette** (4-6 credits)
The design charette uses Overlook as a case study to develop ideas from the field seminar. Students will design and build on-site installations that reflect on or reveal the presence of animals in the landscape. Research and prototypes will lead to a group or individual final installations on site and in the land, presented at a final show open to the public.

**LA 4/510 Regional Study Course** (2 credits)
Students will study the designers, theories, and monuments of regional landscapes and landscape architecture through field trips and site visits. In New York and Philadelphia, we visit design firms to discuss contemporary practice, and visit urban parks, infrastructure, and institutions. At Overlook, we explore the geology, ecosystems, and vernacular landscapes of Northeast Pennsylvania, through the lens of animals in the landscape. Sites visited include gardens and museums in the New York and Philadelphia regions, including Storm King Art Center, DIA Beacon, Winterthur, and Longwood Gardens.
ANIMALS
AS LANDSCAPE AGENTS OF CHANGE

Faculty

Roxi Thoren: program director
Thoren is an associate professor of architecture and landscape architecture at the University of Oregon, Director of the Fuller Center for Productive Landscapes, and author of the book Landscapes of Change.

Phoebe Lickwar: 2016 artist in residence
Lickwar is a landscape architect, photographer, and assistant professor of landscape architecture at the University of Arkansas. She teaches design studios as well as courses in theory, representation, and audiovisual research methods. Her photography has been featured in international expositions and her research interests include fieldwork methodology, design pedagogy, and agricultural landscapes. She is currently working on a book entitled Farmscape: The Design of Productive Landscapes.

Past Faculty

Dee Briggs: 2015 artist in residence
Briggs is a sculptor whose large-scale site installations have been shown throughout the US. She trained as an architect, and teaches in both architecture and sculpture departments at Carnegie Mellon.

Design 99 / Gina Reichert and Mitch Cope: 2014 artists in residence
Design 99 was founded to investigate new models of contemporary art and architectural practice. Initially occupying a retail storefront space, the design studio situated itself in the public realm offering over-the-counter design consultations and marketed $99 house call specials. Now embedded in their residential corner of Detroit, Design 99 seeks out opportunities to experiment with art and design within their community.

Costs
Airfare, local travel, and room and board are paid for by the Fuller Center for Productive Landscapes. Local travel includes the field excursions, including travel, hotels, and admission to required sites.

Students pay tuition summer credit hours, according to the Registrar's fee schedule.

Students make their own travel arrangements to and from Overlook. A travel subsidy will be deposited to students’ UO accounts. The amount of the subsidy is based on round-trip airfare from Eugene to Scranton, PA, one checked bag fee each way, and shuttle cost from Scranton to Overlook.

Contact
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2016 Key Program Dates
6/25 Students arrive
6/26 Orientation + opening dinner
6/27 Classes start
6/28 Kayak Tour
7/5 New York trip
7/13 Philadelphia trip
7/23 Closing show
7/24 Students depart

Applications
Admission is through the Landscape Architecture department, and considers academic standing and GPA, as well as relevance of the program to the student's area of study.

January 31
Application deadline for the summer 2016 program.

February 12
Students will be notified of acceptance.

February 26
Student confirmation of offer. All students who are accepted to participate must confirm by this date.

Waiting List
If accepted students decline to participate, waitlisted students will be accepted after the February 26 deadline. These students will have two weeks to confirm their participation.