

HSPV 6210

Heritage and Social Justice

Prof. Randall Mason, HSPV/CPLN/LARP
Spring 2026, Tuesday 5:15-8:15pm (Eastern time)
Fisher-Bennett 139 and Zoom

Office hours: by appointment (please request by emailing me)
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**Heritage and Social Justice is offered in collaboration with Tuskegee University:
Kwesi Daniels (Assoc Professor and Chair) and Taurean Merriweather (Adjunct Lecturer)**

“To accept one’s past – one’s history – is not the same thing as drowning in it;
it is learning how to use it.”

James Baldwin, The Fire Next Time

COURSE INTRODUCTION

This course explores connections between heritage, historic preservation (and related design, planning and artistic practices), and the pursuit of social justice. The central propositions of the course are: (first) that heritage (and its conservation and design) and social justice (and its applications to many professional and practical domains) are both reparative practices; and (second) that exploring connections between these two realms is a worthwhile and even urgent pursuit.

Engaging with scholarship, advocacy and organizing work, research on specific places, and contemporary design practices, we'll frame several overarching questions: How can historic preservation and other design and humanities professionals contribute to more equitable and just societies? How can our professional work be organized to result in greater equity, access, and social justice in the future? How can heritage conservation and other design fields be deployed as means of repair to address longstanding and widespread injustices?

The course foregrounds two particular aspects of social justice that relate clearly to built environments and design professions – racial and environmental -- and will embrace the intersectionality of these and other arenas of social justice. Course activities will focus first on conceptual, theoretical, and historical work (how we think about built heritage and social change; how we conceptualize social justice), then explore practical examples of advancing social outcomes through preservation and design (how social justice concerns reorganize projects, practices, and organizations). After a few weeks of exploring the intellectual contexts, the class will study a few places in depth through several lens of social justice – West Philadelphia; different places in Alabama; the small East African country of Rwanda.

Our explorations will draw on work by designers, historians, public intellectuals, geographers, historians, anthropologists, other social scientists, heritage organizations, artists, entrepreneurs, community organizers, and more. All these kinds of actors – and more – constitute communities-of-practice centering on each of the main concepts of the course. Specific subjects we study will include traditional preservation, historical scholarship, creative placemaking, public art, memorialization, organizing, and managerial-social innovation.

The course is designed as a graduate seminar, so students will have significant agency in finalizing topics, selecting readings, and will take some responsibility for framing and sustaining conversations about class readings and cases. The syllabus, in other words, is more of a starting point than a checklist; expect some of the details to change depending on how our work evolves week-to-week. We might add or subtract topics, find a new reading or film, discover a new case study, etc.

Students' final projects will be individually designed (in consultation with faculty) as explorations of some specific ways that social justice concerns are reshaping heritage and design/conservation practice and how they could (or should) reshape our fields in the future. The projects can take any number of forms – research paper, design project, exhibition, creative nonfiction, etc.

Over the semester, we will work with colleagues at Tuskegee University – adjunct professor Taurean Merriweather, associate professor and chair of architecture Dr. Kwesi Daniels, and undergraduate students – to organize regular joint discussions and workshops as part of our class schedule (working virtually, across our respective semester schedules, and across our varied graduate and undergraduate curricula).

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Learning outcomes for the semester include:

- Understanding of social justice concepts and built heritage as complex, dynamic phenomena with social, environmental, and design dimensions;
- Developing an understanding of how social justice issues relate to matters of heritage, historic preservation, and other design practices;
- Researching and articulating positions on contemporary debates about social justice – emphasizing their connection, expression, and agency with regard to the built environment;
- Articulating and advocating for social justice as a core concern of design professions and practices
- Practicing collaborative dialogue and having difficult conversations around issues where heritage and social justice dynamics are at work;
- Engaging with social justice concepts and practices of repair through the lens of your own experience, in contexts most familiar to you;
- Demonstrating your creative, research, and intellectual skills/interests through your individual works; and
- Developing individual positions on the issues raised by the course, including the future of one's profession, as prompted by social justice debates.

CLASS STRUCTURE

The format of this course is somewhat experimental. We aim to take advantage of a Tuskegee (Taylor)-Penn (Weitzman) partnership that stretches back to 2019 to foster a deeper and more meaningful discussion of the connections between heritage and social justice. Tuskegee students are undergrads enrolled in a preservation elective in the Department of Architecture; the Penn group is graduate students from a variety of programs. Here is our idea for overcoming the challenges of two university schedules, a variety of student curricula, varied graduate and undergraduate learning outcomes, geographic distance between Philadelphia and Tuskegee, and an hour's difference in time zone: In most of the class sessions, we will block out half the time for both schools' groups to connect via Zoom for discussions, presentations, or other activities.

A typical class session for Penn students will be organized something like this:

- **FIRST HALF: 5:15-6:30**
PENN STUDENTS/FACULTY: meeting in person in Fisher-Bennett 139, for short lectures, slide presentations, reading discussions, etc.
- BREAK 6:30-6:45
- **SECOND HALF: 6:45-8:00**
JOINT TUSKEGEE-PENN WORK: presentations/discussion/workshop via Zoom including both Penn and Tuskegee students (and sometimes other guests)

The class readings are organized by "half" so T.U. students can align with us and prepare accordingly for joint discussions. We will undoubtedly learn how to do this better as the semester proceeds, so be prepared for some adjustments! Your ideas on how to choreograph this kind of joint course are very welcome. And I am in discussion with Tuskegee partners about the possibilities for joint sessions in-person (with Tuskegee folks traveling to Philadelphia) later in the semester.

OVERVIEW SCHEDULE AND COURSE OUTLINE

Readings and other media will be available through Canvas, through links provided, or by some other means noted below in the week-by-week schedule.

Week 1 Jan 20 [Penn only] Conceptions of social justice, heritage, and preservation. Key questions. How the course will work.	Week 6 Feb 24 [Penn + TU] Memorials and Racial Justice, take 2	Week 10 Mar 31 [Penn + TU] Disability (Perri Meldon, guest)
Week 2 Jan 27 [Penn + TU] Relating Historic Preservation Practices and Social Justice Issues	Week 7 Mar 3 [Penn + TU] Africatown and the Clotilda	Week 11 Apr 7 [Penn + TU] LGBTQ communities
Week 3 Feb 3 [Penn + TU] Memorials and Racial Justice, take 1	Week 8 Mar 17 [Penn + TU] Social Justice and Heritage in Philadelphia: sites and organizations (Chris Rogers, guest)	Week 12 Apr 14 [Penn + TU] Asian-American communities (Kecia Fong, guest)
Week 4 Feb 10 [Penn only] Environmental Justice	Week 9 Mar 24 [Penn + TU] Repair and Reparation	Week 13 Apr 21 [Penn + TU] Rwanda and genocide heritage
Week 5 Feb 17 [Penn + TU] National parks (Jake Torkelson, guest lecturer for RM)		Week 14 Apr 28 [Penn only] Students' presentations and final roundtable

WEEKLY TOPICS, ACTIVITIES AND MATERIALS TO CONSULT

Week 1, Jan 20 [Penn only]

Conceptions of social justice, heritage, and preservation. Key questions. How the course will work

A couple things we'll read and refer to in class:

- The Constitution of the United States (including the Amendments; available at <https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/constitution>)
- American Civil Liberties Union: <https://www.aclu.org/>
- Southern Poverty Law Center: <https://www.splcenter.org/>
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (digital and translated versions available at <https://www.ohchr.org/en/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>)

NOTE: Prof. Kofi Boone of North Carolina State University, Department of Landscape Architecture, is giving a talk at Weitzman on Jan 22: <https://www.design.upenn.edu/events/kofi-boone-adjust-recovery>

Week 2, January 27 [Penn + TU]

Relating Historic Preservation Practices and Social Justice Issues

FIRST HALF

ALL READ:

Avrami, Erica. Second-Order Preservation. University of Minnesota, 2023. Intro and Chapter 3 [Canvas]

SCAN at least one other Some readings related to the historic preservation field/profession: Recent surveys/reports on preservation's relevance to social issues

- Avrami, Erica, ed. Preservation and Social Inclusion. Columbia Books on Architecture, 2020; intro and some chapters you select) (<https://www.arch.columbia.edu/books/reader/503-preservation-and-social-inclusion>)
- “Are Americans Falling Out of Love with Their Landmarks?” <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2019/07/04/are-americans-falling-out-of-love-with-their-landmarks-227258/>
- Mason, Randall and Kaitlyn Levesque. Preservation and Change: Survey of Attitudes and Opinions in the Historic Preservation Field (<https://www.design.upenn.edu/work/preservation-and-change-survey>)
- Bonnie McDonald: Relevancy Project: <https://www.landmarks.org/resources/preservation-news/introducing-the-relevancy-project/>
- Page, Max. Why Preservation Matters. Yale University Press, 2016. [available as an ebook through Franklin]
- Joy, Charlotte. Heritage Justice. Cambridge Elements, 2020. <https://www-cambridge-org.proxy.library.upenn.edu/core/elements/heritage-justice/F3BA22F77FEB676EE4D8C54E62E5BA9F>
- Alexander, Jeffrey C. “Toward a Theory of Cultural Trauma.” Alexander, J. C., Eyerman, R., Giesen, B., Smelser, N. J., & Sztompka, P., eds. Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity (2004). [Canvas]

SECOND HALF

- Roberts, Andrea. “When Does it become Social Justice? Thoughts on Intersectional Preservation Practice” NTHP Forum, 2017 (<https://forum.savingplaces.org/blogs/special-contributor/2017/07/20/when-does-it-become-social-justice-thoughts-on-intersectional-preservation-practice>) [Canvas]
- Daniels, Kwesi, ed. Change Over Time (Special issue on Civil Rights: Radical Results, Revolutionary Spirit, Community Activism). Volume 12, Number 2, Fall 2023. [available as an ebook through Franklin]

Week 3, February 3 [Penn + TU]

Memorials and Racial Justice, take 1

FIRST HALF: Establishing the issues re Racial justice and heritage

- Upton, Dell. What Can and Can't Be Said: Race, Uplift, and Monument Building in the Contemporary South. (Yale University Press, 2015). Introduction and Chapter 6 [available as an ebook through Franklin]
- Savage, Kirk: <https://monumentlab.com/podcast/civil-war-memory-and-monuments-to-white-supremacy-with-art-historian-kirk-savage>
- Monument Lab's organizational website: <https://monumentlab.com/>
- Smith, Clint. "Monuments to the Unthinkable: America still can't figure out how to memorialize the sins of our history. What can we learn from Germany?" The Atlantic, November 14, 2022. [Canvas]

SECOND HALF: sample the EJI reports, and listen to the NPR interview with Stephenson.

- Cep, Casey. "The Fight to Preserve African-American History." New Yorker, January 27, 2020. (<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2020/02/03/the-fight-to-preserve-african-american-history>)
- Equal Justice Initiative. EJI Reports. (The Transatlantic Slave Trade; Slavery in America; Reconstruction in America; Lynching in America; Segregation in America). <https://eji.org/reports/>
- Brian Stevenson interview on NPR's Fresh Air interview: <https://www.npr.org/2020/01/20/796234496/just-mercy-attorney-asks-u-s-to-reckon-with-its-racist-past-and-present>

Week 4, February 10 [Penn only]
Environmental Justice

FIRST HALF

ALL READ

- Bullard, Robert. "Race and Environmental Justice in the United States," Yale Journal of International Law 18, no. 1 (Winter 1993): 319-336. And browse <https://drrobertbullard.com/>

SCAN AT LEAST ONE:

- Taylor, Dorceta, The Rise of the American Conservation Movement: Power, Privilege, and Environmental Protection. (Duke University Press, 2016). [available as an ebook through Franklin]
- Fullilove, Mindy. Root Shock: How Tearing Up City Neighborhoods Hurts America, And What We Can Do About It (New Village Press, 2016). [available as an ebook through Franklin]
- Jed Purdy, This Land Is Our Land: The Struggle for a New Commonwealth. (Princeton University Press, 2019) [available as an ebook through Franklin]
- Mitchell, Thomas W., "From Reconstruction to Deconstruction: Undermining Black Ownership, Political Independence, and Community Through Partition Sales of Tenancy in Common Property." Northwestern University Law Review, Vol. 95, p. 505, 2001. (https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1544380)
- Flowers, Catherine Coleman. Waste: One Woman's Fight Against America's Dirty Secret. (The New Press, 2020). [selections on Canvas; available as ebook through Franklin]

SECOND HALF

- "Catherine Coleman Flowers: On Environmental Justice and Protecting Holy Ground" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aOPAheF5peU> and/or "Book Talk with Catherine Coleman Flowers | "Waste: One Woman's Fight Against America's Dirty Secret" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dXtXlw4TRYg>
- Bullard, Robert. "Race and Environmental Justice in the United States," Yale Journal of International Law 18, no. 1 (Winter 1993): 319-336– and <https://drrobertbullard.com/>

Week 5, February 17 [Penn + TU]
National Parks

[RM traveling and absent; Jake Torkelson, guest lecturer]

FIRST HALF

ALL READ

- Torkelson, Jake, et al. "Displacement, Segregation, and Memory in the Making of Prince William Forest Park." (forthcoming in ASALH book African Americans and the National Park Service, 1872–1965). [Canvas]

- Stegner, Wallace. "The Best Idea We Ever Had" in Marking the Sparrow's Fall. Henry Holt, 1999. [Canvas]
- Spears, Alan. "No, national parks are not America's 'best idea'." High Country News, April 16, 2016. [Canvas]

SCAN AT LEAST ONE:

- Finney, Carolyn. Black Faces, White Spaces: Reimagining the Relationship of African Americans to the Great Outdoors. (University of North Carolina Press, 2014; available as an ebook through Franklin)... Finney interview: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VPmCUkMOnQI>
- Outdoor Afro website (<https://outdoorafrro.org/>)
- National Register of Historic Places. "U.S. Public Health Service Syphilis Study, Macon County, AL, 1932-1973" [Canvas]

SECOND HALF

- Torkelson, Jake, et al. "Displacement, Segregation, and Memory in the Making of Prince William Forest Park." (forthcoming in ASALH book African Americans and the National Park Service, 1872-1965). [Canvas]
- Stegner, Wallace. "The Best Idea We Ever Had" in Marking the Sparrow's Fall. Henry Holt, 1999. [Canvas]
- Spears, Alan. "No, national parks are not America's 'best idea'." High Country News, April 16, 2016. [Canvas]

Week 6, February 24 [Penn + TU]
Memorials and Racial Justice, take 2

FIRST HALF

- Student-Generated Readings... do your own scan and choose a recent article, book, or other published work on memorials and social justice... submit a copy of the reading to the Canvas assignment "Week 6 reading" [Canvas]
- Alexander, Elizabeth, Marvel Parker, Tiffany Tolbert, Patrick Weems, Justin Hopkins. "Monuments & Justice: Emmett Till and Mamie Till-Mobley National Monument." Forum Journal, Volume 36, Number 1, 2024, pp. 55-75 [Canvas]
- Wright Thompson. The Barn: The Secret History of a Murder in Mississippi. Penguin Press, 2024. (excerpts) [Canvas]
- View the Atlanta History Center's documentary film, Monument: The Untold Story of Stone Mountain available [here](#)
- Read up (in popular media or academic sources) on a memorial/monument in your home country/region, and be prepared to discuss controversies around it in class. Also choose one image of the memorial; submit to the Canvas assignment "Week 6 image"

SECOND HALF

Conversation with guest Devon Henry [not yet confirmed]

- Wright Thompson. The Barn: The Secret History of a Murder in Mississippi. Penguin Press, 2024. (excerpts) [Canvas]

Week 7, March 3 [Penn + TU]
Africatown and the Clotilda

FIRST HALF

- Watch the documentary film Descendant (<https://www.netflix.com/title/81586731>);
- Skim (though read parts in detail) the book Barracoon by Zora Neale Hurston (HarperCollins, 2020; suggested purchase); and

SECOND HALF

- Same as above

[Penn and Tuskegee spring break is the week of March 6-10 – no class meeting this week]

Week 8, March 17 [Penn + TU]**Social Justice and Heritage in Philadelphia: sites and organizations****FIRST HALF**

Place exploration: West Philadelphia

Themes: Displacement and gentrification in Penn's history – Black Bottom; Gosnell Clinic; MOVE

- John Puckett for West Philadelphia History Collaborative. “Once the Black Bottom: The Wheel is Come Full Circle.” <https://collaborativehistory.gse.upenn.edu/stories/once-black-bottom-wheel-come-full-circle>
- Wolf-Powers, Laura. University City: History, Race, and Community in the Era of the Innovation District. (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2022). Introduction and Chapter 1 (available as an ebook through Franklin)
- Mike Africa, Jr. podcast, 50 Years On a MOVE. [start around 5:00] <https://on-a-move-with-mike-africa-jr.simplecast.com/episodes/50-years-on-a-move-7E3mhEcN>

SECOND HALF

Dr. Kwesi Daniels talk on murals, MOVE, and memorializing West Philly.

Guest: Dr. Christopher Rogers, Friends of Tanner House

- Please search and read selectively the recent media coverage of controversies surrounding PennMuseum (for instance, these stories in [NPR](#), [New York Times](#), [NBC10](#), and a series of statements by PennMuseum [here](#) and [here](#)).
- Friends of the Tanner House website: <https://savethetannerhouse.org/>
- Chris Rogers suggests exploring the project [How We Stay Free: Notes On A Black Uprising](#) [here](#).

Week 9, March 24 [Penn + TU]**Repair and Reparation****FIRST HALF:**

Reading:

- Coates, Ta-Nehisi, “The Case for Reparations” [The Atlantic](#), June 2014.
- Smith, Clint. “Monuments to the Unthinkable: How Germany Remembers the Holocaust” [The Atlantic](#), December 2022.
- Franke, Katherine. Repair: Redeeming the Promise of Abolition. (Haymarket Books, 2019).
- Griffin, Farah Jasmine. “What Justice Looks Like.” [Boston Review](#) special issue on Repair, 47/1, 2022.

SECOND HALF:

- Read your own sampling of the many small articles in Places journal’s issues on “Field Notes on Repair”:
 - <https://placesjournal.org/article/field-notes-on-repair-1>
 - <https://placesjournal.org/article/field-notes-on-repair-2>
 - <https://placesjournal.org/article/field-notes-on-repair-3>
 - <https://placesjournal.org/article/field-notes-on-repair-4>

Week 10 March 31 [Penn + TU]**Disability****FIRST HALF**

- Please view the documentary film “Crip Camp” <https://cripcamp.com/>, viewable on Netflix [here](#)
- Judy Heumann’s [TedEX talk](#)
- Gail Dubrow, Laura Leppink and Michael de Lange. Seattle Disability Activism Historic Context Study, December 20, 2024 [Canvas]

SECOND HALF

Guest, Dr. Perri Meldon

- Jade Ryerson, "Section 504 Sit-In of 1977," StoryMap (University of Minnesota, 2023), <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/52465a5f5f6844a78474f5c45dbd7da5>
- Susan Burch, *Committed: Remembering Native Kinship in and beyond Institutions* (University of North Carolina Press, 2021) – read Introduction only. Open Access available at: <https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/76551>
- See attached: Bess Williamson, "Designing Objects and Spaces: A Modern Disability History" in *The Oxford Handbook of Disability History*, eds. Michael Rembis, Catherine Kudlick, and Kim E. Nielsen (Oxford University Press, 2018): 141-160. [Canvas]

**Weeks 11 April 7 [Penn + TU]
LGBTQ Communities**

FIRST HALF

- "LGBTQ+ Public Spaces: Preservation of Historic Queer Landscapes." February 22, 2023. NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZGDC2IVvXK0>
- Explore NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project [website](#)
- Scan [Change Over Time](#) issue 8.2 on LGBTQ heritage
- Graves, Donna and Gail Dubrow. "Taking Intersectionality Seriously: Learning from LGBTQ Heritage Initiatives for Historic Preservation." *The Public Historian*. (2019) 41 (2): 290–316. [on Canvas]

SECOND HALF

- Graves, Donna and Gail Dubrow. "Taking Intersectionality Seriously: Learning from LGBTQ Heritage Initiatives for Historic Preservation." *The Public Historian*. (2019) 41 (2): 290–316. [on Canvas]

**Weeks 12, April 14 [Penn + TU]
Asian-American communities**

FIRST HALF

Guest, Kecia Fong

- Scan [Change Over Time](#) issue 13.1 on Asian American Heritage
- Di Gao, National Trust for Historic Preservation's America's Chinatowns Project (<https://savingplaces.org/chinatowns>)
(<https://savingplaces.org/stories/chinatown-google-arts-and-culture>)
(<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/3fa093b1c6194409ac979b03a4e77ed6>)

SECOND HALF

Guest, Calvin Nguyen, APIAHIP (Asian & Pacific Islander Americans in Historic Preservation)

- APIAHIP website: <https://apiahip.org/>
- Scan [Change Over Time](#) issue 13.1 on Asian American Heritage

**Weeks 13, Apr 21 [Penn + TU]
Rwanda and genocide memory**

FIRST HALF

- Longman, Timothy. *Memory and Justice in Post-Genocide Rwanda*. (Cambridge University Press, 2017). Introduction and Chapter 9 (available as an ebook through Franklin).
- Mukasonga, Scholastique. *Cockroaches*. (trans. Jordan Stump; Archipelago Books, 2016). [excerpt on Canvas]

- Mason, Randall. "Carrying Weight: Rwandan Genocide Memorials," Platform (May-June, 2020). (<https://www.platformspace.net/home/carrying-weight-rwandan-genocide-memorials>; and <https://www.platformspace.net/home/carrying-weight-rwandan-genocide-memorials-part-2>)
- Gourevitch, Philip. "After the Genocide." *The New Yorker* (<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1995/12/18/after-the-genocide>) and "Remembering in Rwanda." *The New Yorker* (<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/04/21/remembering-in-rwanda>)

SECOND HALF

- Choose and read one of the articles above

Week 14 Apr 28 [Penn only]

Students' presentations and final roundtable

- Short project presentations and full-group discussion with Penn group
- Final project due date is still May 3.

ASSIGNMENTS and GRADING

[1] Brief position paper on Class 2 readings

Write a short essay (2-3 pages; 500-750 words) staking out a position/argument for why historic preservation and social justice issues should or should not be connected. The essay should draw on at least two of the readings assigned for Class 2 (more if you like, and using other, unassigned readings is fine too!). Due before the start of Class 3; it will account for 15% of total grade.

[2] Reaction paper on Descendant / Barracoon

After watching *Descendant* and reading at least parts of *Barracoon*, write a short paper (2-3 pages; 500-750 words) paper about the issues raised, the media of documentary film-making and oral history, and the takeaways for yourself and for general audiences. Due before the start of Class 7; it will account for 15% of total grade.

[3] Help start a class session

Prepare a short, 5-minute spoken introduction to help start or redirect one of the class discussion sessions – in weeks 2, 3, 5-13. (In Class 1 I'll ask you to sign up for your preferred session.) To support your short talk, create one slide to share with the class, articulating at least three discussion topics/questions you think would center us on the built environment/social justice nexus. You are encouraged to research beyond the syllabus' suggested readings and seek additional perspectives and insights on the topic. This will account for 20% of total grade.

[4] Final project

Conceive and complete a long-form creative/analytical project on some issue connecting heritage and social justice. It could be a theme from the course or something we did not cover. These projects could take a variety of forms (combining visual, textual, and other modes of work), but I suggest you include in your research at least one interview with a figure central to your chosen topic (an activist, academic, funder, public official, etc.). Ideally, when combined at the end of the term, these projects can be presented as a semester-end collective digital exhibition/publication on course themes.

A one-page proposal for your semester-end project is due before Spring Break. This is a separate Canvas assignment due by March 6. The proposal should clarify the purpose, the methods, and the final form of the work. I'll have a one-on-one discussion with you based on that. The final project is due May 3 (one week after

your in-class presentations summarizing the project on April 28/Week 14). The total project will account for 40% of total grade (10% proposal; 30% final project).

[5] Participation and engagement in class

You are expected to attend all class sessions, participate in exercises and discussions to the greatest extent possible, and generally be intellectually present and engaged. 10% of total grade.

ADMINISTRATION, GROUND RULES, AND RESOURCES

Grading

Individual assignments will be graded on a point system (“12 out of 15”). Final letter grades for the course will be figured on the basis of these assignments and expectations, in light of the course Learning Outcomes. The grading rubric follows below. General guidelines for course letter grades are as follows: A+ Exceptional; A Outstanding; A- Excellent; B+ Very good; B Good; B- Competent; C+ Fair; C Acceptable; C- Marginal; F Failure.

<u>Overall grading rubric:</u>	Assignment 1	15%
	Assignment 2	15%
	Assignment 3	20%
	Assignment 4	40%
	<u>Assignment 4</u>	<u>10%</u>
	Total	100%

General Guidance on Written Assignments

Good writing is important—and quality will factor in the grading of every written assignment. Grades will reflect the content and persuasiveness of your writing, your willingness to advance new ideas, your grasp of the course’s issues, as well as conformity with scholarly and professional conventions and the mechanics of good writing (spelling, grammar, paragraph structure, and so on).

Conventions of academic and professional writing are essential to successful professional work. You will use standard forms of footnoting and clear bibliographic referencing to record the sources on which your work relies. The Chicago Manual of Style (available online through PennLibraries) should be your guide.

All written assignments must employ the following formatting:

- 10-12 point type
- 1.5 line spacing
- At least 1” side margins and 1” top/bottom margins
- Page numbers
- Footnotes or endnotes, following the Chicago Manual of Style
- Submit assignments electronically, as a Word file or pdf via Canvas.

If you feel (or are told) that you need to improve your writing skills beyond class work and assignments, there are many resources on which to draw. For one, you can make an appointment to talk to your instructor. Assistance in becoming a better writer is abundantly available on campus at Penn’s Writing Center and the Weingarten Learning Resources Center. We encourage you to explore these websites (they have multiple programs) and make an appointment with the counselors. Additionally, there are two reference works you are expected to know and use: Strunk and White’s The Elements of Style (there are many editions) and the Chicago Manual of Style. The former is a classic work on the craft of writing and is very useful in self-critique. The latter explains the proper formatting of footnotes, bibliographies, and other elements of scholarly writing; it is available in print and online.

Academic Integrity & Classroom Culture

Academic integrity is the foundation of the University's culture of learning and research. Everyone, at all times, is expected to abide by the principles set out in the [University's Code of Academic Integrity](#). Students with questions or concerns about plagiarism or any other issues regarding academic integrity or the classroom environment are welcome to approach the professor in confidence. You can also refer to the [Weitzman Student Handbook](#) for academic and other policies that must be followed.

Classroom culture

The School's commitment to diversity, inclusion, justice and belonging, is worth repeating and contemplating here. I will work hard to abide by this; I always welcome conversations and suggestions about improving the experience of the course for you.

“The University of Pennsylvania Stuart Weitzman School of Design is committed to creating an educational setting in which all students, faculty members, and staff members are valued. We strive to create an inclusive culture that celebrates difference and is strengthened by contributions from people of all races, religions, countries of origin, genders, ages, sexual orientations, physical abilities, learning differences, and socioeconomic backgrounds. We aspire to support and retain a student body, faculty and staff who are representative of the multiple communities and publics with which we collaborate and work. A diverse community here enhances our ability to prepare the next generation of artists, architects, landscape architects, planners, and preservationists to become leaders and innovators in a multicultural society.”

Use of digital devices and wireless internet access during class time must be confined to course-related activities (essentially for reference or note-taking). Uses unrelated to the course can be distracting to others in the classroom. This will be monitored and managed throughout the semester; if it becomes an ongoing issue, it could result in loss of in-class internet access, or dismissal from a class session.

About the use of AI tools

Artificial intelligence technologies present challenges to traditional concepts of academic integrity. As AI tools are more widely available and adopted, it seems wise to address their use specifically.

AI use inhibits many of the kinds of learning and habits of mind we want to cultivate in this course and encourage in your professional development. In addition, the high environmental costs, ethical quandaries regarding intellectual property, and confusion of authorship that have come with wide adoption of AI give us pause.

AI tools can be helpful in brainstorming, data-scraping, organizing, or other preliminary research tasks. It is never adequate for completing assignments. We'll discuss the uses of AI occasionally as a class (and even apply it selectively in class activities). Bear in mind the material generated by these programs is often inaccurate, incomplete, or otherwise problematic. Relying on it will limit your own independent thinking and creativity. This said, I regard critical, highly selective use of AI tools as a legitimate means of supporting the research and organization of our work. I strongly discourage use of AI (whether LLMs or image-based) to write or otherwise produce creative work (final versions in particular).

Assignments for this course are to be conceived, designed, and written by you personally. Everyone must abide by traditional standards of transparency and accountability in academic and professional ethics. Report what you use; give credit where it is due; everything under your name is your responsibility. If you feel compelled to use AI, you must disclose and document its use as part of your work deliverables (for instance, in a separate “methodological note”). If you use AI tools without disclosing it, this could be considered a violation of Penn’s Code of Academic Integrity.

Academic and Support Resources

I want to ensure that everyone has the resources they want or need in order to participate fully in this course. Students who are differently abled are welcome let me know if you need special accommodations in the curriculum, activities, instruction or assessments of this course to enable you to participate fully. I will keep all conversations confidential. You can refer to the [Weingarten Center](#) for assistance.

The University provides a number of resources to support improvement of your writing, studying and learning skills. I encourage you to take advantage of them. The following University-wide points of contact may be helpful:

The [Marks Family Writing Center](#) provides individual help with writing. The [Weingarten Learning Resources Center](#) provides support and guidance on a range of academic work issues, including time management and organizational skills. [Communication within the Curriculum](#) offers guidance on speaking and making effective presentations. [Weigle Information Commons in Van Pelt Library](#) is a clearing house to these and other sources of support. And [Career Services](#) offers assistance on a number of issues related to academic work – as well as post-academic job searching and career advice.

As always, the School of Design's Student Services office, and [the University's Wellness resources](#), are ready to help with any issues that arise in or outside the classroom. Please don't hesitate to take advantage of these folks' ability and eagerness to support you.

In this and every other course in the School, you are welcome to make an individual appointment to talk to your instructor. Please email me directly, at any time, to arrange an appointment or have a conversation.