

Course Focus

HORT 225: Landscape Graphics I

By Rebekah VanWieren



The last words I include in this course's syllabus are "Be fearless." This course is the introductory course to the Landscape Design major and challenges students to learn and apply hand drawing and drafting skills needed to, ultimately, create spaces that bring out the best in people and our planet. However, more importantly, my goal for this course is that students gain motivation to explore, take risks, and be fearless in their endeavor to develop their own unique graphic representation styles.

The course begins by looking at the diversity of work that the landscape design field encompasses and the design process that landscape designers utilize. The majority of the course is spent learning and exploring the various graphic communication tools used to visualize and represent physical design ideas, from early brainstorming and inquiry through realization. Although graphics are not design in and of themselves, this course teaches the fundamental ways to begin thinking and working like a landscape designer. HORT 225 Landscape Graphics I focuses on hand graphics, while HORT 226 Landscape Graphics II compliments this course by introducing digital graphic techniques. Today, much of the graphics used in the landscape architecture field are produced digitally; however, traditional hand graphics still play a crucial role especially in the early stages of design, including site analyses, schematic design sketching, and illustrating design proposals. Next year, I plan to incorporate some tradigital (traditional + digital) techniques that highlight the character of hand graphics along with the efficiency and accuracy of digital representation.

In this studio-based course, students also begin to establish the work habits of the design field. The format incorporates a variety of methods, including in-class lecture, tutorials, individual and group exercises, outdoor sketching, sketchbooks, and critiques. One of the assignments this semester was a sketch crawl, in which students applied perspective drawing and rendering (that's a fancy word designers use for coloring) skills to representing the experience of the Main Street to Mountains trail system.

For the final course project, students illustratively represented the landscape and site plan for a new, expanded parking and plaza space at Bozeman's main Co-op location. You are welcome to check out their work, as well as their course portfolios, at our final review: Thursday, December 12, 9:00 AM in 108 PBB.