

# ALA100

# Intro to Environmental Design

Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts

Fall 2021, August 19<sup>th</sup> – October 8<sup>th</sup>, Session A

*“Just because something works doesn’t mean it can’t be improved.”*  
- Princess Shuri, Black Panther

*“Do stuff. Be clenched, curious. Not waiting for inspiration’s shove or society’s kiss on your forehead. Pay attention. It’s all about paying attention. It’s all about taking in as much of what’s out there as you can, and not letting the excuses and the dreariness of obligations narrow our lives. Attention is vitality. It connects you with others. It makes you eager. Stay eager.”* - Susan Sontag



“Year in Ideas” New York Times Magazine 2004

**Nikolas Smilovsky, PhD, GISP**  
**Instructor, The Design School**  
Dr. Nikolas Smilovsky  
Nikolas.Smilovsky@asu.edu

### Office hours

By Zoom appointment only,  
scheduled via email:  
[asu.ala100@gmail.com](mailto:asu.ala100@gmail.com)

### Class dates

05/17 – 06/25

### Teaching Assistants / Graders

Emily Olive, Peter Price, Oliva  
Forish, Susana Becerra Galicia, &  
Kritikia Sharma

### Catalogue description

#### **ALA 100: An Introduction to Environmental Design** (3 credit hours)

Survey of Environmental Design: including historical examples, and the theoretical, social, technical, and environmental forces that influence design and shape our contemporary environment. Prerequisites: none. Satisfies General Studies Requirements: HU (Humanities/Fine Arts), G (Global awareness), H (Historical awareness).

### Course overview

*“Education is the ability to perceive the hidden connections between phenomena.”*  
- Vaclav Havel

Our environment not only sustains our lives, but constantly evolves and is changed through our daily actions or lack thereof. Without any doubt all of us are “designers” who shape the future

environment that our children will inherit at many scales, whether our natural landscapes, cities, buildings, interiors, virtual worlds, or a cherished gift that we hold in our hand. In this course, we will collectively discover what design is, how design comes about, and why design is important to your life, and our evolving environment. We will strive for a deeper understanding of the major ideas, conditions and forces, which are influencing design today, both locally and globally, and in turn shaping our contemporary global environment. The appreciation of design is not merely the task of learning facts, historic styles or media fashions, but rather is a matter of developing a consciousness of yourself and your evolving environment, and then taking responsibility for your role as a “designer” to act now to enhance and sustain life every day within our global community.

### Instructional objectives

*“The real voyage of discovery consists not of seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes.”*  
- Marcel Proust

We will help you:

- 1) Develop an awareness of what design is, how design comes about, and why design is important.
- 2) Develop an ability to see the world through a designers eyes – to observe and read your environment, not just glance and pass by, but to slow down and open your senses fully to new experiences and opportunities. Our interest is to help you look carefully at the inherent knowledge of your immediate environment - how to perceive it, how to think critically about it, how to represent it, how to use it - and how those readings of a specific environment can inform and enhance your life.
- 3) Develop an awareness and respect for the diversity of global environments, their respective cultures, and designs, which reflect the fundamental beliefs, and values of individuals, families, and institutions within a specific community and place.
- 4) Develop an awareness of the world around you through the eyes of environment design.

### Instructional methodology

*“Stepping onto a brand-new path is difficult, but not more difficult than remaining in a situation...”* - Maya Angelou

Our teaching is committed to assisting each of you in your pursuit of mastery, lifelong learning that influences how you see, feel, question, think and act - rather than short term performance based education: simply memorizing known facts and recalling them on exams.

### **This course will be challenging and engaging.**

It will immerse you in the exciting pursuit of ideas and answers to the bigger questions, which are shaping contemporary design, our environment, and your own life. Foundational concepts and their real world applications will be introduced first in our illustrated lectures and supplemented by hearing from a series of Arizona’s leading designers, who will be joining us for our Inside the Designer’s Studio sessions. Deep personal learning will occur as you apply your new design understanding in our Collaborative Design Challenge, which will require you to go out into the local environment, and actively see, feel, question, think and act.

## Evaluation, Feedback, and Grading

Within this course, your work will be carefully examined, evaluated and graded. You should not confuse feedback or evaluation with grading. **Feedback** is a process of discussion in which your ideas and observations are themselves modified, corrected, and strengthened. **Evaluation** is a critic of a performance to appraise and mentor a future trajectory of intellectual growth (Mastery). **Grading** on the other hand is an index of a relative standing against a grading standard or norm for a particular peer group (your Collaborative Design Group). Within this course all feedback, evaluation and grading will be done collectively by both your Group and Instructors.

### 1) Time management

Time management is a well-known problem for 87% of beginning college students. Purchase a calendar and use it or use the calendar on your smartphone – put all our course deadlines and your study times on it today. Keep ahead of the deadlines by **working on this class for one-hour everyday** (the rule of thumb is for each 3 credit course = 6 hours a week of homework), rather than waiting until the last minute to complete poor design challenges, weak videos, or the last minute writing of unprepared answers during the online discussion sessions.

### 2) Attendance and excused absences

As with any high-quality professional position, or within any leading edge design practice, your active participation each and every day is mandatory. To succeed you will need to watch and review the class notes for every lecture, to insure you develop an understanding of the ideas and skills you will need to successfully complete the Design Challenge and gain full benefits from this course. Also, like working globally today, **you must remain in constant contact EVERY DAY with your Collaborative Design Group members**, (via cellphone, text, Google hangout, Adobe connect, Skype, Zoom and email) because all your assignments are completed in individually, but peer reviewed and graded – preparing you for the norm in your future professional career.

**Late or incomplete work is never accepted.** The only exceptions are:

- 1) excused absences due to a serious illness under a doctor's care, hospitalization, a family death/tragedy, or another serious life altering event;
- 2) excused absences related to religious observances/practices that are in accord with ACD 304–04, Accommodation for Religious Practices; or
- 3) excused absences related to an ASU sanctioned events/activities that are in accord with ACD 304–02, Missed Classes Due to University-Sanctioned Activities. After receiving a pdf documenting your event, an excused absence will be granted and you will be allowed to complete the assignment in the same amount of time you were absent.

### 3) Your required readings and class content

Lectures and readings available on our class website. **Please be sure to review the schedule document, design challenge document, and the extra credit document.**

### 4) Our class web site

To access the site:

- Go to <https://courses.hol.asu.edu/courses/ala100/>
- If prompted, log in with your ASURITE name and password
- You can also find a link to the site on the main Herberger Online site at <https://herbergeronline.asu.edu>

Posted on our class web site are: your syllabus, schedule, lectures, lecture notes, access to your assigned Collaborative Design Group, the Design Challenge assignment, announcements, and your grades. Take the time to familiarize yourself with the location and operation of all of them. Caution - **using your MyASU canvas link to our website is not advised**, Canvas outages can happen, and citing a canvas outage as the reason for missing a submission is not accepted.

#### 5) **Your Collaborative Design Group**

You have been assigned automatically to a Collaborative Design Group to study and work with to complete your Design Challenge assignments.

How to locate your Collaborative Design Group:

- Log on to the “ALA 100 – Introduction to Environmental Design” web site (see directions above)
- Click on the “My Group” tab.
- At the bottom of that page, you’ll see a list of everyone in your group, email them ASAP get connected and organized.

Given the nature of your work on the Design Challenge, you must stay in constant daily contact with your assigned Collaborative Design Group members. Exchange email addresses and cell numbers immediately. **If you choose not to stay in daily contact** (via cellphone, text, Google + hangouts, Adobe Connect, Skype and email) with your Collaborative Design Group in completing your assignment reviews/responses, **then your group’s peer grades of your work will suffer.**

#### 6) **Our Design Challenge**

The real test of whether anyone has really learned and understood a body of newly acquired body of knowledge is to simply ask them to apply it to a real life problem. **You will be working in a randomly assigned Collaborative Design Group on a required Design Challenges with two major sections.**

You will explore the concepts and steps of design through a comprehensive project involving a 1a) virtual scavenger hunt of the different disciplines of design, 1b) an exploration of chairs and seating areas in your local neighborhood, and 2) the conceptual design of the “perfect seat and sitting space.” The project has three distinct, but interwoven sections that will be completed individually and discussed with your assigned Collaborative Design Group. For more details refer to the course website or please email an instructor.

#### 7) **Online Group Discussions for Design Challenge**

Following the completion of the Design Challenge sections, you and your Group members will be required to engage in an Online Discussion about the ideas, methods and significance of the design work you have just completed. On the dates indicated, you will need to participate throughout the day in your Collaborative Design Group’s Online Discussion. **Be**

**sure to answer the required questions. In every post, thoughtfully respond to your Group member's ideas and observations supported by detailed "quoted examples" from our lectures, textbook and daily *New York Times* readings.** Remember no credit will be given for late postings or missed assignments!

### **How do I post my Design Challenge Group Discussion?**

- Log on to our "ALA 100 – Introduction to Environmental Design" web site.
- Click on the "My Group" tab.
- Under "Group Discussions" find the entry for the appropriate part of the Design Challenge. If it is before the submission deadline, the discussion will still be open; you will see a link in the Action column labeled "Discuss."
- Click on the "Discuss" link. You should now see the Discussion Area for your group, for this Design Challenge only.
- In the User Agreement, enter your name and check the box labeled "Confirm Your Agreement." When you have done that, click "Enter Assessment."
- You should now be looking at the form for the appropriate Design Challenge.
- In the first box, paste your YouTube URL hyperlink.
- In the second box, type your 200 word summary introduction - remember to always check the grammar and spelling. Think of this more as a term paper than an e-mail, you will be marked down for the use any shorthand (texting) or failure to capitalize. Now read your response out loud.
- Click "Submit."
- If everything worked, you should see a receipt page and a message indicating that the Challenge is complete. You may want to print or screen grab this page for your records.

### **How do I read/respond to other members of my Collaborative Design Group's posts?**

- Log on to our "ALA 100 – Introduction to Environmental Design" website.
- Click on the "My Group" tab.
- Under "Group Discussions" find the entry for the appropriate Design Challenge. If it is before the submission deadline, the discussion will still be open; you will see a link in the Action column labeled "Discuss."
- Click on the "Discuss" link. You should now see the Discussion Area for your group, for this Design Challenge only.
- Each post by a fellow group member will have a "Reply" button. Click that button to post a reply.
- Enter your response in the "message" box - be sure to read your response out loud and check the grammar and spelling, prior to submitting.
- Finally post it by clicking on "Post Reply."

**For Each Group discussion you need to prepare all your posts a minimum of one week in advance.**

After you complete your design challenge, it's time to discuss the content of your work in a group discussion. Check out the sample posts on the class website located under the calendar. Please keep in mind the sample posts were create based on a different design Challenge. Create a word file a minimum of a week before hand. Email it to all the members, and have each group member write out and share all their thoughtful, well written,

4-5 sentence posts one week prior to the due date. Then on the date of the group discussion, all each member does is cut-n-paste their posts on to the website.

If you encounter any technical problems with our course web site: First, contact Herberger Online Help Desk by email at [holsupport@asu.edu](mailto:holsupport@asu.edu). There is a “Help” tab on the course website that has a link to that address also, as well as a link to an online Help Form. Make sure to provide as much detail as you can about the problem you have encountered – so we can quickly help you.

8) **Special accommodations**

To request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact the ASU Disability Resource Center (<http://www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/ed/drc/#> ; Phone: (480) 965-1234; TDD: (480) 965-9000). This is a very important step as accommodations may be difficult to make retroactively. If you have a letter from their office indicating that you have a disability which requires academic accommodations, in order to assure that you receive your accommodations in a timely manner, please send this documentation to the instructor no later than the end of the first week of the semester so that your needs can be addressed effectively.

9) **ASU Student Code of Conduct, academic dishonesty and plagiarism**

Please review the ASU Student Code of Conduct <https://students.asu.edu/srr/code> and ASU policy against disruptive or threatening behavior [SSM 104-02](#). Any act of academic dishonesty, such as plagiarism, will result in your *automatic failure of the course* and a final course grade of E. Plagiarism is the act of using designs, words and the ideas of others as if they are your own. By citing sources correctly, you give credit to the originator of the words and ideas you are using, you give your readers the information they need to consult those sources directly, and build their own credibility. Young college students sometime get into trouble because they mistakenly assume that plagiarizing and mashing up is ok, it is not. If you are unsure or have any questions, regarding these policies, academic dishonestly or plagiarism, please ask one of your instructors to explain it.

10) **Grading**

**We want to be sure that all grading in our class is fair and equitable. We only discuss grades FACE-TO-FACE (via Zoom), not by email, text or phone (if you are an out-of-state student we will use Zoom).** Please contact the particular instructor who graded your assignment and set up a meeting. Next write out the reason for your proposed grade change and bring all the supporting materials with you to our meeting (for Zoom meetings, you will send this electronically in advance). Understand that your grade may go up or down based on our re-examination.

**Required**

Online quizzes on lectures and readings (60 questions, 0.50 point each) -	30
Design Challenge Section #1 -	35
Design Challenge Section #2 -	<u>35</u>
Total:	100 points

A+ 97 % and above	B 84-86 %	D 70-73%
A 94-96 %	B- 80-83 %	E 69% and below
A- 90-93 %	C+ 77-79 %	XE Failure due to dishonesty
B+ 87-89 %	C 74-76 %	Y Satisfactory

**Important notes:**

1) Remember late work is never accepted and there is only one extra credit assignment defined independent to design challenges.

2) To insure equity and fairness for every student enrolled in this course, we will not round up or down the cumulative final points you earn.

**11) Course drop or withdrawal**

If you wish to drop or withdraw from this course, it is your responsibility to do so by the deadlines. You need to drop before **October 8<sup>th</sup>**. See <https://students.asu.edu/academic-calendar> to confirm these dates and requirements. Any course registration changes are processed through My ASU: <http://my.asu.edu>.