

PORTLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE
ARCH 113 SITE PLANNING
SPRING 2021
CRN 20145 2 Credits
Tuesday 12:00-15:50

SYLVANIA CAMPUS
Peter Gramlich
peter.gramlich@pcc.edu
remote via D2L

OVERVIEW:

Components of internationalization in ARCH 113, Site Planning.

Course catalog description:

Covers site development, including surveying existing grades, locating existing and future buildings, locating driveways, controlling erosion, managing stormwater and drawing site plans.

Course outcomes:

Interpret information obtained from site plan drawings and apply to design projects.

Construct site plan drawings using raw site information and site survey data.

Apply basic concepts of site water management and erosion control and communicate strategies and requirements to clients and consultants.

Instructor statement:

The Site Planning class is a key prerequisite for all architecture students before they move on to their studios, which form the crux of the learning for the AAS degree. I recreated the course in 2011 to reflect modern trends and technology, and update and revise it regularly. I teach it twice a year, each spring (10 weeks) and summer (8 weeks) term.

The gist of the class is to get students to think beyond the design of the home. Yes, they probably enrolled in the program because they enjoy floor plans and elevations. But nothing gets built without understanding how the home connects to the site, and all that entails: we do a pretty deep dive on civil engineering, with a good dose of sustainable land use strategies mixed in.

To that end, while the focus of the course is appropriately and necessarily on the Portland market into which the students will be graduating, I've found it valuable to expand the discussion into international arenas.

Western Europe is a generation or two ahead of us in preservation of land, respect for natural ecosystems and smart strategies to blend construction and conservation. I grew up in southern Germany, speak the language and have been back to western Europe regularly, most recently the summer of 2018. Each time I collect images and data to reinforce lessons for coursework. It is these materials that form the bulk of the international component of the course.

International components in ARCH 113:

The **Week 1 Overview** slide show and lecture feature 54 images I've taken and moves from local (Portland) further afield to Bend, New Orleans and the Stuttgart region of Germany. It tries to place coursework in a global context in the first class.

The **Week 2 Global Cities** slide show and discussion focus on a global problem, rising sea levels. I provide my own images of glacial melt in Alaska, and move on to a survey of world cities. This is the most directly international portion of the course. I've noticed students are fascinated by talking about other cultures, and several are motivated to share from their own backgrounds. It's very gratifying.

The **Week 4 Stormwater Management** slide show and lecture convey best practices for this important topic in architecture and engineering. We again move from the local (Portland) to broad (Germany and Switzerland).

The **Week 6 Site Sections and Profiles** slide show and discussion focus, for the first time, on section views of sites (and not just plans). We expand the scope from individual plots of land to a larger scale: mountain profiles, marathon courses, races and hikes. One of these is the Inca Trail in Peru: a past student shared that with us, and I've used her image and experience in subsequent course sections.

The Projects 1 thru 7 document lists all ARCH 113 assignments. It necessarily focuses on a Portland-area site: students begin by drawing property and setback lines, then progressively add contours, a building, driveway and patio. From there they reshape the land per what they've learned, and draw site sections for 2 projects. A 2-week final project asks them to apply all of that to the SW Portland site they'll use for their Fall ARCH 201 studio. So while there isn't a compulsory international component to the projects they do, internationalization is embedded in the learning.

A new wrinkle happening now, in late May 2021:

Our Architecture department has recently forged an exciting practicum/partnership with the City of Portland's BDS (Bureau of Development Services). They're the building permit people. Our students work with their Equity and Policy Development Group to address a common problem: minority, largely non-English-speaking populations need help moving through the building permit process. The city calls it the Empowered Neighborhoods Program; Ami Fitzgerald is the coordinator and our contact.

A common example is a foreign immigrant adds an unpermitted kitchen to open an ethnic food-service business; the city, to its credit, doesn't seek punitive remedies but instead has our students work with the client to produce drawing sets and move through the permit and approvals process on a fast track. The list of people seeking this win-win remedy is VERY long, and our students can have as much work and real-life experience as they wish.

The program appeals in particular to those students of ours who are speakers of other languages, since the majority of the clients don't speak English. As such our students are exposed to other cultures and norms.

Here's how this relates to the ARCH 113 class: BDS had a recent audit that showed how difficult it is to permit work. Many clients get stuck on the site plan. The city's communications team reached out to me to see if we could set up a program where clients could have site plan development completed by

my students. We have this meeting next week, on June 2. If everyone's on board, starting this 2021 summer term, I will offer an alternative final project for this course, where students could opt to work with the Empowered Neighborhood program on developing site plans for local, foreign-born immigrants.

Lastly:

I know there's a lot here. I will produce a Kaltura video that walks the viewer through the above internationalization-focused materials and tries to tie it all together. This way other faculty can engage and learn what we've been up to.