

IDS 2935

Gardens: Between Nature and Culture

Quest 1

I. Course Information

Quest 1 Theme: Nature and Culture

Spring 2022

Meeting Day/Time: Tuesday period 4; Thursday periods 4-5

Location: Tuesdays Leigh Hall 104; Thursdays Architecture 215

Primary General Education Humanities Statement:

Humanities courses provide instruction in the history, key themes, principles, terminology, and theory or methodologies used within a humanities discipline or the humanities in general. Students will learn to identify and to analyze the key elements, biases and influences that shape thought. These courses emphasize clear and effective analysis and approach issues and problems from multiple perspectives.

A minimum grade of C is required for general education credit. Courses intended to satisfy the general education requirement cannot be taken S-U.

Instructor Information

- Victoria Pagán, PhD – vepagan@ufl.edu
- Office location: 115C Dauer Hall
- Office hours: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 5 and by appointment via zoom
- Phone: (352) 273-3696

Course Description

Why do we create gardens? Such a question invites investigation from a variety of disciplines: landscape architecture; art history; history; literature; philosophy. Gardens are cultural artifacts that are embedded in the natural world; they exist between nature and culture. While gardens may seem permanent, and even eternal (think of Eden or Paradise), they are in fact ephemeral spaces that change with every passing moment. As places where life blooms and decays, gardens remind us of the essential fact of our mortality even as they promise eternity. In this course we will discover that gardens are beautiful and emotional, but also political and ideological. Above all, gardens are enclosures, and so they continually invite transgression and beg the questions, who is allowed in the garden, who are gardens for? Drawing on Homer's *Odyssey*, Vergil's *Georgics*, select writings by African American women and others, the many gardens on the University of Florida campus, and objects at the Harn Museum of Art, we will explore the essential question: why do we create gardens?

Recommended Course Materials (to purchase/rent)

We will read four books in their entirety, so it is best if you can purchase them. We will read them in this order:

1. McKay, George. 2011. *Radical Gardening: Politics, Idealism and Rebellion in the Garden*. London.
2. Robert Pogue Harrison. 2008. *Gardens: An Essay on the Human Condition*. Chicago.
3. Fallon, Peter, translator. 2006. *Virgil: Georgics*, with an Introduction and Notes by Elaine Fantham. Oxford World's Classics. Oxford.
4. Emily Wilson, translator. 2017. *The Odyssey by Homer*. W. W. Norton.

All other readings provided in Canvas. There is no Materials and Supplies Fee for this class.

II. Coursework & Schedule

1. List of Graded Work

Assignment	Description	Requirements	Points
Discussion Board Posts (DBPs)	To help prepare for class discussion, you will contribute discussion board posts via Canvas on select readings before the class meeting.	4 DBPs @ 25 points each	100
UF Garden	Visit a garden on the UF campus and compose a "Spark Story" in which you (1) describe the physical features that make the space a proper garden as per the definition developed in discussion based on the essays by St-Denis and Hunt; (2) describe your emotional response to the garden; and (3) conjecture about the meaning of the garden to the UF community. In what ways is the garden a site of contest as defined by McKay?	Spark Story	150
Wilmot Garden	Based on our class visit to Wilmot Garden compose a "Spark Story" in which you (1) describe the activities that take place in the garden; (2) identify the labor force(s) that maintain the garden; and (3) discuss the social and even political impact of the garden on the immediate community. Connect the horticultural therapy program to Harrison's ideas about therapy and care in chapter 12.	Spark Story	150
Harn Visual Analysis	Based on our class visit to the Harn Museum, find a work in the museum that is a visual representation of a garden. Using what you've learned in class, write a 500-word analysis of the representation of time. How does the work of art convey the temporality of the garden? To what extent is the work of art an "afterlife," to use Hunt's term?	500 words	150

Homer Analytical Essay	Some might object to the inclusion of Homer's <i>Odyssey</i> on the syllabus for a class on gardens. Defend the choice. What does this poem have to do with gardens? What themes in the poem contribute to our understanding of the gardens? Drawing on our theoretical readings, be sure to back up your thesis with evidence from the text.	1000 words	300
Final Reflection	Write a personal statement for admission to graduate or professional school, or a cover letter, in which you describe how this class has prepared you for your future career. What practical applications, writing skills, social applications, critical thinking or other abilities have you developed this semester that contribute to your professional development?	250 words	50
Attendance	Attendance will be taken using “Roll Call” in Canvas. Your grade is based on the number of times you attend divided by the number of times our class meets. The UF policy on absences will be followed.	See below	100
<i>Note on Weekly Reading</i>	Readings are drawn from books, scholarly journal articles, chapters in books, and works of literature. Although the number of pages will seem high, please note that the <i>Odyssey</i> and <i>Georgics</i> are poems, so that much of the page is “white space.” All of our readings are richly illustrated, which also adds to the page count.		
TOTAL			1000

2. Weekly Course Schedule

Week/ Date	Activity	Topic/Assignment (Question/Subject)	Assigned Work Due
Week 1	Topic	Defining Gardens: What is a garden?	
1/ 6	Introduction	Expectations (yours and mine); Logistics	
Week 2	Topic	Defining Gardens: What is a garden?	
1/ 11, 13	Summary	How does the meaning of gardens change in different landscapes? What can the analysis of a landscape contribute to the definition of gardens?	
	Reading	St-Denis, Bernard. 2007. "Just what is a garden?" <i>Studies in the History of Gardens and Designed Landscapes</i> 27.1: 61-76. (15 pages of reading for the week)	
	Assignment	First DBP: What are the strengths and weaknesses of St-Denis' definition of a garden?	1/14
Week 3	Topic	Defining Gardens: What is a garden?	
1/18, 1/20	Summary	How does the meaning of gardens change over time? What can historical analysis contribute to the definition of gardens?	
	Reading	Hunt, John, Dixon. 1991. "The Garden as Cultural Object." in S. Wrede and W. H. Adams, eds. <i>Denatured Visions: Landscape and Culture in the Twentieth Century</i> . New York: 19-32. (13 pages of reading for the week)	
	Assignment	Second DBP: Whose definition of "garden" is more effective, St-Denis's or Hunt's, and why? Whose definition is weaker, and why?	1/21
Week 4	Topic	Intersections: Gardens of African American Women	
1/25, 1/27	Summary	We explore what gardens mean to African American women. What can gardens contribute to the current racial reckoning in the United States?	
	Readings	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Walker, Alice. 1972. "In Search of our Mother's Gardens." in A. Mitchell, ed. <i>Within the Circle: An Anthology of African American Literary Criticism</i>. Durham and London: Duke University Press. 1994: 401-409 Kincaid, Jamaica. 2001. "Sowers and Reapers." <i>The New Yorker</i> 76.43 (January 22, 2001): 41-46 	

Week/ Date	Activity	Topic/Assignment (Question/Subject)	Assigned Work Due
		3. Vaughn Sills, <i>Places for the Spirit: Traditional African American Gardens</i> . San Antonio. (53 total pages of reading for the week; photographs will be made available on canvas by permission of the photographer).	
	Assignment	Third DBP: To what extent are these three essays (Walker, Kincaid, Sills), written well before 2014, relevant in the wake of the establishment of the Black Lives Matter movement and the events of the summer of 2020? What role can gardens play in the current reckoning with anti-black racism in the United States?	1/28
Week 5	Topic	Political Gardens: What do gardens mean?	
2/1, 2/3	Summary	What are “horticultural politics”? How are gardens places of struggle and activism?	
	Reading	McKay, George. 2011. <i>Radical Gardening: Politics, Idealism, and Rebellion in the Garden</i> . London. Chapters 1-2 (69 pages of reading, first half of book)	
Week 6	Topic	Political Gardens: What do gardens mean?	
2/8, 2/10	Summary	How are gardens uniquely capable of contributing to social justice?	
	Reading	McKay, George. 2011. <i>Radical Gardening: Politics, Idealism, and Rebellion in the Garden</i> . London. Chapters 3-5, pages (100 pages of reading, rest of the book)	
	Assignment	First Spark Story: UF Garden Visit a garden on the UF campus and compose a “Spark Story” in which you (1) describe the physical features that make the space a proper garden as per the definition developed in discussion using our readings, (2) describe your emotional response to the garden, and (3) conjecture about the meaning of the garden to the UF community. Is the garden a site of contest as outlined by McKay?	2/11
Week 7	Topic	The Afterlife of Gardens	
2/15, 2/17	Summary	If you cannot visit a garden (think Eden), is it still a garden?	
	Readings	1. Hunt, John Dixon. 2004. <i>The Afterlife of Gardens</i> . Philadelphia. Pages 33-56 2. Pagán, V. 2015. “The Afterlife of Little Sparta,” in <i>Disciples of Flora</i> , edited by Pagán, Page, and Weltman-Aron, pages 145-166 (44 pages of reading for the week)	
Week 8	Topic	Representations of Gardens in Art	

Week/ Date	Activity	Topic/Assignment (Question/Subject)	Assigned Work Due
2/22, 2/24	Summary	How do artists capture gardens in visual arts? How do they express the natural world in a cultural form? How do they express the temporality and eternity of gardens?	
	Meeting	No reading this week: we will meet at the Harn Museum on Tuesday for a guided tour and on Thursday for an open exploration for the assignment.	
	Assignment	Harn Visual Analysis: Based on our class visit to the Harn Museum, find a work in the museum that is a visual representation of a garden. Using what you've learned in class, write a 500-word analysis of the representation of time. How does the work of art convey the temporality of the garden? To what extent is the work of art an "afterlife," to use John Dixon Hunt's term?	2/28
Week 9	Topic	Gardens as Therapy	
3/1, 3/3	Summary	Why are gardens powerful sites of healing and such effective spaces for therapy?	
	Reading/Meeting	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Harrison, Robert Pogue. 2008. <i>Gardens: An Essay on the Human Condition</i>. Chicago. pages 1-82. We will meet at Wilmot Garden on Thursday for a guided tour and lecture on the history and operations of the gardens. 	
	Assignment	Second Spark Story: Wilmot Garden Based on our class visit to Wilmot Garden compose a "Spark Story" in which you (1) describe the activities that take place in the garden, (2) identify the labor force(s) that maintain the garden, and (3) discuss the social and even political impact of the garden on the immediate community. Connect the horticultural therapy to Harrison's ideas about therapy and care in chapters 2 and 12.	3/14
Week 10	Topic	Vergil, <i>Georgics</i>: Poetics and Politics	
3/15, 3/17	Summary	Who is this poem for? Where are the laborers of the gardens of the <i>Georgics</i> ? How does Vergil use gardens to criticize the Augustan political regime?	
	Reading	<i>Georgics</i> Books 1-2	
Week 11	Topic	Vergil, <i>Georgics</i>: Politics and Eternity	
3/22, 3/24	Summary	Why does the poem end with the myth of Orpheus and Euridice?	
	Reading	<i>Georgics</i> Books 3-4	

Week/ Date	Activity	Topic/Assignment (Question/Subject)	Assigned Work Due
	Assignment	Fourth DBP: What does the <i>Georgics</i> have to do with gardens? What themes in the poem contribute to our understanding of the gardens?	3/25
Week 12	Topic	Homer, <i>Odyssey</i>	
3/29, 3/31	Summary	How do gardens define the wealth of Odysseus and his family?	
	Reading	Books 1-8	
Week 13	Topic	Homer, <i>Odyssey</i>	
4/5, 4/7	Summary	What dangerous gardens threaten do detain Odysseus on his journey home?	
	Reading	Books 9-16	
Week 14	Topic	Homer, <i>Odyssey</i>	
4/12, 4/14	Summary	How does the garden bring resolution to the epic?	
	Reading	Books 17-24	
	Assignment	Analytical Essay Some might object to the inclusion of the <i>Odyssey</i> on the syllabus for a class on gardens. Defend the choice. What does this poem have to do with gardens? What themes in the poem contribute to our understanding of the gardens? Drawing on our theoretical readings, support your thesis with evidence from the text.	4/15
Week 15	Topic	Reflections	
4/19	Summary	How has this class changed your assumptions about what gardens are, what gardens mean, why we garden, who gardens are for, and what activities can take place in a garden?	
	Assignment	Final Reflection (see “Details of Self Reflection Component” below)	4/20

III. Grading

1. Statement on Attendance

Attendance:

Attendance will be taken using “Roll Call” in Canvas. Your grade is based on the number of times you attend, divided by the number of times our class meets.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

3. Grading Scale

For information on how UF assigns grade points, visit: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

A	94 – 100% of possible points		C	74 – 76%
A-	90 – 93%		C-	70 – 73%
B+	87 – 89%		D+	67 – 69%
B	84 – 86%		D	64 – 66%
B-	80 – 83%		D-	60 – 63%
C+	77 – 79%		E	<60

IV. Quest Learning Experiences

1. Details of Experiential Learning Component

Together as a class we will visit the Harn Museum of Art for two class periods to explore exhibits relating to gardens. One visit will be guided, the other will be open. We will attend a special presentation about the history and contributions of Wilmot Garden, by Leah Deihl, master gardener and curator of Wilmot Garden. We will take walking tours in central campus to visit Yardley Gardens, the Nobel Laureate Garden, and the Plaza of the Americas.

- For students who need special accommodations for the walking tours, please register with the DRC (see “Required Policies” below, number 1) and accommodations will be made for virtual, on-line tours.
- For students whose course schedules make travel to and from the Harn prohibitive, alternate times will be arranged for visits with the professor together with other classmates.

2. Details of Self-Reflection Component

Write a personal statement for admission to graduate study or professional school in which you describe how this class has prepared you for your future career. If you do not plan on applying to graduate or professional school, you can frame the essay as a personal reflection, or you can frame the essay as a letter, addressed to someone to whom you wish to explain what you learned in this class.

Some topics to consider:

- Practical Applications: What have you learned in this course specifically about time management; personal responsibility; working under pressure; maintaining momentum; work ethic; persevering on a topic that you are not actually interested in; keeping up with readings; managing this course with your course load and/or work schedule/other commitments?
- Social Applications: What have you learned in this course specifically about working with others; listening to other people's points of view; expressing your own point of view; cooperating in a group of diverse students with different skills, abilities, and interests; thinking about questions posed by Greek and Roman authors from a different time/place/society?
- Critical Thinking: What are the skills that you have learned in this course specifically that can be applied to your career goals? Examples include:
 - Attention to detail
 - Filling in the gaps (Literature always requires the audience to know something about the myth/story; our poets do not spell everything out for us. Make a connection to a workplace/professional setting in which you are required to fill in the gaps.)
 - Challenging assumptions (You came to this class with a set of assumptions about what the gardens would be, what the class would be. How were these assumptions challenged, and how does this prepare you for your next step in your career?)
 - Courage of conviction (You've proven to yourself and to others that you have the courage of your conviction, to spend a semester studying something that matters to you and that you find valuable. Connect this asset to your future career.)

I admit that the question assumes a fair degree of satisfaction on your part. You might rather play "devil's advocate," and reflect on how "useless" the course proved to be. If this is the case, then I ask you to include a procataleptic refutation based on this quote from Pliny the Elder: "No book is so bad as to not have something of use in some part of it" (Pliny, *Epistles* 3.5.10).

V. General Education and Quest Objectives & SLOs

1. This Course's Objectives—Gen Ed Primary Area and Quest

Humanities +	Quest 1 +	Course Objectives	
Humanities Objectives →	Quest 1 Objectives →	This Course's Objectives → (This course will...)	Objectives will be Accomplished By: (This course will accomplish the objective in the box at left by...)
Humanities courses provide instruction in the history, key themes, principles, terminology, and theory or methodologies used within a humanities discipline or the humanities in general.	Quest 1 courses address the history, key themes, principles, terminologies, theories, or methodologies of various arts and humanities disciplines that enable us to ask essential questions about the human condition.	Identify, describe, and explain the concept of the garden as a cultural artifact embedded in the natural world; Identify, describe, and explain the different modes of visual and verbal representation used by artists and poets, with a particular focus on the political and ideological meanings and the paradoxical possibilities that gardens hold as sites of both contest and healing, violence and therapy.	... reading theoretical scholarship on the meaning of gardens, essays on gardens, and two poems from the ancient Mediterranean world; by viewing works of art at the Harn Museum; by visiting gardens on the campus of the University of Florida.
Students will learn to identify and to analyze the key elements, biases and influences that shape thought.	Students learn to identify and analyze the distinctive elements of different arts and humanities disciplines, along with their biases and influences on essential questions about the human condition.	Consider the relationship between nature and culture in physical spaces of gardens and in their representations in art and poetry, and the relation of gardens to the political contexts in which they are produced.	Lectures on the assigned readings and guided question and answer through discussion board posts and in class discussions.
These courses emphasize clear and effective analysis and approach issues and problems from multiple perspectives.	These courses emphasize clear and effective analysis and evaluation of essential questions about the human condition from multiple perspectives.	Develop and present clear and effective responses to essential questions about nature and culture in visual and written forms appropriate to the relevant humanities disciplines incorporated into the course	In class lectures and discussion, readings, writing assignments, creative Spark Story assignments
	Students reflect on the ways in which the arts and the humanities impact individuals, societies, and their own intellectual, personal, and professional development.	Analyze, evaluate, and critically reflect on connections between the questions of nature and culture and your intellectual, personal, and professional development at UF and beyond	In class discussions, personal reflection essay

2. This Course’s Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)—Gen Ed Primary Area and Quest

	Humanities SLOs → Students will be able to...	Quest 1 SLOs → Students will be able to...	This Course’s SLOs → Students will be able to...	Assessment Student competencies will be assessed through...
Content	Identify, describe, and explain the history, underlying theory and methodologies used.	Identify, describe, and explain the history, theories, and methodologies used to examine essential questions about the human condition within and across the arts and humanities disciplines incorporated into the course.	Identify, describe, and explain the concept of the garden as a cultural artifact embedded in the natural world, and the different modes of visual and verbal representation used by artists and poets;	Discussion board posts; first Spark Story
			Identify and critique political and social contexts in which gardens are created; perceive, beyond the artist’s aesthetic intentions, the hidden costs of gardens, the exploitations of gender, race, class that gardens are built on	Discussion board posts, in particular on African American readings and on the <i>Georgics</i> ; second Spark Story on Wilmot Garden
Critical Thinking	Identify and analyze key elements, biases and influences that shape thought within the subject area. Approach issues and problems within the discipline from multiple perspectives.	Analyze and evaluate essential questions about the human condition using established practices appropriate for the arts and humanities disciplines incorporated into the course.	Analyze and Evaluate works of visual art and poetry in their social and political contexts; make connections between individual gardens and garden representations and the larger theoretical frameworks that guide the study of gardens; create for themselves frameworks for interpreting any and all gardens that they will experience for the rest of their lives	Harn Analysis; Analytical Essay; reflection essay
Communication	Communicate knowledge, thoughts and reasoning clearly and effectively.	Develop and present clear and effective responses to essential questions in oral and written forms as appropriate to the relevant humanities disciplines incorporated into the course.	Develop and present clear and effective responses in oral, visual, and written form, to the theoretical readings, visual arts encountered at the museum; the physical spaces on the University of Florida campus, and the poetry of Vergil and Homer from the ancient Mediterranean world	Harn Analysis; Analytical Essay; Discussion board posts; Spark Stories
Connection	N/A		Connect course content with critical reflection on their intellectual, personal, and professional development at UF and beyond.	Reflection essay

VI. Required Policies

1. Students Requiring Accommodation

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

2. UF Evaluations Process

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

3. University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

4. Counseling and Wellness Center

Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

5. The Writing Studio

The writing studio is committed to helping University of Florida students meet their academic and professional goals by becoming better writers. Visit the writing studio online at <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/> or in 2215 Turlington Hall for one-on-one consultations and workshops.

6. Policy on Recordings

Our class sessions may be audio visually recorded for students in the class to refer back and for enrolled students who are unable to attend live. Students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, be sure to keep your camera off and do not use a profile image. Likewise, students who un-mute during class and participate orally are agreeing to have their voices recorded. If you are not willing to consent to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated and communicate exclusively using the "chat" feature, which allows students to type questions and comments live. The chat will not be recorded or shared. As in all courses, unauthorized recording and unauthorized sharing of recorded materials is prohibited.