



LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

COMMITMENT TO EDUCATION

Dalhousie University and the Landscape Architecture Program is committed to ensuring your online learning experience and education continues to be delivered in an outstanding manner. Our academic quality will not suffer nor will the education and learning experience of our students. There are many and unique issues we will address during this semester.

COMMUNICATIONS

Online environments are normally driven by text as opposed to face-to-face lectures, with some emphasis on live or verbal exchanges. Emphasis on the written word, whether in communication forums or via other platforms, creates potential issues related to the interpretation of content. Students from different cultures (local, national and international) and whose first language is not English tend to interpret messages in text and feedback and may often decipher it differently from the original intent of the instructor.

We will conduct periodic assessments of your written and verbal submittals and assignments to make sure you are maintaining a clear understanding of the course's intent. Our feedback will be modified to address these cultural and accessibility issues to make sure you remain engaged in the coursework.

INTERACTIONS

Cultural norms, which can be defined as "common beliefs, expectations, and practices" of a society may impact how and when students respond to questions, including their perceived roles in a forum. Students from Western cultures, for example, are more apt to view the instructor as a facilitator, rather than non-Western students whose cultural norm is to view the instructor as more authoritative in nature. They tend to value teacher feedback more than peer feedback and get frustrated when they do not see teacher presence.

The role of the instructor is still critical, but adapting to western education culture is required. We will be available for consultation and guidance on any issues and provide constant feedback to your work and course progress.

PRESENCE, PARTICIPATION and CRITICAL REFLECTION

Students hesitate to ask questions, give up on discussions, or make fewer inputs when their perspectives/experiences are different/contrary with those of other participants or with that their teacher. This is particularly problematic when active participation in discussions, etc are highly valued and assessed. Also, challenging and criticizing others' ideas may not be considered culturally appropriate in some cultural groups but highly valued in the North American/Canadian context.

We are committed to make sure the instructor efforts promote critique and divergent thinking. We strive to create safe space where your experiences, opinions, beliefs and knowledge is valued and easily shared.

We will check in with you often and are open to any communication we can provide to address your concerns. We are here to support your education and success. We are here to listen.