environmental design
I like to think (and the sooner the better!) of a cybernetic meadow where mammals and computers live together in mutually programming harmony like pure water touching clear sky.

I like to think (right now, please!) of a cybernetic forest filled with pines and electronics where deer stroll peacefully past computers as if they were flowers with spinning blossoms.

I like to think (it has to be!) of a cybernetic ecology where we are free of our labors and joined back to nature, returned to our mammal brothers and sisters, and all watched over by machines of loving grace.
If I had asked people what they wanted, they would have said faster horses.
- Henry Ford

In “Philosophia Botanica” (1751), the great taxonomist Carl Linnaeus proposed that it should be possible to plant a floral clock. He noted that two species of daisy, the hawk’s-beard and the hawkbit, opened and closed at their respective times within about a half-hour each day. He suggested planting these daisies along with St. John’s Wort, marigolds, water-lilies and other species in a circle. The rhythmic opening and closing of the plants would be the effective hands of this clock.


Conversation with a New York City cabbie:

Cabbie: Whaddaya do?
  Reply: I’m a designer
Cabbie: Oh yeah, designer. So you’re in fashion design, right?
  Reply: No. I design signs.
Cabbie: Whaddaya mean, you design signs?
  Reply: I design signs. I mean, when you have to drive fares to LaGuardia, how do you know where to drop them off?
Cabbie: I follow the signs. Wait, you mean someone designs those things? Never woulda figured that someone designed signs.
  Reply: Well, God didn’t put them here.
Cabbie: People really do that, huh? I mean, design signs?
  Reply: Yep.
GRPH 392/INDE 300/INDE 400 [fall 2009]

Dawn Hachenski, Associate Professor
M 10–Noon, W 9–Noon, F by appointment
hachendm@jmu.edu [540.568-6500]

Ronn Daniel, Associate Professor
TU/TH 1:30-3, WED 10-12 + by appointment
danielrm@jmu.edu [540.568-5850]

This course will study the process and execution of sustainable design practices within the built environment. Environmental Design is a relatively new, cross-disciplinary field that has gained recognition and importance over the past 30 years. It is a primary concentration where the graphic, interior, and industrial design disciplines converge. The studio will consist of 3 sections:

1. Warm-ups
   Exercises, readings, & small projects to introduce issues of environmental design (signage/wayfinding, interpretation, placemaking) design process, sustainable landscapes, and historical/theoretical concepts.

2. Sustainable Landscapes at JMU
   Working in teams, students will meet w/ clients, research site issues, research materials, study design alternatives, and propose design solutions. Final projects will be drawn, modeled, rendered, and study in full-scale prototype as necessary. Final projects will be exhibited in the IVS gallery, 17 November – 4 December.

3. Public Information Campaign
   Design graphics for a public-information campaign incorporating landscape designs
MATERIALS
We expect each of you to already own a basic set of drawing + model-making tools. You must also have a sketchbook and thumb drives. Each of you will be responsible for obtaining the necessary materials and specialized tools should we decide to construct full-scale mockups.

EVALUATION
Individual projects will be thoroughly reviewed and critiqued, but will not be graded. To succeed, you must be daring enough to take great risks. If you take risks, you must be certain that, at times, you will stumble. What matters is the commitment to the project and the process. At the end of the semester, you will be graded on how hard you challenged yourself, how relentlessly you struggled, and how high did you fly. An optional mid-semester conference will be offered.

ABSENCES
We allow 2 unexcused. After that the final grade is lowered by 1 full letter grade.

IVS/Roop
Our class if one of only 2 that will use this space. The other is our IVS studio-seminar partner, “re-envisioning environments.” We are free to configure this room as suits our needs, and you are welcome to work here whenever you wish to do so. The flip side of that—everyone must promise to be good stewards of the IVS space & equipment.

KEY DATES
12-13 October: Michael Singer
17 November: IVS gallery opening
We may also hold several joint-meetings of our class & the IVS environmental rhetoric seminar, tbd.

READINGS: required textbooks
Calori, *Signage and Wayfinding Design* (required GRPH)
Reed, *Groundswell: Construction the Contemporary Landscape* (required INDE. Buy used online)

READINGS: supplementary articles
Thomas Berry, “Art in the Ecozoic Era”
William Cronon, “The Trouble with Wilderness; or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature”
Cynthia Davidson, “Raised to Observe: Glenn Murcutt”
McDonough & Braungart, Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things (excerpts)
Allen Weiss, ”Trauma and the Future of Landscape”

READINGS: supplemental
Borasi & Zardini, Sorry Out of Gas: Architecture’s Response to the 1973 Oil Crisis
Hayes et al, Buckminster Fuller: Starting with the Universe
Klanten, Tangible: High Touch Visuals
Landscapes: Selected Writings of J.B. Jackson
McPhee, The Control of Nature
Sterling, Shaping Things
Viction: Workshop Ltd., Stereographics, graphics in new directions
Waldheim, The Landscape Urbanism Reader
James Wines, Green Architecture

PRACTICES + PROJECTS
Maya Lin, Michael Singer, Robert Smithson, Andy Goldsworthy
Adriaan Geuze, West 8
Petra Blaisse, Inside/Outside
James Corner, Field Operations
William McDonough
Eric Benson, Jimmy Luu
websites: Center for Land Use Interpretation; pruned.blogspot.com

CLASS VISITS
Michael Singer
Leslie Bellavance, GreenMaps.org
JMU grounds staff
“re-envisioning environments” faculty (Brodrick, Bsumek, Hickerson) + students