

**WEST VALLEY COLLEGE**  
**Course Outline**

**Department:** Architecture

**Course Number and Title:** ARCH 083 - Plant Composition

**Length of course in weeks:** 16

**Units:** 2

**Total Class Hours/Week:** 4

**Lecture Hours/Week:** 1

**Lab Hours/Week:** 3

**Grade Type:** Grade/Credit/No Credit

**Catalog Description:** This course is a study of the design placement of ornamental trees, shrubs, vines, and groundcovers in the environmental landscape. Emphasis is on the aesthetic and functional relationship of plant combinations, forms, and the scale of plants to structures and outdoor spaces.

**Schedule Description:** This course is a study of the design placement of ornamental trees, shrubs, vines, and groundcovers in the designed landscape.

**Prerequisites:**

ARCH 081, Landscape Plants: Summer & Autumn

**Corequisite:** (Course required to be taken concurrently)

ARCH 082, Landscape Plants: Winter & Spring.

**Recommended Preparation:**

BIO 042, Principles of Plant Biology

**Course Outcomes:** Student Learning Outcomes

1. **Outcome:** Students will be able to critically evaluate planting compositions.  
**Assessment:** Student evaluations of their own work and the work of others in the field.
2. **Outcome:** Students will create a landscape project demonstrating planting design skills that meet aesthetic and cultural criteria.  
**Assessment:** Final project.

**Course Objectives:** Upon completion of this course the student should be able to:

1. Identify the aesthetic elements of plant composition.
2. Identify the cultural significance of plants in different landscape environments.
3. Describe plant selection as related to specific project needs.
4. Relate plant composition to site analysis and interpretation.
5. Identify specific site attributes, constraints, and plant compatibility in the design process.

6. Prepare and present basic design and implementation plans with supporting documentation for plant composition.

**Assessment:** Students in this course will be graded base on the following four categories:

1. **Writing Assignments:** written assignments
2. **Problem Solving Demonstrations:** homework problems
3. **Skill Demonstrations:** class performance(s)
4. **Examinations:** midterm and final exam

**Repeatability:** 1 time

**Methods of Instruction:** Lecture & Lab

**Lecture Content:**

1. Aesthetic Attributes	25.00 %
2. Cultural Attributes	25.00 %
3. Social and Psychological Factors	10.00 %
4. Installation and Maintenance Issues	20.00 %
5. Native and Non-Native Design Issues	20.00 %

**Lab Content:**

1. Design projects focused on the exclusive use of plant materials in composition to respond to a given design program and site.	50.00 %
2. Communicating design solutions through graphic, written and oral form.	50.00 %

**Critical Thinking:** Analyze a shady residential front yard and create a landscape design.

**College Level Required Reading, Writing, and other Outside-of-Class Assignments:**

Over a 16 week presentation of the course, three hours per week are required for each unit of credit. Two hours of independent work done out of class are required for each hour of lecture. Outside of the regular class time the students in this class will be doing the following outside of class:

- **Study:** 1.00 additional hour
- **Problem solving activity or exercise:** 0.50 additional hour
- **Answer questions:** 0.50 additional hour

**Textbooks:**

1. Austin Richard L. Elements of Planting Design. Wiley & Sons, 2001. ISBN: 9780471398882
2. Brenzel, Kathleen Norris Sunset Western Garden Book. Rev. Upd. ed. Sunset Books, 2007. ISBN: 9780376039170