Trees and Shrubs for Sustainable Built Environments
HORT 306 Fall 2018
Plants As Landscape Design Elements

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Complementary / Contrasting Color Designs

Opposite colors (complementary) or widely spaced (contrasting) on color wheel
Adjacent series of colors (hues) on the color wheel often provide harmonious combinations for designs.
Tints, Tones, Shades Within a Hue

Particularly important along with textures in tropical landscapes where greens tend to dominate.
Monochromatic Effects
Changing 3-Dimensionality With Color

- Bright colors draw the eye, bring plants to the foreground.
- Darker colors (blues, purples, violets, deep greens) provide illusion of depth.
Creating Space Illusion: Horizontal Lines
Creating Space Illusion: Vertical Lines
Textural Considerations: Coarse

Coarse textured plants grab your attention = focal points
Textural Considerations: Fine

- Fine textures can be used to soften harsh lines & highlight coarser textured plants by contrast
Form (habit)

Natural shapes

Altered states
Repetition of Plants or Hardscape

Repeated use of a design element can provide a unifying theme
Balance

Can be symmetrical or asymmetrical
Scale

Strategies differ when designing on a grand scale
Scale

Micro-scale allows greater implementation of individual elements such as textural contrasts.
Formal versus Informal

- Formal: Texas Capital Grounds
- Informal: Texas Cottage Garden
- Formal: Structured Water Garden
- Informal: Naturalistic Pond
Naturalizing

Naturalistic plantings ≠ native plants
Transition Landscapes

From the cultivated into the wild
Woodland / Shade Gardens
Wind Breaks / Shelter Belts
Soil / Dune / Slope / Bank Erosion Prevention
Dune Reclamation
Estuary / Coastal Restoration
Tropical Oasis / Coastal Resorts
Seasonal Displays
Seasonal Accents / Focal Points

/ Specimen Plants
Formal Sheared Hedges
Screening / Backgrounds
Knot Garden / Parterres
Specialty Designs / Logos

Warm season annuals

Cold season vegetative annuals

Cold season flowering annuals
Containers Gardens
Hanging Baskets
Window Boxes / Hanging Gardens
Rock Gardens
Heritage / Historic / Period Garden Features
Arbors / Pergolas
Green Roofs

Regional challenges
Ohio ➔
Texas ➔

California ➔
Green Roofs

What do you notice first about this building, even in the dead of winter?
Living Walls

Images courtesy of Dr. David Byrne
Living Walls

Offer transition from exterior to interiorscapes and incorporation as living art
Rain Gardens / Swales / Detention Ponds / Biofiltration

Constructed Wetlands
Wildlife Attractants
Pollinator Plants
Framing Views (Outdoors)
Framing Views
(Inside Out)
Reflections
(Mirror Imaging)
Night Lighting
Does This Serve A Design Purpose?
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