
TITLE

Open Space Design for Resilient and Sustainable Territories:
A Teaching Experience in the Synthesis of Architecture, Urban
Planning, and Landscape

AUTHOR

Joan Florit-Femenias

ABSTRACT

In recent times, various theoretical and practical contributions have called for a closer synthesis between nature and artifice, or between architectural and urban design and the landscape, in response to the current climate crisis that cities must address. At the same time, landscape architecture curricula are becoming increasingly consolidated and autonomous from traditional architectural education programs across Europe. Within this context of tension between specialization and transdisciplinarity, the education of future architects must experiment with the need for synthesis, turning design projects into laboratories for integrating knowledges and demands from diverse disciplines and contexts.

This paper presents the pedagogical approach and results of a Public Space and Landscape Design Studio for fifth-year architecture students, developed during the first semester of the 2024-2025 academic year at the Barcelona School of Architecture (ETSAB). The studio involved professors from different departments and proposed an integrated approach

AFFILIATION

Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (UPC), Laboratori d'Urbanisme de Barcelona (LUB), Spain

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to public space and metropolitan landscape design. The territory of El Maresme (Barcelona), characterized by fragmented urbanization alongside open spaces of high socio-ecological value, served as a laboratory for interventions aimed at mitigating dysfunctions in the urban fabric while enhancing the environmental values of unbuilt land.

Awareness of flood risks encouraged an approach where water is conceived not as an enemy to be expelled, but as a resource to be managed, leading to proposals that are sensitive to the territory and its natural dynamics. Strategies developed include design as the initiation of evolving ecological processes, the compatibility between urban functionality and active natural systems, among other reflections that will be presented and analysed during the session.

Building on the strong tradition of public space design in Barcelona, the experience emphasizes the need to incorporate nature-based solutions, sustainability requirements, and landscape management into the definition of future metropolitan public spaces.