

LANDSCAPE LEARNING; XERISCAPING DESIGN TECHNIQUES: THE CASE OF JORDAN UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

Xeriscape landscapes are defined as "quality landscaping that conserves water and protects the environment." Xeriscape landscape design is a challenging new field in Jordan as well as in the Middle East. The role of the landscape designer in Jordan is little different from his/her role in any country in the world. His/her role is to understand, design, supervise, and advise on the management of the landscapes his/her clients wish to create.

Therefore, we must try to avoid, as much as possible, untried technology, but spend time in acquiring a deep understanding of the climate, soils, the plants, local materials, water management, local craft, and management skills and above all, of the people. With the escalating water scarcity problem in Jordan, the promotion of such concepts is essential for the sustainability Jordanian urban landscaping. The document at hand proposes a curriculum for a 1-credit hour course to be instructed at the University of Jordan as a summer session course for architecture and agriculture students. Considering its low load (i.e., 1-credit hour), and the importance of the issue, it is highly recommended that such course be mandatory for such students.

In addition, and being a newly applied concept in Jordan, it is also recommended that such course be offered to non-students through the University's Center for Consulting and Technical Studies. Target audiences for such course will include landscape architects, agriculturalists, and nursery owners. So, any successful course in Xeriscaping must cover the following basic areas

1. Planning and Design
2. Plant Selection
3. Turf Areas
4. Soil Improvement
5. Efficient Irrigation
6. Mulches
7. Maintenance

Considering the inter-disciplinary nature of those areas, it is highly recommended that such course be instructed via a joint effort between the Department of Architecture and the Faculty of Agriculture.

KEYWORDS: Xeriscaping Landscape, Environment, Soil Improvement, Plant Selection