

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Overview

Landscape architecture is an environmental design discipline. Landscape architects actively shape the human environment: they map, interpret, imagine, draw, build, conceptualize, synthesize, and project ideas that transform landscapes. The design process involves creative expression that derives from an understanding of the context of site (or landscape) ecosystems, cultural frameworks, functional systems, and social dynamics. Students in our program learn to change the world around them by re-imagining and re-shaping the landscape to enhance its aesthetic and functional dimensions, ecological health, cultural significance, and social relevance. The profession addresses a broad range of landscapes in urban, suburban, rural, and wilderness settings. The scale of landscape architecture projects varies from broad, regional landscape analysis and planning to detailed, individual site-scale designs. The curriculum at Iowa State prepares students for this challenge as they develop their abilities to design and communicate ideas through a sequence of foundational courses and studios. The program seeks to produce graduates who understand the ethical, social, and environmental/ecological dimensions of issues involving changes in the landscape.

Graduates are active in a broad range of careers, such as sustainable site design, land development, park management, environmental advocacy, community planning, urban design, and others. In their professional lives, graduates apply their creative and technical skills in the planned arrangement of natural and constructed elements on the land with a concern for the stewardship and conservation of natural, constructed, and human resources. The resulting environments serve useful, aesthetic, safe, and enjoyable purposes. Graduates are able to communicate effectively with colleagues in the sciences and humanities as well as in the allied professions and are prepared to work individually and in multidisciplinary teams to address complex problems dealing with the cultural/ecological environment.

The department offers graduate and undergraduate degree programs and cooperates in the undergraduate minors in Design Studies, Critical Studies in Design, and Digital Media.

The undergraduate curriculum includes one year of the college's Core Design Program followed by four years in the professional program. Applicants are reviewed on the basis of academic performance and a portfolio of original work; admission to the professional program is subject to the approval of a faculty committee at the completion of the Core Design Program. Information on admission criteria is posted each year on the College of Design website.

Following admission to the professional program, students embark on the traveling studio during the fall semester of their second year. This studio is a full semester's credit of integrated departmental courses and involves extensive travel within and beyond the great Midwest region of North America, to study regional natural systems and the cultural responses to those systems.

To enhance the study of landscape architecture in off-campus settings, the department requires students to choose from among the following options during the spring and summer of their fourth year: 1. a professional internship 2. the College of Design Rome Program 3. an independent study abroad experience or 4. National Student Exchange. The department assists students with placement, and additional information is provided through the department and the College of Design's Career Services Office.

The undergraduate program consists of a five-year curriculum, requiring 150 credits, leading to the degree Bachelor of Landscape Architecture. These credits are distributed between a one-year Core Design Program of 30 credits and a four-year professional program of 120 credits.

Student Learning Outcomes

- Understand and practice design as an iterative process.
- Design landscapes as part of the built material world from concept to detail.
- Select and use a wide range of manual and digital techniques to communicate ideas; utilize appropriate communication and representation techniques based on the design problem.
- Present a project clearly and concisely to a client, community, or user group and produce professional communications.
- Produce basic construction documents and other project documentation including plans and specifications.
- Incorporate knowledge of ecology and plants into design proposals.
- Understand and practice landscape architecture as a continuously changing historical and cultural activity.
- Interpret how social, cultural, and political dynamics affect the use and design of public and private space.
- Function effectively in collaborative and multidisciplinary settings.
- Practice professional ethics, judgment, and skills and understand the professional's role as a fiduciary.

Degree Requirements

The department offers graduate and undergraduate degree programs.

The undergraduate program consists of a five-year curriculum, requiring 150 credits, leading to the degree Bachelor of Landscape Architecture. These credits are distributed between a one-year Core Design Program of 31 credits and a four-year professional program of 119 credits.

Admission into the professional program depends upon available resources and is subject to the approval of a faculty committee at the completion of the Core Design Program. Applicants are reviewed on the basis of academic performance and a portfolio of original work. Information on admission criteria is posted each year on the College of Design website.

The BLA from Iowa State University is an LAAB (Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board)-accredited professional degree program. In the United States, most state registration boards require a degree from an accredited professional degree program as a prerequisite for professional licensure. The LAAB is the sole entity recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation to accredit U.S. first-professional degree programs in landscape architecture at the bachelor's and master's levels.

Total Degree Requirement: 150 credits

Only 65 credits from a two-year institution may apply, which may include up to 16 technical credits; 9 P-NP credits of free electives; 2.00 minimum GPA.

International Perspective: 3 credits

U.S. Diversity: 3 credits

Communications: 10 credits

(C or better grade in ENGL 1500 and ENGL 2500)

ENGL 1500	Critical Thinking and Communication	3
ENGL 2500	Written, Oral, Visual, and Electronic Composition	3
LIB 1600	Introduction to College Level Research	1
One of the following:		3
ENGL 3090	Proposal and Report Writing	
ENGL 3140	Technical Communication	
Total Credits		10

Humanities: 9 credits

9 credits from PHIL, HIST, MUSIC or other humanities course offerings.

Social Sciences: 6 credits

6 credits from ANTHR, ECON, POLS, PSYCH, or SOC.

Mathematics and Science: 12 credits

One of the following:		3-4
MATH 1400	College Algebra	
MATH 1450	Applied Trigonometry	
MATH 1650	Calculus I (4 crs)	
ENVS 1200	Introduction to Renewable Resources	3
Science Elective		6

Additional General Education Course 3 credits

3 credits from 3000-4000-level courses

Design Core: 13 credits

DSNS 1020	Design Studio I	4
DSNS 1150	Design Collaborative Seminar	1
or DSNS 1100	Design Exchange Seminar I	
DSNS 1310	Drawing I	4
DSNS 1320	Digital Design Literacy	1
DSNS 1830	Design in Context	3
Total Credits		13

Landscape Architecture: 85 credits

LA 2010	Studio: Landscape Interpretation and Representation	6
LA 2020	Studio: Site Design I	6
LA 2110	Digital Design Methods for Landscape Architecture	3
LA 2410	Developing Identity as a Landscape Architect	1
LA 2720	Landscape Studies	3
LA 2740	The Social and Behavioral Landscape	3
LA 2810	Investigating Landscape Form, Process, and Detail	3
LA 3010	Site Design II	6
LA 3020	Ecological Design	6
LA 3220	Fundamentals of Planting Design	3
LA 3410	Contemporary Landscape Architecture	1
LA 3710	History of Modern Landscapes, 1750 to Present	3
LA 3730	Gardens and Landscapes from Antiquity to 1750	3
LA 3810	Shaping the Land	3
LA 4020	Urban Design	6
LA 4040	Advanced Landscape Architectural Design	6
LA 4440A	Landscape Architecture Independent Educational Enrichment: Professional Internship	
or LA 4440B	Landscape Architecture Independent Educational Enrichment: Study Abroad	
or LA 4440C	Landscape Architecture Independent Educational Enrichment: National Student Exchange	
LA 4420	Professional Practice	2
LA 4810	Landscape Construction	3
LA 4820	Landscape Construction Documentation	3
DSNS 5460	Interdisciplinary Design Studio	6
Plus nine credits professional electives		9
Total Credits		85

Electives: 12 credits

Complete electives sufficient to complete graduation requirements.

Landscape Architecture, B.L.A.

First Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
DSNS 1020 or 1310	4 DSNS 1310 or 1020	4
DSNS 1150	1 DSNS 1320	1
DSNS 1830 (or General Education)	3 Soc. Sciences/Humanities Elective	3
ENGL 1500 or 2500	3 Science Elective or MATH 1420	3
Soc. Sciences/Humanities Elective	3 LIB 1600	1
MATH 1450	3 Elective (Optional for pre-professional year; not required for program application. If not taken in first year, add 3 cr. to a subsequent semester to meet the 150.0 credit total)	3
	17	15

Second Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
LA 2010	6 LA 2020	6
LA 2110	3 LA 2740	3
LA 2210	3 ENVS 1200	3
LA 2410	1 Elective	3
LA 2720	3	
	16	15

Third Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
LA 3010	6 LA 3020	6
LA 3220	3 LA 3410	1
LA 3730	3 LA 3710	3
LA 3810	3 Social Science/Humanities Electives	3
ENGL 2500	3 Math/Science Elective	3
	18	16

Fourth Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
LA 4020	6 One of the following:	
LA 4810	3 LA 4440A	R
Social Science/Humanities Elective	3 LA 4440B	R
LA electives	3 LA 4440C	R

Communications (3000 level English)	3
DSNS 3010 (Rome option only)	1
	19

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Fifth Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
LA 4040	6 DSNS 5460	6
LA Electives	3 LA 4420	2
LA Electives	3 LA 4820	3
Social Science/Humanities Elective (3000 level)	6 Electives/LA Electives	3
	Professional Elective	1
	18	15

Additionally: Each student needs to take 3 credits of a US Diversity and 3 credits of an International Perspectives course (usually covered by LA 3730). Students also need to take at least 6 credits of 3000 level or above in the combined areas of communication, science, math, humanities, and social science (6 total from all the areas).

Graduate Programs

The department offers the Master of Landscape Architecture (MLA), an accredited professional degree designed for students with or without an undergraduate degree in landscape architecture. The degree provides skills and knowledge as measured by the Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board (LAAB) and the licensing exam for students seeking to practice as a licensed professional in the public or private sectors. The MLA degree also offers competency for students interested in post-professional study as it provides the skills and knowledge for the application of research and/or scholarly methods to professional practice.

The MLA program offers three concentration tracks in the following topical areas — Theory/Urbanism, Technology/Ecology, Advocacy/Community — through coursework and an optional thesis or creative component. The concentration in one of the three tracks will be determined by the student in consultation with his/her advisor. Concentration electives may be selected from within the college and university from an approved list and up to three (3) credits from within the department. In their final year, students may undertake a creative component or thesis option with the approval of their major professor and the department Graduate Committee.

Students are also able to pursue double degrees with Master of Community and Regional Planning (MLA/MCRP), Master of Urban Design (MLA/MUD), and Master of Design in Sustainable Environments

(MLA/MDesSE). Students interested in the double-degree programs should contact the departments to receive a detailed description of requirements.

The department also offers courses in the Graduate Certificate Program in Geographic Information Systems (GIS), administered by the Department of Community and Regional Planning.

Design and Planning: 34 credits

LA 6010	Design Representation	4
LA 6020	Studio I – Land/Form & Plant/Scape	6
LA 6030	Studio II – Living Systems	6
LA 6040	Studio III – City Matters	6
LA 6050	Studio IV – LandWorks/LandDigits	6
DSNS 5460	Interdisciplinary Design Studio	6

or 2 cr. LA 5800 Thesis, Creative Comp. Tutorial + 4 cr. LA 5990 Creative Comp. or LA 6990 Thesis

Theory/History/Research: 10 credits

LA 5710	Landscape Architectural Theory	3
LA 5900D	Special Topics: History/Theory/Criticism	3
or LA 5780D: LA History elective*		
LA 5410	Design Inquiry	3
LA 5430	Colloquium: Landscape Architecture Research	1

Technology/Ecology/Materiality: 14 credits

LA 5220	Advanced Plant Technology	3
LA 5420	Professional Practice	2
LA 5590	Digital Design Methods for Landscape Architecture	3
LA 5830	Landscape TopoGraphics	3
LA 5870	Landscape Construction	3

Advocacy/Planning/Policy: 6 credits

LA 5940	Environmental Justice in Built Environments	3
Planning Elective - choose one from:		3
CRP 5660	Policy Analysis and Planning	
CRP 5680	Planning and Development	
CRP 5910	Environmental Law and Planning	
CRP 5920	Land Use and Development Regulation Law	

Concentration Electives: 15 credits

Concentration track electives in Theory/History/Urbanism; Advocacy/Planning/Community; Technology/Ecology/Materiality from approved list. Students may in consultation with their advisor also choose courses from CRP, ARCH, MUD, SUSE, INDD, or other relevant departments in the college or university.

Total 80 credits