

# 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.

## 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 30 credits and a four-year professional program of 120 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: 149.5 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 150 and ENGL 250)

ENGL 150	Critical Thinking and Communication	3
ENGL 250	Written, Oral, Visual, and Electronic Composition	3
LIB 160	Introduction to College Level Research	1
One of the following:		3
ENGL 309	Proposal and Report Writing	
ENGL 314	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, POL S, PSYCH, or SOC.

**Mathematics and Science: 12 credits**

One of the following: 3-4

MATH 140	College Algebra	
MATH 145	Applied Trigonometry	
MATH 165	Calculus I (4 crs)	
ENV S 120	Introduction to Renewable Resources	3
Science Elective		6

**Additional General Education Course 3 credits**

3 credits from 300-400-level courses

**Design Core: 12 credits**

DSN S 102	Design Studio I	4
DSN S 115	Design Collaborative Seminar	1
or DSN S 110	Design Exchange Seminar I	
DSN S 131	Drawing I	4
DSN S 183	Design in Context	3

**Total Credits 12****Landscape Architecture: 88 credits**

L A 201	Studio: Landscape Interpretation and Representation	6
L A 202	Studio: Site Design I	6
L A 221	Native Plants of the Savanna Ecotone	3
L A 222	Introduced Plants of the Midwest	3
L A 241	Developing Identity as a Landscape Architect	1
L A 272	Landscape Studies	3
L A 274	The Social and Behavioral Landscape	3
L A 281	Investigating Landscape Form, Process, and Detail	3
L A 282	Landscape Dynamics	3

L A 301	Site Design II	6
L A 302	Ecological Design	6
L A 341	Contemporary Landscape Architecture	1
L A 371	History of Modern Landscapes, 1750 to Present	3
L A 373	Gardens and Landscapes from Antiquity to 1750	3
L A 381	Shaping the Land	3
L A 402	Urban Design	6
L A 404	Advanced Landscape Architectural Design	6
L A 444	Landscape Architecture Independent Educational Enrichment	R
L A 442	Professional Practice	2
L A 481	Landscape Construction	3
L A 482	Landscape Construction Documentation	3
DSN S 546	Interdisciplinary Design Studio	6
Plus nine credits professional electives		9

**Total Credits 88****Electives: 14 credits**

Complete electives sufficient to complete graduation requirements.

Landscape Architecture, B.L.A.

**First Year**

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
DSN S 102 or 131	4 DSN S 131 or 102	4
DSN S 183 ( or General Education)	3 Soc. Sciences/Humanities Elective	3
DSN S 115	1 Science Elective or MATH 142	3
ENGL 150 or 250	3 LIB 160	1
Soc. Sciences/Humanities Elective	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
MATH 145	3	
		<b>17</b>

**Second Year**

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
L A 201	6 L A 202	6
L A 221	3 L A 222	3
L A 241	1 L A 274	3
L A 272	3 L A 282	3

L A 281	3 Elective	3
		<b>16</b>
		<b>18</b>

**Third Year**

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
L A 301	6 L A 302	6
L A 373	3 L A 341	1
L A 381	3 L A 371	3
ENGL 250	3 Social Science/Humanities Electives	3
ENV S 120	3 Math/Science Elective	3
		<b>18</b>
		<b>16</b>

**Fourth Year**

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
L A 402	6 One of the following:	
L A 481	3 L A 444A	R
Social Science/Humanities Elective	3 L A 444B	R
LA electives	3 L A 444C	R
Communications (300 level English)	3	
DSN S 301 (Rome option only)	1	
		<b>19</b>
		<b>0</b>

**Fifth Year**

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
L A 401	6 DSN S 546	6
LA Electives	3 L A 442	2
LA Electives	3 L A 482	3
Social Science/Humanities Elective (300 level)	6 Electives/LA Electives	3
	Professional Elective	1
		<b>18</b>
		<b>15</b>

Additionally: Each student needs to take 3 credits of a US Diversity (usually covered by LA 272) and 3 credits of an International Perspectives course (usually covered by LA 373). Students also need to take at least 6 credits of 300 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

L A 601 Design Representation	4
L A 602 Studio I – Land/Form & Plant/Scape	6
L A 603 Studio II – Living Systems	6
L A 604 Studio III – City Matters	6
L A 605 Studio IV – LandWorks/LandDigits	6
DSN S 546 Interdisciplinary Design Studio	6
or 2 cr. L A 580 Thesis, Creative Comp. Tutorial + 4 cr. L A 599 Creative Comp. or L A 699 Thesis	

### Theory/History/Research: 11 credits

L A 571 Landscape Architectural Theory	3
L A 590D Special Topics: History/Theory/Criticism	3
or L A 578D: LA History elective*	
L A 541 Design Inquiry	3
L A 543 Colloquium I: Landscape Architecture Research	1
L A 545 Colloquium II: Interdisciplinary Research	1

**Technology/Ecology/Materiality: 14 credits**

L A 522	Advanced Plant Technology	3
L A 542	Professional Practice	2
L A 559	Digital Design Methods for Landscape Architecture	3
L A 583	Landscape TopoGraphics	3
L A 587	Landscape Construction	3

**Advocacy/Planning/Policy: 6 credits**

L A 594	Environmental Justice in Built Environments	3
Planning Elective - choose one from:		3
C R P 566	Policy Analysis and Planning	
C R P 568	Planning and Development	
C R P 591	Environmental Law and Planning	
C R P 592	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, SUS E, IND D, or other relevant departments in the college or university.

**Total 80 credits**