Undergraduate Program Assessment

Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning

Student Learning Objectives

Natural Systems
- Understand ecosystems and how they work.
- Able to use plants in design.
- Understand the principles of sustainability.
- Understand landscape ecology methodologies and principles.
- Able to apply concepts of landscape ecology.

Cultural Systems
- Understand how human behavior, perception and use influence the site analysis.
- Understand the basic attributes of human behavior and how they affect perception and the use of space.
- Understand principles of sustainability for human health and well being.
- Apply to apply user needs in design
- Understand landscape preference and human behavior.
- Apply and evaluate a multicultural approach to design.

Design and Planning Theory
- Understand landscape design theory and principles.
- Understand multiple design processes.
- Ability to think creatively and solve problems.
- Ability to think and design three dimensionally.
- Ability to work across multiple scales.
- Understand how urban systems work.
- Understand theories of aesthetics and beauty.
- Understand regional landscape planning, land use and open space planning theory.
- Understand land use and environmental regulations and policy.
- Able to design to meet the needs of a program.
- Able to apply principles of pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular circulation.

Communication
- Able to use graphic methods of representing spatial designs.
- Able to verbally present ideas and information.
- Able to graphically represent abstract ideas and information.
- Able to write.
- Understand public participation tools, strategies and techniques.

Technologies
- Able to use CAD to prepare design and construction drawings.
- Able to use GIS to solve planning problems.
- Able to use digital imaging, layout, and presentation programs.

Site Design and Engineering
- Able to develop or interpret a design program.
- Understand site planning and design methodologies.
- Understand local codes and building standards.
- Understand on-site storm water management, bioengineering for erosion control and bioremediation.
- Understand sustainable construction practices and material selection.
- Able to apply principles of universal design.
- Able to produce site grading plans.
- Able to integrate construction information from concept to design development.

Research Skills
- Able to use research methodologies, data collection, analysis and management.
- Understand methods of literature review.
• Understand processes of critical thinking.
• Able to develop a research idea, question, and hypothesis.

History and Criticism
• Understand how landscape change relates to human action throughout history.
• Understand the development of landscape and planning theories, their roots and their evolution through time.
• Understand how designed landscapes have been affected over time by cultural, political, social and economic movements.
• Able to develop a vocabulary of design styles and elements based on historical antecedents.
• Able to critically analyze precedents.
• Understand important literature in the profession.
• Understand planning and design of built works.

Values and Ethics
• Understand professional practice norms and standards.
• Understand theories of environmental ethics.
• Understand project management skills.

Assessment tools
• Curriculum map (see below)

Highlighted recent activities
• In the Fall, the BSLA curriculum committee met to discuss intended learning objectives for the Landscape Architecture undergraduate major. The BSLA curriculum committee then shared a draft list with the entire Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning faculty. They then revised the list and asked the faculty to indicate how their courses contribute to the learning objectives. The committee completed a matrix and further compared the matrix to student work presented in final studios and other courses, resulting in slight revisions of the matrix. Results were analyzed in terms of level of coverage of learning objectives in courses. The committee plans to reduce the number of learning objectives, better calibrate the distinction faculty were asked to make between “primary competency” and “secondary competency”, and adjust the curriculum in response to learning objectives that were addressed only sparingly.