

ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

For Professional Programs in Landscape Architecture



Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board

**American Society of Landscape Architects
636 Eye Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001-3736**

Updated TBD

Updated September 2024

Published September 2021

Table of Contents

PREAMBLE	Page
Introduction	3
Core Values	3
 STANDARDS	
Standard 1: Program Mission and Goals	5
Standard 2: Program Autonomy, Governance, and Administration	7
Standard 3: Professional Curriculum	9
Standard 4: Student Outcomes and Experiences	15
Standard 5: Faculty	17
Standard 6: Outreach to the Institution, Communities, Alumni, and Practitioners	21
Standard 7: Facilities, Equipment, and Technology	22

[Cover Image: To be updated](#)

Introduction

The mission of the Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board (LAAB) is to evaluate, advance, and advocate for the quality of professional landscape architecture education. To do that, the Board creates and applies Accreditation **Standards** and Accreditation **Procedures**, which LAAB develops with input from the communities of interest. The Standards are statements of the essential conditions, across seven areas, that a professional program in landscape architecture must meet to achieve accreditation. A professional program may be offered in whole or in part through an online platform. A professional program, [including those](#) that offer all or part of its curriculum through an online platform, must demonstrate that it meets all the requirements of these Standards. The Procedures identify the mission, goals, and values of LAAB; define the accreditation process; provide the definitions, interpretation, and applicability of these Standards; and establish the basis for decision-making within LAAB and actions undertaken by LAAB. LAAB regularly reviews and assesses the Standards and Procedures—at a minimum of once every five years—through a process articulated in the Accreditation Procedures.

This document contains the Accreditation Standards.

Core Values

The profession of landscape architecture serves two primary principles in the planning, design, and stewardship of natural and built environments: 1) to protect the health, safety, and welfare of people and communities, including future generations; and 2) to safeguard the health and resilience of natural systems, ecosystems, and non-human inhabitants.

LAAB believes the following Core Values are essential to the education of future landscape architects. Accordingly, the professional program shall embed these Core Values into its curriculum, policies, community, processes, and activities, and identify and engage in contemporary issues in alignment with these Core Values.

1. **Environmental Health, Sustainability, Resilience, and Stewardship**: Landscape architects preserve, plan, design, and steward healthy environmental systems that promote the health and resilience of the environment, people, and cultures. Well-functioning ecological and biological systems are assets essential to the well-being, sustainability, and resilience of current and future generations.
2. **Inclusive Professional Culture and Practice**: [Landscape architects, through their professional activities and products, strive to create, maintain, and expand an inclusive and welcoming climate as demonstrated through documented actions, practices, and outcomes, that embraces differences, reduces barriers to broaden access to educational and career opportunities in the profession, offers respect in words and actions, demonstrates awareness of varied cultural and community contexts, and values people and their perspectives as essential for the health and well-being of diverse individuals and communities.](#)
3. **Human and Community Health and Safety**: Landscape architectural practice impacts individual and community health, safety, and welfare. Landscape architects commit to methodologies that study and understand the public protections, policies, and environmental justice outcomes that improve individual and community health.
4. **Professional Ethics and Responsibility**: Landscape architects serve the environment, the public, and their clients; address inherent conflicts in those services with honesty, integrity, fairness, equality, dignity, and a recognition of diverse and individual rights; and advocate for the principles of the

profession.

5. **Leadership and Innovation**: To practice effectively in changing contexts, landscape architects seek continuous advancement of their own and the discipline's values, knowledge, and skills; create new ideas and knowledge; effect positive change in the environment; and lead, inspire, facilitate, and empower innovation.
6. **Application of the Sciences to the Design of Natural and Built Landscapes**: As practitioners of a discipline firmly rooted in the natural, physical, and social sciences, landscape architects utilize science, technology, engineering, and mathematics to develop innovative, site-specific design solutions that protect [and enhance](#) both human and environmental health and safety.

STANDARDS

Standard 1: Program Mission and Goals

The professional program shall have a clearly defined mission that is supported by goals appropriate to the profession of landscape architecture and the Core Values of these Standards. The program shall demonstrate progress toward the attainment of its mission and goals.

A. Program Mission.

The professional program shall have a mission statement that expresses the underlying purposes and values of the professional program; defines for the faculty, students, prospective students, and institution its values and fundamental purpose; and summarizes why the professional program exists.

Assessment 1: The professional program has a clearly stated mission reflecting its purpose and values, which relates to the institution's mission and addresses the Core Values.

B. Educational Goals.

The professional program shall have clearly defined and formally stated academic goals that reflect the mission and demonstrate that attainment of the [educational](#) goals will advance the professional program's mission.

Assessment 1: The professional program has clearly defined, achievable educational goals [that reflect the program's mission and address the Core Value](#).

Assessment 2: The professional program has an effective procedure that it uses regularly to assess and determine progress in meeting its [educational](#) goals.

Assessment 3: The professional program provides benchmarks for assessing and advancing the professional program in meeting the stated [educational](#) goals.

C. Commitment to [Inclusive Professional Culture and Practice](#)

The professional program shall demonstrate—through concrete steps—systematic, coherent, and long-term efforts to incorporate [inclusive professional culture and practice](#) through its program [strategies and policies](#).

[Assessment 1: The professional program demonstrates that it promotes an inclusive professional culture and practice through areas such as recruitment, curriculum, learning experiences, and program activities.](#)

[Assessment 2: The professional program provides students with educational opportunities and professional practice preparation to engage with diverse perspectives, communities, and cultural contexts through activities such as coursework, projects, service-learning, community-based experiences, and public-facing work.](#)

C. Long-Range Planning Process.

The professional program shall engage in an effective long-range planning and program assessment process.

Assessment 1: At the time of an accreditation review, a professional program has a long-range plan in effect.

Assessment 2: The long-range plan describes how the professional program's mission, goals, and objectives will be met, including strategies to sustain a viable student body through inclusive recruitment, enrollment, retention, and student success efforts, and the professional program documents the review and evaluation process of its long-range plan.

Assessment 3: A professional program reviews and revises its long-range plan (along with its mission, goals, and objectives) periodically and determines whether the plan presents realistic and attainable methods for advancing the professional program's academic mission.

D. Program Disclosure.

A professional program shall accurately disclose the following information about each landscape architecture degree in its literature, in its promotional media, and on its website within a single-click link from the professional program's website:

- a. the professional program's mission, objectives, and goals,
- b. accreditation status,
- c. estimated cost of attendance, including fellowship, assistantship, and scholarship opportunities and other financial support options to reduce the cost of attending,
- d. student retention and graduation rates,
- e. number of degrees granted per year,
- f. percentage of students with timely graduation,
- g. list of required and optional materials and equipment, including an estimated cost as well as available shared resources or alternative access,
- h. supplemental and experiential learning opportunities, associated costs, and potentially available subsidies,
- i. post-graduation employment,
- j. number of licensed faculty, and
- k. in accordance with the Higher Education Act, disclosure of whether or not the program meets the educational requirements for licensure eligibility in each U.S. state.

Assessment 1: The professional program information is accurate, understandable, and accessible to the public.

Assessment 2: The professional program disclosure information can be found with a single-click link from the professional program's website.

F. Program Title.

An accredited professional program's title and degree must incorporate the term "landscape architecture." An institution may offer a program leading to a non-accredited degree with the title "Master of Science in Landscape Architecture" or "Master of Arts in Landscape Architecture" without jeopardizing the institution's accredited degree in landscape architecture. In offering such a degree, an institution must disclose that the degree is not accredited in its public statements and to the Council of Landscape Architectural Registration Boards (CLARB).

Assessment 1: The professional program's title and degree conform to this Standard.

Assessment 2: If a Master of Arts or Master of Science is offered, the program discloses this under Standard 1.E Program Disclosure.

Standard 2: Program Autonomy, Governance, and Administration

The professional program shall have the authority and resources to achieve its mission and goals and shall be recognized as a discrete professional program with the resources, institutional support, and authority to enable achievement of the stated program mission and goals.

A. Institutional Context.

The parent institution must be accredited by an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

Assessment 1: The parent institution is accredited by an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

B. Institutional Support.

The institution shall provide sufficient [personnel-related funding](#) resources to enable the professional program to achieve its mission and goals, and it shall support individual faculty members' development and advancement.

Assessment 1: Funding is available to assist faculty and other instructional personnel with continued professional development, including support in developing funded grants and attendance at conferences.

Assessment 2: Funding is adequate for student support, such as scholarships and work-study employment.

Assessment 3: Adequate support personnel are available to accomplish the professional program's mission and goals.

C. Program Administration.

The landscape architecture program shall be administered as an identifiable, discrete program within its institution. There must be a designated program administrator responsible for the leadership and management functions for the professional program under review. The program administrator shall have significant influence in the budget and personnel management decisions of the professional program.

Assessment 1: The professional program is seen as a discrete and identifiable program within the institution.

Assessment 2: The program administrator holds a faculty appointment in landscape architecture.

Assessment 3: The program administrator exercises effective leadership of and management functions for the professional program. (Where the program administrator is not the primary administrator for the academic unit, as in a landscape architecture program within a multidisciplinary department or school, the landscape architecture leader has the authority to significantly influence the management of resources, including budget, faculty review, tenure and promotion outcomes, and the direction of the professional program.)

D. Faculty Participation in Autonomy, Governance, and Administration

The faculty, [as identified by the program's faculty definition](#), shall participate in program governance and administration.

Assessment 1: The faculty makes recommendations on the [allocation of resources and contributes to operating practices](#).

Assessment 2: The faculty participates, in accordance with institutional guidelines, in developing criteria and procedures for annual evaluation, promotion, and tenure of faculty members.

Assessment 3: The faculty participates, in accordance with institutional guidelines, in developing and applying criteria and procedures for the appointment and assessment of professional program and academic unit leadership.

Assessment 4: The professional program or institution adequately communicates with and provides mentoring services to faculty regarding policies, expectations, and procedures for annual evaluations, tenure, and promotion to all ranks.

Standard 3: Professional Curriculum

The professional degree curriculum [addresses](#) the Core Values of these Standards; the knowledge, skills, and competencies of landscape architecture; and the learning goals stated by the professional program. The curriculum encompasses coursework and co-curricular opportunities intended to develop students' knowledge and skills in landscape architecture.

A. Curricular Expression of the Mission, [Educational](#) Goals, and Core Values.

The professional program shall integrate its mission, [educational](#) goals, and the Core Values into the curriculum.

Assessment 1: The professional program demonstrates how the curriculum addresses its mission and educational goals, and the Core Values.

B. Learning [Objectives](#)

A professional program shall establish learning outcomes that shall include competency in the following:

1. Knowledge

- a. **Design Process, Principles, and Theory**: the range of creative, cultural, and historical approaches to developing material, spatial, and temporal landscape compositions, site-specific design solutions, and other creative responses that are grounded in the natural, physical, and social sciences and address aesthetic, environmental, and social issues and goals.
- b. **Histories and Theories of the Art and Science of Landscape Architecture**: the [knowledge of the built and natural environment, the planning and design of urban and rural communities, and ecological systems, examined through varied historical, cultural, professional, and scientific forces in North America and globally.](#)
- c. **Plants, Ecosystems, and Climate Science**: the abiotic and biotic aspects of ecosystems associated with natural and constructed landscapes; application of ecology, botany, and horticulture principles to the design of the landscape; knowledge of soil science and geology and their impact on the landscape; impacts associated with landscape engineering, development, post-construction management, and maintenance; and the interrelationships between ecosystems and climate.
- d. **Resilience**: the social, human, economic, and environmental principles of sustainability and resilience; landscape performance categories, metrics, and methodologies; and the use of behavioral sciences to assess the impacts of design within diverse social, human, economic, and environmental systems.
- e. **Legal Context of the Profession**: the legal responsibilities and the role of landscape architects to preserve and safeguard human health, safety, and the public welfare through their professional practice; maintaining the intrinsic values of environmental, historic, cultural, and community resources in compliance with legal and regulatory frameworks; and the regulatory professional practice and licensure requirements.

- f. **Professional Practice**: the current and emerging practice opportunities that utilize landscape architectural skills and knowledge in a variety of private, public, academic, and non-governmental settings; project management and delivery; the ethical and professional obligations to clients, communities, the public, and the landscape and environment; and lifelong learning, advocacy, career development, and the role of professional and community organizations.

2. Skills and Competencies

- a. **Assessment**: analysis of the physical, biotic, climatic, and cultural context of a project; comprehensive synthesis of objective and subjective analysis; evaluation of the suitability of a program to multiple sites and prioritization of a site based on program; evaluation of spatial and other relevant data; and communication of the criteria and methodologies used in evaluation.
- b. **Design and Construction**, i.e., generation of multiple design concepts for a project; evaluation and critique of alternatives and synthesis of ideas into a comprehensive, implementable result; application of the natural, physical, and social sciences in the development of innovative and site-specific design solutions; design decision-making that incorporates physical, cultural, climatic, and regulatory context, as well as the diverse needs of users, considering all abilities and modes of perception, equitable access, ecological health, and temporal change, materials and constructability.
- c. **Communication**: [the use of verbal, nonverbal, visual, and written communication to express ideas; solicit ideas from, listen to, and seek to understand and communicate effectively with audiences with varied perspectives, experiences, cultural contexts, knowledge systems, and languages; and thoughtfully provide, receive, and respond to feedback and critiques.](#)
- d. **Digital Literacy**: [the ability to critically evaluate, ethically develop and/or apply, and transparently document the use of digital technologies, including digital computational tools and all forms of artificial intelligence in research, design, representation, and scholarship.](#)
- e. **Construction, Materials, and Methods**: the integration of materials, engineering, specifications, and construction techniques in a design proposal; selection of materials for character, quality, cost, constructability, sustainability, and cultural relevance; preparation of design development, construction documents, details, and understanding of construction administration and oversight.
- f. **Landform/Landscape Engineering and Green Infrastructure**: applying quantifiable principles and practice of engineering, including grading, drainage, water quality and management, and other landform processes, to design landscapes that are accessible, safe, and ecologically sustainable.
- g. **Numeracy/Quantification**: the mathematical calculations to inform and substantiate design and construction performance.
- h. **Landscape Performance**: the ability to define and measure the impact of a design on its environmental, social, and economic goals based on measurable outcomes; identification of types

of data to measure project impact(s); and use of performance metrics to measure performative impacts of a project.

- i. **Inclusive Engagement:** the ability to engage communities with varied perspectives, experiences, and cultural contexts; identify and respond to community needs and priorities, including conditions or barriers that affect participation; and demonstrate effective communication and cultural awareness in community-engaged work.
- j. **Collaboration:** leadership and collaboration on multidisciplinary teams; and the incorporation of knowledge from other disciplines, professions, and perspectives—for example, sustainable development, environmental policies, ethics, ecology, city and regional planning, economics, natural resources, sociology, and anthropology.
- k. **Research (graduate level):** articulation of a clear research theory; selection and application of appropriate research methods; placement of work within an existing body of knowledge and articulation of the significance of the work to the field; the practice of research ethics and responsible conduct; working autonomously and effectively to complete independent projects; and the contribution of new knowledge to the profession to address current and future challenges.

Assessment 1: The curriculum integrates the professional knowledge, skills, and competencies in a clearly defined sequence and documents how required content and competency areas are addressed.

Assessment 2: The curriculum identifies and engages in contemporary issues in alignment with the Core Values.

Assessment 3: The curriculum enables students to pursue academic interests consistent with institutional requirements, enter into the profession, and be prepared to pursue licensure.

Assessment 4: The professional program documents, publishes, and regularly communicates policies and expectations for the critical, ethical, and transparent use of digital technologies, including digital computational tools and all forms of artificial intelligence.

Assessment 5: (For graduate level only.) Student work and other accomplishments demonstrate student competence with research skills.

C. General Studies.

1. In addition to the professional curriculum, a professional degree program at the bachelor's level shall provide an educational context enriched by other disciplines, including but not limited to liberal and fine arts and natural, physical, and social sciences, as well as opportunities for students to develop other areas of interest. This may be covered within the institution's general education requirements.
2. A professional degree at the master's level that does not require all students to have an undergraduate degree before receiving the Master of Landscape Architecture (MLA) shall meet requirement 1.

Assessment 1: Students take courses in the humanities, arts, technologies, mathematics, natural sciences, social sciences, and/or other disciplines.

D. Delivery of and Augmentation to Curricular Experience.

A professional program may be offered in whole or in part through an online platform. A professional program that offers all or part of its curriculum through an online platform must demonstrate that it meets all the requirements of the Accreditation Standards. Students shall participate in service-learning and interdisciplinary curricular experiences outside of the professional program. The professional program shall provide opportunities for co-curricular activities such as institutional and professional activities, internships, off-campus studies, research assistantships, or practicum experiences.

Assessment 1: A professional program that is offered in whole or in part through an online platform demonstrates that it meets all the requirements of the Accreditation Standards.

Assessment 2: The professional program provides students with opportunities to participate in service-learning and collaborative experiences that engage communities directly, incorporate community input, share student work with public audiences, and foster awareness of diverse cultural, social, and environmental contexts.

Assessment 3: The professional program identifies the objectives of—and documents students' participation in—both service-learning projects and interdisciplinary curricular experiences outside of the professional program.

Assessment 4: The professional program provides opportunities for students to augment their formal educational experience—through events such as LABash, ASLA Conference on Landscape Architecture, state and local ASLA chapter events, LAF Symposium and research and activities, and the activities of other professional societies or special-interest groups—and also documents students' participation in these opportunities.

Assessment 5: The professional program provides students with opportunities to share these experiences with their fellow students.

E. Areas of Interest (Bachelor's Level).

The professional program shall provide opportunities for students to pursue or develop focal interests within the discipline of landscape architecture.

Assessment 1: The professional program provides opportunities for students to pursue independent projects, focused electives, optional studios, certificates, and/or minors beyond the core curriculum.

F. Research and Innovation (Master's Level).

The professional program shall provide opportunities for graduate students to develop independent research and/or innovative projects to address current and future challenges by advancing the knowledge within the discipline.

Assessment 1: The professional program requires that thesis or terminal project exhibit creative and independent thinking and contain a significant research and/or innovation component.

G. Syllabi.

Appropriate syllabi shall be maintained and distributed for courses.

Assessment 1: Syllabi include course learning objectives, course content, and the criteria and the methods used to evaluate student performance.

Assessment 2: Syllabi identify the various levels of accomplishment students need to achieve to successfully complete the course and advance in the curriculum.

Assessment 3: Syllabi include a list of required and optional materials and equipment, and provide an estimated cost as well as available shared resources or alternative access.

Assessment 4: Syllabi identify expectations for the use of digital technologies, including digital computational tools and all forms of artificial intelligence.

Assessment 5: Syllabi are complete, consistent, and readily accessible to all students throughout the period of course offering and delivery.

H. Curriculum Evaluation and Development.

The professional program shall define continuous, systematic, and well-documented curriculum evaluation procedures that include appropriate evaluation methods and metrics that allow the professional program to determine its effectiveness in advancing its learning objectives. The chosen evaluation methods and metrics shall track the professional program's progress in advancing its mission and goals, aligning with the Core Values, and promoting student competency.

Assessment 1: The evaluation procedures identify the professional program's evaluation methods and metrics, curriculum development, and the parties responsible for review.

Assessment 2: The evaluation examines, documents, and tracks the professional program's progress in advancing its mission and goals (including instruction, scholarship, and service), alignment with the Core Values, and promoting student competency.

Assessment 3: Evidence that the evaluation procedures are being implemented is provided. (Evidence may include reports or data summaries prepared for review, minutes of meetings at which results were discussed, action items that were identified, etc.)

Assessment 4: The professional program regularly assesses and documents its strengths and weaknesses related to this Standard and identifies opportunities for improvement in accordance with the evaluation procedures.

Assessment 5: The professional program assesses and documents the effectiveness of curricular development and refinement in addressing issues identified through the evaluation process.

Assessment 6: Students participate in evaluation of the professional program, courses, and curriculum.

I. Academic Integrity.

The institution establishes—and the professional program implements and demonstrates—clear, specific policies related to student integrity and academic honesty in all course delivery methods.

Assessment 1: The professional program affirms that the student who takes an examination or submits project work is the same person who enrolled in the professional program, and that the examination or project results will reflect the student's own knowledge and competence.

J. Degree Length (Bachelor's Level).

A professional program offering an accredited undergraduate professional degree must meet the following degree length requirements:

1. An undergraduate professional program leading to a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture (BLA) or a Bachelor of Science of Landscape Architecture (BSLA) degree must be a single-degree program that has a minimum number of total credit hours equivalent to its institution's definition of four academic years of full-time undergraduate enrollment.
2. A professional program may allow for advanced placement up to one academic year, provided it has a clearly articulated policy and criteria for advanced placement and how the professional program determines whether an applicant meets the criteria. The advanced placement may be counted towards the minimum credit hours referenced in Standard 3.J.1 above.
3. Any professional program that offers a degree with "Bachelor of Landscape Architecture" or "BLA," or "Bachelor of Science of Landscape Architecture" or "BSLA," in the degree title must meet the requirements of the LAAB Accreditation Standards. This includes a professional program that offers a BLA degree with an advanced placement track or pathway. An institution that offers a program or track leading to a degree with the words "Bachelor of Landscape Architecture" or "BLA," or "Bachelor of Science in Landscape Architecture" or "BSLA," in the title that does not comply with these Standards is not eligible to offer any accredited BLA or BSLA degree.

Assessment 1: The bachelor's-level professional program meets the degree length requirements above.

Assessment 2: There is a clearly articulated policy and criteria for advanced placement and for how the program determines whether the applicant meets the criteria.

K. Degree Length (Master's Level).

A professional program offering an accredited graduate professional degree must meet the following degree length requirements:

1. The graduate professional program leading to an MLA must be a single-degree program that has a minimum number of total credit hours equivalent to its institution's definition of three academic years of full-time graduate enrollment.
2. A professional program may allow for advanced placement of up to one academic year of study, provided it has a clearly articulated policy and criteria for advanced placement and demonstrates how the professional program determines whether an applicant meets the criteria. The advanced placement may be counted towards the minimum credit hours referenced in Standard 3.K.1 above.
3. Any professional program that offers a degree with "Master of Landscape Architecture" or "MLA" in the degree title must meet the requirements of the LAAB Accreditation Standards. This includes a professional program that offers an MLA degree with an advanced-placement track or pathway. An institution that offers a program or track leading to a degree with the words "Master of Landscape Architecture" or "MLA" in the title that does not comply with these Standards is not eligible to offer any accredited MLA degree.

Assessment 1: The master's-level professional program meets the degree length requirements above.

Assessment 2: There is a clearly articulated policy and criteria for advanced placement and for how the program determines whether the applicant meets the criteria.

Standard 4: Student Outcomes and Experiences

The professional program shall prepare students—through educational programs, advising, mentoring, and other academic and professional opportunities—to pursue careers in landscape architecture upon graduation. The professional program shall foster the Core Values of these Standards and the knowledge, skills, and competencies embodied in the art and science of landscape architecture.

A. Student Outcomes.

The professional program shall prepare students to pursue careers in landscape architecture.

Assessment 1: Student work and other accomplishments demonstrate that students are achieving the professional skills and competencies required for entry-level positions in the profession of landscape architecture.

Assessment 2: Students demonstrate their achievement of the professional program's learning outcomes as defined by the professional program's curriculum and as stated in Standard 3.

Assessment 3: Students demonstrate, through documented coursework, projects, community-engaged experiences, or other assessed work, the ability to identify and respond to varied community needs, consider relevant cultural and social contexts, and engage effectively with communities, clients, and stakeholders.

B. Student Advising.

The professional program shall provide students with effective advising and mentoring that recognizes and supports their individual circumstances and continues throughout their educational careers.

Assessment 1: Students receive effective advising regarding academic development.

Assessment 2: Students receive effective advising regarding career and personal development, the benefits of and pathways to licensure, general licensure requirements, and the need for continuing education.

Assessment 3: Students are made aware of professional opportunities, advanced educational opportunities, licensure requirements, and continuing education requirements associated with professional practice.

Assessment 4: Students have the opportunity to provide feedback on their academic experiences and their preparation for the landscape architecture profession.

C. Student Experiences.

In addition to curricular engagement, the professional program shall provide students with an educational experience that considers the diverse needs and obligations of students, and also provides opportunities to learn about and grow within the profession of landscape architecture. The professional program shall provide students with a learning environment that cultivates an understanding of the role of the community in the profession and the profession in the community, the changing culture and environment of the profession, and competency regarding inclusive professional culture and practice.

Assessment 1: Students participate in service-learning projects or equivalent community-engaged curricular experiences that foster community engagement.

Assessment 2: The educational structure of the professional program considers the varied needs and obligations of students, recognizes and affirms the importance of study/work-life balance, and seeks to

overcome barriers to student success.

Assessment 3: Students have an opportunity to engage with various aspects of the landscape architecture profession and the skills required in practice.

Assessment 4: Students have an opportunity to provide input regarding the program's efforts to foster an inclusive community and environment.

Standard 5: Faculty

The professional program shall have sufficient, qualified, and experienced faculty and instructional personnel to advance its program mission and objectives, to instill the Core Values of these Standards, and to prepare students for professional practice in landscape architecture. The program shall support faculty through equitable workloads and compensation, professional development, and other resources necessary for faculty and program success.

A. Faculty Capacity and Credentials

The program demonstrates that the capacity of its faculty and instructional personnel is sufficient to deliver a quality professional curriculum through teaching, student advising, extracurricular learning, and professional development, as well as to conduct program activities in research and scholarship, administration, service, and professional engagement. Faculty capacity is demonstrated through a combination of minimum numbers of faculty with continuing appointments and instructional FTE, based on degree program(s), enrollment, and workload distribution, as well as the credentials of those faculty.

1. Definition

The program's formal definition of faculty shall serve as the basis for evaluation under Standard 5 Faculty. Each professional program shall define who constitutes its faculty and provide criteria for each faculty category. The program shall also identify all individuals contributing to administration, instruction, advising, and other educational functions, and systematically classify those individuals as either faculty with continuing appointments (see definition below) or part-time, temporary, or short-term contract faculty in accordance with its established definitions.

Faculty with continuing appointments: Faculty whose appointments provide an expectation of continued association with the program and who have sustained responsibilities for program continuity beyond course instruction, including involvement in areas such as curriculum development and maintenance, student advising and mentorship, program governance, assessment, and other activities that support the ongoing quality of the program. This may include tenured and tenure-track faculty, as well as faculty with renewable or multi-year appointments whose responsibilities extend beyond teaching individual courses.

Assessment 1: The professional program provides a clear and consistent definition of faculty aligned with its institution's policies, that identifies faculty by appointment type and role, and serves as the basis for evaluating faculty capacity, credentials, qualifications, and responsibility.

2. Faculty Capacity

The program shall have sufficient, qualified, and experienced faculty and instructional personnel to deliver its curriculum, advise students, administer the program, and sustain its academic and professional activities. Faculty capacity should be appropriate to the program size, enrollment, curriculum, and distribution of faculty responsibilities.

Assessment 1: Faculty size is proportionate to program size and keeps pace with enrollment and program growth to support the sustained delivery of the program's mission, goals, and educational objectives.

For a single program, there should be at least 4 full-time equivalent instructional faculty, 3 of whom are faculty members with continuing appointments; for an academic unit with dual programs, there should be at least 6 full-time equivalent instructional faculty, 5 of whom are faculty members with continuing appointments.

Assessment 2: The program demonstrates that it has sufficient faculty FTEs dedicated to teaching in order to support course delivery, studio instruction, and other requirements of the full curriculum.

Assessment 3: Student-to-faculty ratios in studios are typically not greater than 15:1.

3. Faculty Credentials

The program shall have faculty with the academic and professional credentials necessary to deliver a quality professional landscape architecture curriculum. Faculty credentials should collectively reflect the expertise expected in landscape architecture education, professional practice, and research.

Assessment 1: The program maintains an appropriate proportion of faculty holding professional degrees in landscape architecture (BLA, BSLA, MLA), meeting or exceeding established thresholds.

For a single program, the required minimum number of faculty holding a professional degree in landscape architecture is the greater of either three faculty members or at least 75% of the total faculty, rounded to the nearest whole number. For example, a single program with 4 faculty members should have three faculty members meeting this qualification; a single program with 7 faculty members should have 5 faculty members meeting this qualification

For an academic unit with dual programs, the required minimum number of faculty holding a professional degree in landscape architecture is the greater of either five faculty members or at least 75% of the total faculty, rounded to the nearest whole number. For example, a dual program with 6 faculty members should have five faculty members meeting this qualification, whereas a dual program with 15 faculty members should have 11 faculty members meeting this qualification.

Assessment 2: The program includes faculty with continuing appointments who demonstrate professional practice experience and/or hold professional licensure in landscape architecture. Such faculty must constitute at least one-third of the program's faculty, with any fractional result rounded up to the next whole number. For example, a program with seven faculty members should have no fewer than three faculty members with continuing appointments who demonstrate professional practice experience and/or hold professional licensure in landscape architecture. Of the faculty meeting this requirement, at least one faculty member in a single program and at least two faculty members in dual programs must hold a professional license in landscape architecture.

Assessment 3: The professional program demonstrates that faculty with continuing appointments have appropriate research training and experience, and contribute to the curriculum, instruction, and overall program quality through research and scholarship.

B. Faculty Qualifications

The qualifications of the faculty, instructional personnel, and teaching assistants support the program's objectives and are appropriate to their assigned roles and responsibilities. Faculty are also appropriately engaged in the academic and administrative activities of the program.

Assessment 1: Faculty collectively demonstrate the advanced education, professional and academic experience, and research or practice-based expertise necessary to support the program's mission, educational objectives, curriculum, and scholarly activities.

Assessment 2: Faculty qualifications are appropriate to their assigned courses and methods of instruction, to support LAAB-defined core competencies and the program's educational goals.

Assessment 3: Faculty are appropriately integrated into the professional program's administration, curriculum development, and curriculum evaluation in a coordinated and organized manner.

C. Faculty Development.

Faculty shall be engaged in activities that support their professional growth, contribute to the profession, and advance the mission, curriculum, Core Values, and effectiveness of the professional program.

1. Faculty Scholarly, Professional, and Service Activities

Faculty shall engage in scholarly, creative, professional, and service activities, with appropriate opportunities and support for their continued development.

Assessment 1: Faculty activities such as scholarly inquiry, research, creative and professional practice, and service to the profession, university, and community are documented, peer-reviewed, and disseminated through appropriate media such as journals, professional magazines, and community and university publications.

Assessment 2: Faculty have sufficient opportunities to pursue professional development and advancement, including scholarly activities addressing emerging issues, inclusive teaching and practice, and engagement with diverse communities, and have access to available funding and other resources for conference attendance, equipment, technical support, and other professional needs.

Assessment 3: Faculty participate in university and professional service, student advising, and other activities that enhance the effectiveness of the professional program.

2. Faculty Evaluation

Faculty and instructional personnel shall be evaluated regularly through transparent processes that support their professional development, teaching effectiveness, and contributions to the professional program.

Assessment 1: The professional program systematically evaluates the development, teaching effectiveness, and competence of faculty and instructional personnel through a peer and program review process and uses the results for individual and program improvement.

Assessment 2: Programs regularly provide, audit, and update internal policies and procedures related to faculty development in an inclusive professional culture.

Assessment 3: The program ensures that all faculty undergoing evaluation are adequately informed of the policies, procedures, and criteria governing the evaluation process.

D. Faculty Compensation, Workload, and Retention

Faculty shall have appropriate compensation, support, and workloads that promote professional success, faculty retention, and sustainability of the professional program.

1. Faculty Compensation and Support

Faculty shall receive compensation and program support appropriate to their roles and responsibilities and to support professional development and retention.

Assessment 1: Faculty compensation and financial support are evaluated and are appropriate to promote faculty retention and productivity.

Assessment 2: The professional program provides support for faculty who are interested in obtaining and maintaining licensure, including access to professional development opportunities, financial assistance, or institutional resources that promote continued credentialing related to professional practice.

2. Faculty Retention and Continuity

The program shall support faculty retention and maintain sufficient continuity among faculty with continuing appointments to sustain the curriculum and other essential program responsibilities.

Assessment 1: The professional program has a plan to maintain faculty with continuing appointments to ensure that faculty turnover and temporary leave, individually or collectively, do not undermine the mission and goals of the professional program or the continuous delivery of the professional curriculum.

3. Faculty Workload and Equity

Faculty workloads shall be manageable, appropriately and equitably distributed relative to individual roles and responsibilities and institutional and program expectations.

Assessment 1: Expectations for faculty workload and distribution of responsibilities (of teaching, research, service, and professional engagement) are similar to expectations in related academic units in the institution.

Assessment 2: Faculty workload is appropriately assigned and manageable, in alignment with individual contractual responsibilities.

Assessment 3: The program maintains a clear distribution of core functions, teaching, research, service, and professional engagement, such that essential roles and responsibilities are not concentrated in a small number of individuals.

Standard 6: Outreach to the Institution, Communities, Alumni, and Practitioners

The professional program shall maintain effective relationships with the institution, the public, its alumni, and practitioners in order to enhance the professional program and educate its constituencies regarding the profession of landscape architecture.

A. Interaction with the Institution and Public.

The professional program shall represent and advocate for the profession by interacting with the institution, the local community, practitioners, and the public at large.

Assessment 1: Community engagement and service-learning activities undertaken by students and faculty are documented and publicly disseminated on a regular basis.

Assessment 2: The professional program interacts with the institution to build awareness of the program; and to interact with local, diverse, and historically underserved communities, and with the general public at large, to advance knowledge and understanding of landscape architecture; all in a way that builds students' cultural competence during their educational career.

B. Interaction with Alumni and Practitioners.

The professional program shall engage alumni and practitioners as a resource to create partnerships that build the depth and capacity of the professional program.

Assessment 1: The professional program maintains or has access to a current registry of alumni that includes information pertaining to current employment, professional activity, postgraduate study, and significant professional accomplishments.

Assessment 2: The professional program engages its alumni and other practitioners in activities that include efforts to expand students' educational opportunities, mentoring, career advising and potential employment, curriculum review and development, service on a formal advisory board, fundraising, and continuing education.

Assessment 3: The professional program regularly engages alumni and practitioners to support inclusive professional culture and practice, broaden awareness of educational and career pathways in landscape architecture among current and prospective students.

Assessment 4: The professional program engages with alumni and practitioners to provide opportunities for community engagement and service-learning for students, scholarly development for faculty, and professional guidance and financial support for the professional program.

Assessment 5: The professional program acknowledges and celebrates the significant professional accomplishments of its alumni and benefactors within the institution and the public at large.

Standard 7: Facilities, Equipment, and Technology

The professional program shall provide faculty, students, and staff access to facilities, equipment, libraries, and other resources necessary for achieving the professional program's mission and goals.

A. Facilities.

A professional program shall provide facilities and tools—in designated, code-compliant space—that enable achievement of the professional program's mission and goals and are adequately maintained to serve the professional and educational requirements of the faculty, students, and staff.

Assessment 1: Faculty, staff, and administration are provided with appropriate office, presentation, and meeting space.

Assessment 2: Students are assigned studio workspaces and have access to collaborative workspace adequate to meet the professional program's needs and designed to meet the diverse needs of students.

Assessment 3: Facilities are adequately maintained and in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Life Safety Code, and applicable building codes. (Acceptable documentation includes reasonable-accommodation reports from the university ADA-compliance office and/or facilities or risk management office.)

B. Information Systems and Technical Equipment.

The professional program shall provide to students, faculty, and other instructional and administrative personnel the software, information systems, and technical equipment needed to achieve its mission and goals.

Assessment 1: The information systems and technical equipment are sufficient, accessible, equitable, and available to serve the diverse needs of faculty and students.

Assessment 2: [Funding is sufficient to maintain, update, and replace computers and appropriate software, other types of equipment, and technical support.](#)

Assessment 3: The professional program has a strategy for funding, maintaining, and advancing technology that supports learning.

C. Library Resources.

The professional program shall provide access to a digital and/or physical library and/or specialized resources sufficient to support its mission and goals.

Assessment 1: Collections are adequate to support the professional program and include access to a broad cross-section of publications, periodicals, research, and other materials that reflect the diverse social, cultural, economic, political, and scientific forces that shape the art and science of landscape architecture.

Assessment 2: Courses integrate library and other resources.

Assessment 3: Library hours of operation and access to library resources are convenient, accessible, and adequate to serve the diverse needs of faculty and students.