



December 15, 2019

Rodney Swink, FASLA
Chair
Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board
636 I Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. Swink and members of the Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments during the Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board (LAAB) standards revision period. The timing of these revisions comes as members of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) are calling for the Society and the profession to take the lead in the ongoing climate crisis. Climate change is having profound effects on landscapes, global ecologies, and human culture. Landscape architects must be trained to effectively speak to the myriad of issues raised by the climate crisis. ASLA urges LAAB to call for landscape architecture curricula that increase dedicated coursework on climate change and that ensure more aggressive results to halt this global crisis.

ASLA collected feedback from a recent Student Climate Crisis Forum held during last month's ASLA Conference on Landscape Architecture in San Diego, as well as from members of ASLA's Committee on Education and Education and Practice Professional Practice Network and through discussions with executives from some of the nation's largest landscape architecture firms. ASLA believes strongly that while knowledge around climate change issues is often addressed throughout existing curricular requirements, dedicated coursework on climate change needs to be explicitly required, so that the next generation of landscape architects will be adequately prepared to design and plan resilient and climate-smart communities and projects.

ASLA urges you to include the following curricular topics highlighted in red to Standard 3: Professional Curriculum in the LAAB Accreditation Standards:

History, theory, philosophy, principles, and values

- design history
- design theory
- criticism
- **stewardship of earth systems**
- health, safety, welfare

Design processes and methodology

- critical thinking
- analysis
- ideation
- synthesis
- site program
- iterative design developments
- design communication
- **climate literacy**



Systems and processes-natural and cultural (related to design, planning, and management)

- plants and ecosystems sciences
- built environment and infrastructure
- design to reduce carbon footprint
- design mitigation, adaptation, and resiliency methods
- human factors and social and community systems
- human health, social equity, and well-being

Communication and documentation

- written communication
- oral communication
- visual and graphic communication
- design and construction documents
- numeracy, quantitative problem-solving, and communication
- community and client engagement
- community engagement, including education on climate mitigation and adaptation techniques

Implementation

- construction technology and site engineering
- evaluation to determine the appropriate implementation of mitigating, adaptive, or resiliency measures in design
- environmentally responsible procurement of site materials
- integrated landscape technologies and practices of water management
- use and management of plants and vegetation to address global warming issues
- policies and regulation

Computer applications and advanced technologies

- visualization and modeling, including as it relates to climate change mitigation and adaptation
- communication (conceptual and construction drawings)
- geospatial analysis

Assessment and evaluation

- site assessment to include measurement of carbon footprint
- pre-design analysis
- landscape performance (ecological, effects of future climate change, social, and economic)
- post-occupancy evaluation
- visual and scenic assessment

Professional practice

- values
- ethics, including climate, environmental, and social justice
- practice
- construction administration



Research and scholarly methods (for master's-level degree programs)

- quantitative and qualitative methods
- establishing a research hypothesis
- framing research questions
- literature/case study review/precedent review
- research integrity and protection of human subjects
- communication of research
- research to project climate-related effects

Additionally, mitigating climate effects and adapting to the climate crisis requires interdisciplinary collaboration. Through education, training, and experience, landscape architects have the skills to collaborate with allied design professionals (architects, planners, engineers), scientists (natural, physical, social), health care professionals, and others to lead the execution of complex land-based projects. As design professionals, landscape architects can and should be leading teams with these professionals and community stakeholders to achieve solutions that are timely, cost effective, and resilient, and achieve just, equitable, and inclusive communities for all. For that reason, ASLA believes that educational curricula need to allow for and encourage more interdisciplinary learning and networking.

The climate crisis affects everyone, particularly our vulnerable and underserved communities. As such, we must ensure future generations of landscape architects are prepared to create climate solutions that benefit all.

Sincerely,

Wendy Miller, FASLA
President
American Society of Landscape Architects