



August 7, 2020

The Honorable Chad Wolf
Acting Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528

Re: Request to continue support of student visas, the Optional Practical Training (OPT) Program, and for landscape architecture to be added to STEM Designated Degree Program.

Dear Secretary Wolf:

As leaders of world-renowned landscape architecture programs throughout the nation, we are writing to urge your continued support of F student visas and the Optional Practical Training (OPT) program. The undersigned also strongly support the recent request that landscape architecture be added to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Designated Degree Program List.

The practice of landscape architecture is rooted in the STEM disciplines. Landscape architects plan and design all the spaces outside buildings, including community master plans, multimodal transportation networks, transit-oriented development projects, outdoor park and recreation spaces, water and stormwater management projects, and more. The landscape architecture university programs in the United States, which we represent, are the finest in the world and attract the best and brightest talent from around the globe who are drawn to our higher education institutions. One attractive aspect of studying in the U.S. is the Optional Practical Training (OPT) program, which grants graduates temporary stay in the country to enhance their education while contributing to the U.S. economy.

There are 99 accredited landscape architecture programs within 73 institutions across the country, of which leaders representing 97 programs have signed on to this request; however, the professional demand for graduates drastically outpaces the supply of students. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the need for planning and developing new and existing sites for commercial, industrial, and residential construction projects is expected to drive employment growth. Environmental threats and increased demand for sustainably designed buildings and open spaces should also spur demand for the services of landscape architects.¹ Furthermore, efforts to conserve water, prevent waterway pollution, mitigate flooding, and control wildfires are expected to persist.

¹ <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/architecture-and-engineering/landscape-architects.htm#tab-6>

New generations of landscape architects will be needed to fulfill all of these urgent needs.

The continuation of F visas and the OPT program, in addition to the DHS STEM designation, will allow our universities to recruit landscape architecture students from a global pool of highly qualified candidates. Many foreign graduates of these programs express the desire to work for landscape architecture firms in this country, helping to address our nation's growing needs. Support for the F visas and OPT program, as well as the implementation of DHS's STEM designation, is essential if our nation is to generate an adequate number of landscape architects to serve communities and expand our economy.

Once again, we strongly urge continued support for F visas related to international students and the Optional Practical Training (OPT) program and respectfully request that DHS add the discipline of landscape architecture (CIP Codes 04.0601 and 04.06) to the STEM Designated Degree Program List.

If you require any additional information or have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Kristopher Pritchard, Accreditation and Education Director at the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA), at kpritchard@asla.org or 202-216-2359.

Thank you in advance for your favorable consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Arizona State University, Landscape Architecture Program, Joseph M. Ewan ASLA
Auburn University, Landscape Architecture, David Hill, ASLA
Ball State University, Landscape Architecture, Martha Hunt, ASLA
Boston Architectural College, School of Landscape Architecture, Maria Bellalta, ASLA
California Polytechnic State University, Landscape Architecture, Beverly Bass, ASLA
California State Polytechnic University Pomona, Department of Landscape Architecture, Andrew O. Wilcox, ASLA
City College of New York, Graduate Landscape Architecture Program, Spitzer School of Architecture, Catherine Seavitt Nordenson, ASLA
Clemson University, Master of Landscape Architecture, Paul Russell, ASLA
Colorado State University, Department of Horticulture & Landscape Architecture, Jessica G. Davis
Cornell University, Landscape Architecture, C. Timothy Baird, ASLA
Florida International University, Landscape Architecture + Environmental and Urban Design, Roberto J. Rovira, ASLA
Harvard University, Master in Landscape Architecture, Anita Berrizbeitia, ASLA

Illinois Institute of Technology, Master of Landscape Architecture, Ron Henderson
FASLA

Iowa State University, Department of Landscape Architecture, Carl Rogers, ASLA

Kansas State University, Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional &
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Kent State University, Master's Program in Landscape Architecture, Cathy Marshall,
ASLA

Louisiana State University, Robert Reich School of Landscape Architecture, Mark E.
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Michigan State University, Landscape Architecture Program, Ming-Han Li, Ph.D., ASLA

Michigan State University, Landscape Architecture Program, Jun-Hyun Kim, Ph.D.,
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Mississippi State University, Department of Landscape Architecture, Sadik C. Artunc,
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Morgan State University, Graduate Program in Landscape Architecture, Laurel McSherry

North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, Landscape Architecture,
William Harrison, ASLA

North Carolina State University, Department of Landscape Architecture and
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North Dakota State University, Department of Landscape Architecture, Matthew
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Oklahoma State University, Landscape Architecture Program, Michael Holmes, ASLA

Pennsylvania State University, Department of Landscape Architecture, Eliza
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Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico, Landscape Architecture Graduate Program,
Edmundo R. Colón-Izquierdo, ASLA

Purdue University, Landscape Architecture Program, Sean Rotar, ASLA

Rhode Island School of Design, Masters of Landscape Architecture, Johanna Barthmaier-
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Rutgers University, Department of Landscape Architecture, Richard Alomar, ASLA

South Dakota State University, Landscape Architecture Program, Don Burger, ASLA

State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry,
Department of Landscape Architecture, Douglas M. Johnston, Ph.D., ASLA

Temple University, Landscape Architecture, Sasha Eisenman, Ph.D.

Texas A&M University, Bachelor of Landscape Architecture, Galen D. Newman, Ph.D.,
ASLA

Texas Tech University, Department of Landscape Architecture, Eric A. Bernard, ASLA

The Ohio State University, The Knowlton School, Landscape Architecture, Kristi
Cheramie

The University of Arizona, School of Landscape Architecture and Planning, Lauri
Macmillan Johnson, ASLA

The University of Oklahoma, Master of Landscape Architecture, Leehu Loon, ASLA
Thomas Jefferson University, Landscape Architecture, Kim Douglas, ASLA
Universidad Ana G. Méndez, International School of Design and Architecture, María Gabriela Flores Kearns
University of Arkansas, Department of Landscape Architecture, Ken McCown, ASLA
University of California, Berkeley, Master of Landscape Architecture, Louise A. Mozingo
University of California, Davis, Landscape Architecture + Environmental Design, David de la Peña, Ph.D.
University of Colorado Denver, Master of Landscape Architecture, Louise Bordelon, Ph.D.
University of Connecticut, Landscape Architecture, Peter Miniutti, ASLA
University of Delaware, Bachelor of Landscape Architecture, Jules Bruck, Ph.D., ASLA
University of Florida, Department of Landscape Architecture, Maria C. Gurucharri, ASLA
University of Georgia, College of Environment and Design, Ashley Steffens, ASLA
University of Georgia, College of Environment and Design, Sonia Hirt, Ph.D.
University of Georgia, College of Environment and Design, Ronald B. Sawhill, ASLA
University of Idaho, Landscape Architecture, Elizabeth Scott, ASLA
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Department of Landscape Architecture, David L. Hays
University of Kentucky, Bachelor of Science in Landscape Architecture, Ned Crankshaw, FASLA
University of Maryland, Landscape Architecture, Christopher Ellis, Ph.D., ASLA
University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Landscape Architecture, Patricia McGirr
University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Landscape Architecture, Robert Ryan, FASLA
University of Minnesota, Landscape Architecture, Joseph Favour, ASLA
University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Landscape Architecture, Mark A. Hoistad
University of Nevada Las Vegas, Landscape Architecture, Daniel H. Ortega, ASLA
University of New Mexico, Department of Landscape Architecture, Katya Crawford, Affiliate ASLA
University of Oregon, Department of Landscape Architecture, Roxi Thoren, ASLA
University of Pennsylvania, Weitzman School of Design, Richard Weller, ASLA
University of Rhode Island, Landscape Architecture, Will Green, ASLA
University of Southern California, Graduate Program in Landscape Architecture + Urbanism, Alison Hirsch, Ph.D., ASLA
University of Tennessee, School of Landscape Architecture, Gale Fulton, ASLA
University of Texas at Arlington, Landscape Architecture Program, Diane Jones Allen, D. Eng., ASLA
University of Texas at Austin, Graduate Program in Landscape Architecture, Hope H Hasbrouck, ASLA

University of Virginia, Master of Landscape Architecture, Michael Lee

University of Washington, Seattle, Department of Landscape Architecture, Ken Yocom, ASLA

University of Wisconsin-Madison, Department of Planning and Landscape Architecture, Samuel Dennis Jr, Ph.D. ASLA

Utah State University, Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning, Keith Christensen

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Landscape Architecture Program, Terry Clements, FASLA

Washington State University, Landscape Architecture, Jolie Kaytes, ASLA

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West Virginia University, Landscape Architecture Program, Elisabeth (Lisa) Orr, ASLA