



Advocating, advancing, and evaluating quality education in Landscape Architecture

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Dr. Mary Padua, ASLA, Program Chair
Department of Landscape Architecture
3-109 Lee Hall

Clemson University
Clemson, South Carolina 29634-0512

Dear Dr. Padua:

The Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board (LAAB) at its February 10-11, 2017 meeting granted provisional accreditation for a period of two (2) years to the course of study leading to the first professional MLA degree at Clemson University. This status is subject to review of annual reports and maintenance of good standing.

Accreditation is awarded on a time-certain basis. The two-year period of provisional accreditation ends December 31, 2018. Accordingly, the MLA program is next scheduled for a review during the fall of 2018.

In making its decision, LAAB considered the program's self-evaluation report (SER), the visiting team report, the institution's response to the team report, and discussions with team members and program faculty.

There was a long and serious discussion by LAAB concerning the program. In particular, LAAB is concerned that of the two Recommendations Affecting Accreditation, both were previous Recommendations from the last accreditation review in fall 2009. Standard 1, Section D, Assessment 3 of the LAAB Accreditation Standards asks the ROVE team if the SER responds to Recommendations from the previous accreditation review. Although the program has a long-range plan in place, due to several administrative changes in the university, college, and department over the last few years, the department is going through a process to implement a new plan. At the end of the 2016 spring semester faculty retreat, the department was set to work on updates to this plan but due to three faculty members absent this effort focused on the BLA program only. The program has been given a May 2017 deadline from the Dean of the College.

Additionally, issues with planting design being incorporated and delivered in the curriculum has been listed again as a Recommendation, similarly to the previous review. In addition to the imbedding of conceptual planting design in second and third year studios, Design Implementation III, a recently approved third course in the technology sequence is intended to include planting design. However, given that this course has yet to be formally incorporated into the MLA curriculum and acknowledging the LAAB team's recommendation, the faculty intends to investigate further ways to incorporate more clearly "when" and "where" planting design would be taught in the MLA program curriculum.

Lastly, LAAB is concerned of the team’s overall view of the program from the Introduction section of the SER. The team states that “for the MLA program to move forward there are important considerations to be made about stabilization of the faculty unit. There is currently a culture in the faculty that appears to be a potential area of concern for the University as experienced by the 2016 LAAB site visit team. The curriculum also needs to be stabilized and reviewed from a standpoint of offering unique opportunities to graduate students pursuing their first professional degree in landscape architecture. Additionally, an overall stabilization of administrative functions in the Department need to be made including leadership, bylaws, strategic plan, and tenure and promotion guidelines.”

Therefore, since one or more standards were met with recommendation, where both recommendations were continued from the previous review, and the cited deficiencies are such that continued overall program quality or conformance to standards is uncertain, LAAB voted to grant Clemson University provisional accreditation for a period of two (2) years.

Enclosed is a list of recommendations affecting accreditation (to be responded to in annual reports). This list was developed by LAAB from the materials reviewed during the meeting. As a reminder, provisional accreditation status is not deemed to be an adverse action and is not subject to be appealed, as outlined in the LAAB Accreditation Standards and Procedures.

On behalf of the visiting team, I would like to thank you for the hospitality extended to them by the faculty, staff, and students.

Sincerely,



Ned Crankshaw, ASLA
LAAB Chair

Enclosure

cc: James P. Clements, PhD, President

**Clemson University
MLA Program
LAAB Meeting
February 10-11, 2017**

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations Affecting Accreditation

1. Engage in a collaborative and meaningful long range strategic planning process. With the changes in the university including the new university strategic plan and the new college strategic plan it is critical for the program to do the same to align itself strategically with those missions (Standard 1).
2. Planting design should be clearly incorporated and delivered in the curriculum (Standard 3).