



Advocating, advancing, and evaluating quality education in Landscape Architecture

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Anita Berrizbeitia, ASLA
Chair of the Department of Landscape Architecture / Professor
Graduate School of Design
Harvard University
48 Quincy Street
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

Dear Professor Berrizbeitia:

The Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board (LAAB) at its July 17-18, 2015 meeting granted accreditation for a period of six (6) years to the course of study leading to the first professional MLA degree at Harvard University. This status is subject to review of annual reports and maintenance of good standing.

Accreditation is awarded on a time-certain basis. The six-year period of accreditation ends June 30, 2021. Accordingly, the MLA program is next scheduled for a review during the spring of 2021.

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

Enclosed is a list of recommendations affecting accreditation (to be responded to in annual reports) and suggestions for improvement (to be responded to in annual reports). This list was developed by LAAB from the materials reviewed during the meeting.

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,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Stephanie Rolley".

Stephanie Rolley, FASLA
LAAB Chair

Enclosure

cc: Drew Faust, President

**Harvard University
MLA Program
LAAB Meeting
July 17-18, 2015**

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Recommendations Affecting Accreditation

1. Develop a written long-range plan for the Program with clear and concise goals and objectives, applicable policies, measureable metrics, and timeline for implementation (Standard 1).
2. Develop a written record documenting the progress of the Program meeting its Educational/Program Goals, and a schedule to update it periodically (Standard 1).
3. Embark on a process of clearly defining and articulating measurable learning outcomes for first, the program, and second, for each required course as a component of the course syllabus. Programmatic learning outcomes should be clearly tied to subject matter areas described by the LAAB (Standard 3).
4. Develop a thoughtful and systematic plan for the assessment of student learning across the curriculum, and incorporate a process for faculty to use assessments in meaningful efforts to revise and refine courses to further the program's mission and goals (Standard 3).

Suggestions for Improvements

1. Develop an Annual Reporting process which (Standard 1):
 - a. identifies current trends and needs of the profession of landscape architecture, and describes methodologies for introducing or reinforcing the curriculum to address evolving needs;
 - b. compiles data from each incoming class regarding their educational or contextual background (undergraduate degree, original region) and query each class to identify their career goals in context to the profession of landscape architecture; and
 - c. identifies new relationships with alumni, communities, and institutions in the Greater Boston region, the United States, and across the globe. Identify regions where the Program can expand its reach through research and outreach, potential partner institutions and organizations/NGO's, as well as forethought to regions and communities that are underserved by the profession of landscape architecture.
2. The MLA Program's Mission should be revised to specifically include reference to "ecology" as it has been intrinsically woven into the curriculum fabric of the Program (Standard 1).
3. Consider adopting a clear and written policy for promotion and tenure for "ladder faculty," potentially resulting in an improvement in both real and perceived sense of equity in the promotion, tenure and hiring practices (Standard 2).
4. While student work does suggest that broad program goals regarding "outcomes" are being met, the department has not articulated a systematic process for first, defining the curriculum's desired learning outcomes in a measurable way; and then second, assessing the degree to which specific learning outcomes or objectives are being met. The department

should work to define and systematize the definition and assessment of student learning outcomes prior to the next reaccreditation (Standard 4).

5. Develop a calendar of regularly-scheduled events that promote greater practitioner alumni contact with current students in order to expose the students to the different aspects of the profession, current design topics, and commence the development of mentoring opportunities. Encourage alumni to visit the Program when in Boston and reach out to Option Studios that may occur in their respective city (Standard 6).
6. Broaden the opportunities for service learning projects in under-served communities, as well as those facing environmental justice issues. In keeping with the global nature of Harvard's presence, these may take place in the Greater Boston region, as well as in small or large communities in other states or in countries where sophisticated and detailed planning or landscape architectural design are absent (Standard 6).
7. Address safety problems associated with leaking roof over the studio trays in Gund Hall (Standard 7).