



*Advocating, advancing, and evaluating quality education in Landscape Architecture*

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Accreditation and Education  
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Dr. Charles Klein, ASLA  
Interim Program Chair  
Landscape Architecture Program  
College of Agriculture Sciences and Natural Resources  
Texas Tech University  
Lubbock, Texas

Dear Dr. Klein:

The Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board (LAAB) at its February 5-6, 2016 meeting granted provisional accreditation for a period of two (2) years to the course of study leading to the first professional MLA degree at Texas Tech 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, 2017. Accordingly, the MLA program is next scheduled for a review during the fall of 2017.

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.

There was a long and serious discussion by LAAB concerning the program. In particular, LAAB is concerned about the number of recommendations and considerations that were presented by the team including issues related to long-range planning, the curriculum, and the need for master's level theses/projects to consistently display the rigor expected of graduate study.

Enclosed is a list of recommendations affecting accreditation (to be responded to in annual reports) and considerations for improvement. 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary Kesler".

Gary Kesler, FASLA  
LAAB Chair

Enclosure

cc: Dr. Mark S. Schlissel, President

**Texas Tech University  
MLA Program  
LAAB Meeting  
February 5-6, 2016**

**SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS**

**Recommendations Affecting Accreditation**

1. The Department needs to develop, publish, and implement an up-to-date long-range plan that contains true educational goals and objectives, which address learning objectives and the knowledge, skills, and abilities the program's MLA graduates should expect to have upon graduation (Standard 1).
2. The Department needs to develop and implement a process for assessing progress towards achieving the educational goals and objectives and necessary changes to the long-range plan that provides for independent review and feedback to the department (Standard 1).
3. The curriculum needs to be reconsidered to ensure that it addresses all of the required subject matter particularly in the areas of: natural and cultural systems including principals of sustainability; public policy and regulation; and construction documentation and administration as well as the list of knowledge, skills, abilities and values required in Standard 1 (Standard 3).
4. The curriculum, through the student work, must be evaluated by the program to ensure that it meets the rigor required by the graduate school and that students are achieving the programs learning objectives by graduation and are fully ready for entry-level positions in the field (Standard 4).
5. Create active, engaged connections with alumni and the established Department Advisory Board. The development of both a graduate and undergraduate board would greatly help to improve the curriculum, improve outreach, and allow the program to focus on current design practices (Standard 6).

**Considerations for Improvements**

1. There needs to be a consistent presentation of information: for example, the mission statement accessed from the website Mission tab is different than that found in the strategic plan (Standard 1).
2. The Chair and mentors of new faculty should be as explicit as possible in helping the new research faculty understand the expectations of the department, college, and university regarding distribution of effort and its impact on promotion and tenure (Standard 2).
3. The program and the students should work to develop theses or projects that contain a more significant research component, scholarly component or creative component (Standard 3).

4. Faculty assignments should be clarified to provide a better understanding of workload, including: percentage of teaching, research and service (Standard 5).
5. Investigate the review of semester work on university 'Dead' day to determine if courses have met the learning objectives stated for each course. (This is being used by the College of Architecture) (Standard 5).
6. Service learning projects, on the campus and in regional communities, should be encouraged as part of the graduate curriculum to help promote the program and allow for an expanded base for course projects (Standard 6).
7. The department should work with the library to update the book collection in the main library (Standard 7).