



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

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Ron Leighton  
LAAB Administrator

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Brian Katen, ASLA, Chair  
Landscape Architecture Program Chair  
School of Architecture + Design  
121E Burruss Hall  
Virginia Tech  
Blacksburg, VA 24061

Dear Professor Katen:

The Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board at its July 26-27, 2013 meeting granted accreditation for a six (6) years to the course of study leading to the first professional MLA degree at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State 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, 2019. Accordingly, the MLA program is next scheduled for a review during the spring of 2019.

In making its decision, the 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,

Mary Myers, FASLA  
LAAB Chair

Enclosure

cc: Dr. Charles Steger, FAIA, President

**Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University**  
**MLA Program**  
**LAAB Meeting**  
**July 26-27, 2013**

**Summary of Recommendations and Suggestions**

**A. Recommendations Affecting Accreditation**

None

**B. Suggestions for Improvements**

1. Landscape Architecture faculty should clearly articulate the structure and intent of each MLA track (1<sup>st</sup> professional and post-professional) and their roles and function: i.e. within the larger program mission of landscape architecture, in the School of Architecture & Design, and in the College of Architecture and Urban Studies at the main campus (Standard 1).
2. The Landscape Architecture program and NCR/MLA should continue to collectively develop an overarching mission statement, with general and program-specific educational goals and supporting objectives; the group should consider ways to build benchmarks for program assessment (Standard 1).
3. Given the complex administrative structure, there should be more effective regular and complete consultation between the MLA Director in Alexandria, the Landscape Architecture Program Coordinator in Blacksburg and The SA+D Director on faculty personnel evaluation and program planning (Standard 2).
4. Provide additional administrative support to meet the needs of the MLA program (Standard 2).
5. Clearly articulate the specific knowledge, skills, abilities and values expected by students at time of graduation and how these align with the program mission, goals and objectives (Standard 3).
6. Revise the professional practice course so that it adequately reflects the wide range of practice opportunities and career tracks available to landscape architects (Standard 3).
7. Engage and recognize the contributions of adjunct faculty members and to engage them in faculty activities at the WAAC such as faculty meetings, strategic planning, student portfolio reviews etc. who are an important part of the success of the NCR/MLA program, and partners in the delivery of the WAAC programs (Standard 5).
8. Improve handicapped accessibility to all program facilities (Standard 7).
9. Assess advances in the information technology industry (such as the use of tablets and 3D printing) and their potential future integration into MLA education (Standard 7).