



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

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Ron Leighton  
Accreditation Manager

August 17, 2011

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Charles B. Yuill, Program Chair  
Landscape Architecture Program  
West Virginia University  
Davis College of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Design  
P.O. Box 6108  
Morgantown, WV 26506-6108

Dear Professor Yuill:

The Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board at its August 1-2, 2011 meeting granted accreditation to the course of study leading to the first professional BSLA degree at West Virginia 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, 2017. Accordingly, the BSLA program is next scheduled for a review during the spring of 2017.

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,

Whitney Talcott, FASLA  
LAAB Chair

Enclosure

cc: President James Clements

**West Virginia University  
BSLA Program  
LAAB Meeting  
August 1-2, 2011**

**Summary of Recommendations and Suggestions**

**Recommendations Affecting Accreditation:**

1. Develop a new mission statement which clearly expresses its core values, carefully reflects the contemporary practice of landscape architecture, and identifies the role the program will play in the institution's accomplishment of its 2020 Strategic Plan and in landscape architecture's rapidly changing global profession. The mission statement should serve as a benchmark for assessing whether the Program's educational goals have been accomplished (Standard 1).
2. Engage in a systematic and ongoing long-range planning process which will result in specific action items for program and curricular development, and an implementation timeline for needed program changes and advancement (Standard 1).
3. Develop a recruitment process which strives for diversity of the student body, including minority and international students with targets reflecting the institution's demographics (Standard 2).
4. Curriculum should be assessed and revised to better coordinate design studio offerings which cover a consistent and broad range of professional practice areas, and to provide a sequenced offering of technical/construction coursework with particular attention to earthwork and grading instruction and construction documentation (Standard 3).
5. Develop a better tracking system for alumni, and develop effective methodologies for periodic alumni survey for professional practices and accomplishments and more effectively involve alumni in program development (Standard 6).
6. Develop better procedures and processes to facilitate students' ability for digital output of course documents and projects (Standard 7).
7. Work with the West Virginia University Libraries to augment and update library holdings including the acquisition of materials associated with the broad range of historic and contemporary practices of landscape architecture, and in developing other contemporary library media, design journals and periodicals (Standard 7).

**Suggestions for Improvements**

1. Develop effective ways to orient new faculty to academia and to mentor faculty with regard to tenure and promotion policies and procedures, and scholarly productivity expectations (Standard 2).
2. Consider the development of master syllabi to serve as a guideline or template in order to assure consistency of course topics and coverage from year to year, and to accommodate varied faculty assignments (Standard 3).
3. Institute a process for archiving student work. Develop a structured placement program for internship and full-time placement opportunities (Standard 4).
4. Develop a strategy for faculty development and expansion which carefully addresses a perceived need for academic and administrative leadership (Standard 5).
5. Work with College and Institutional Administration to provide a structured administrative load for the Program Chair and possibly for undergraduate and graduate program administration (Standard 5).