MLA Handbook

Master of Landscape Architecture
College of Fine and Applied Arts
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Professor W. Sullivan, Head
Professor D. Hays, Associate Head
C. Emmerling-DiNovo, Assistant Head and Advisor

101 Temple Buell Hall
611 Lorado Taft Drive
Champaign, IL 61820

Phone  (217) 333-0176
Fax      (217) 244-4568
E-mail  LADept@illinois.edu
URL     http://www.landarch.illinois.edu

August 2014

Cover art by MLA student Phillip Burke.
Master of Landscape Architecture
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

The University

Since its founding in 1867, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign has earned an international reputation for its distinguished faculty, outstanding resources and academic programs, and broad research capabilities. Graduate study is offered in more than 150 disciplines, and enrollment includes 9,000 graduate and professional students from every state and from over 100 foreign countries. The University attracts more than $200 million per year in private, state, and federal research grants and contract appropriations. Academic resources are among the finest in the world. Along with those of Harvard and Yale, the University Library ranks among the three largest academic collections in the nation. Its computerized catalog provides easy access to more than 12 million items housed in the Main Library and departmental libraries campus-wide.

The Department

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign was among the first institutions in the nation to offer an educational program in landscape architecture, with a degree program in place by 1907. Today, the Department of Landscape Architecture sponsors one of the leading graduate-level academic and research programs in the country. The first professional MLA degree program is fully accredited. An accredited BLA program and a PhD program are also offered. The Department has produced some of the best-known practitioners in the US, and its students and faculty have gone on to direct programs at many other universities. Additional information, including the Department’s on-line Newsletter, may be found at the website: www.landarch.illinois.edu.

The MLA Program

The objectives of the MLA Program at the University of Illinois are to provide each student with a specialization relevant to the central priorities of contemporary landscape architecture as well as fundamental research skills and proficiency in the traditional core methods of the profession. Specialization is developed and articulated through required and elective coursework and, for some, the MLA thesis. The faculty of the Department is distinguished internationally for wide-ranging scholarly, professional, and creative expertise including community and urban design; ecological and sustainable design; architectural and landscape history and methods; cultural heritage; social and environmental justice, and public health. Two-thirds of the core faculty have doctoral degrees. Affiliated faculty members represent numerous University units. Students may also pursue a joint MLA/MUP program or a joint MLA/MBA.
Our students come from diverse academic backgrounds in the arts and humanities, as well as the design disciplines. Some are recent graduates, whereas others are experienced design practitioners or second-career aspirants from entirely different disciplines. Those with an accredited undergraduate degree in landscape architecture enter a two-year program. Students with other non-design undergraduate degrees take prerequisite courses in the foundation skills related to landscape architecture and should expect a two-and-one-half to three-year program. All MLA students (except those with BLA degrees and one year of practice) are required to complete a three-month professional internship. There are no substitutes for this requirement. All MLA students are expected to graduate within five years of their initial registration.

Application Procedures

A complete application for admission should include:

1. Application for Admission and Graduate Appointment ([http://www.grad.illinois.edu/admissions/apply/](http://www.grad.illinois.edu/admissions/apply/))
2. Transcripts of all prior college-level work.
3. Portfolio of design work (from students with visual arts backgrounds).
4. Graduate Record Exam (GRE) scores.
5. TOEFL or IELTS score (required of non-native speakers of English).

Applicants must submit a transcript from every college attended. When applying on-line applicants may scan and upload their transcripts. Applicants who enroll will be required to submit certified originals sent directly from the granting institution(s). A minimum grade point average of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) for the last 60 credit hours of undergraduate study is required.

A portfolio must accompany the application if the student's undergraduate or professional work is in a design field. Non-design students may submit examples of creative work, although a portfolio is optional. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit their portfolios digitally.

While the GRE is required, the Department does not require a minimum score. The results of the GRE are particularly helpful when an applicant has been out of school for a long period or has a borderline GPA.

For non-native speakers of English, the Department requires a minimum TOEFL score of 89/iBT or a minimum IELTS (academic exam) score of 6.5 (with a score of 6.0 or higher in all sub-sections). Applicants with TOEFL scores between 89-96 are strongly encouraged to complete an Intensive English course prior to enrollment.

Letters of reference are important factors in the admissions process. At least one letter should come from a former instructor. Unless you have been away from school for a long period, at least two of your letters should be from academics.
Because applicants to the MLA program are not required to have an undergraduate degree in landscape architecture, the Statement of Intent is closely reviewed to identify a match between the applicant’s interests and the Department's resources and strengths. The Statement of Intent should, at a minimum, address the following:

1. How do your previous experiences (academic study, work, volunteer activities) relate to your intended study of landscape architecture?
2. What areas of study, related to the discipline of landscape architecture, do you wish to pursue in our program?
3. At this point, how do you plan to utilize your MLA degree? What type of work do you hope to pursue after graduation from our program (e.g., private sector, public sector, teaching, research)?
4. What specific resources (faculty and other) does the University of Illinois possess for the kind of work you hope to pursue as a graduate student on this campus?

For full consideration, the completed application package must be received by January 15 previous to the fall semester of admission. Because of the time involved with international applications (overseas mail is often slow), early submission is encouraged, as is early receipt of TOEFL/IELTS scores.

For further information, please contact:

Graduate Coordinator
Department of Landscape Architecture
101 Temple Buell Hall
611 East Taft Drive
Champaign, Illinois 61820
e-mail: ladept@illinois.edu

Admissions

The Department is limited as to the number of new students it can enroll each year. Admission decisions are never made prior to the application deadline. All applications are reviewed by the MLA Program Committee and ranked based on academic record, statement of intent, creative work, reference letters, GRE scores, and overall fit with the resources and strengths of the Department. Special consideration is given for academic, professional and personal experiences, and objectives that appear to increase possibilities for success in the program’s specialty areas. Applicants with undergraduate grade-point averages below 3.00 are very rarely considered, and their admission requires special petition by the Department to the Graduate College. Applicants are advised of admissions results by on or before April 1. Given the structure of the curriculum, students must begin their studies in the fall semester. Accordingly, applications for spring semester matriculation are rarely considered.
Advising

All incoming MLA students meet with the Assistant Department Head prior to registration for the first semester. At that time, courses are selected. The Graduate Coordinator and the Assistant Department Head assist with technical issues such as registration, funding, and the certification of course work as meeting degree requirements.

Computers

Students are required to acquire a laptop capable of running software used in our degree programs. There are a few University-provided workstations in the studios that are a shared resource. The i5 is the minimum recommended processor, 4GB of memory is the minimum/8GB is recommended, and a dedicated graphics card of 512MB or greater is recommended.

MLA Program of Study

Graduate studies consist of an integrated program of course work, studios, and specialization through coursework or thesis. Courses provide information about critical issues and methods, and studios provide opportunities to apply and explore those through design. Specialization in a landscape related topic is acquired through coursework and thesis (for those who pursue research) that allows each individual to pursue an issue of particular interest in greater depth.

To ensure that appropriate knowledge and experiences are gained, the MLA curriculum includes required prerequisite and core courses along with recommended and elective courses. Prerequisite and core courses must be taken for a grade; credit-no credit is not an option for those courses.

Students must successfully complete a minimum of 48 credit hours of graduate work (courses with 400- or 500- level numbers). Eight credit hours will be awarded for the thesis (LA 599). A minimum of 24 credit hours must be in graduate-level landscape architecture coursework. At least 18 credit hours must be in the 500 series. Up to four hours of LA 599 may be counted toward this requirement, with the remaining 14 coming from coursework. Up to 8 hours of LA 590 credit may be counted towards the degree. Students are required to complete a three-month internship for five hours of academic credit. Typically this is completed in a summer semester. Students may choose to do a Minor in Heritage Studies administered by CHAMP (Collaborative for Cultural Heritage Management and Policy).

After completion of LA 501/Theory and Practice and LA 597/Research Methods, students choose either the Coursework Option (develop a specialization through coursework) or the Thesis Option (register for LA 599/Thesis). Students must have completed all required coursework, have at least 40 credit hours of non-thesis coursework, and have successfully completed the requirements of specialization in order to participate in the Department’s commencement ceremony.

To obtain the MLA degree, each student must complete all requirements within five years from the beginning of enrollment in the program. After that time, requests to complete degree requirements, including the thesis, will be denied.
Courses

Required Courses OF ALL:

LA 438 Design Workshop Studio (taken twice, 5 credit hours each)
LA 470 Social/Cultural Design Issues (3 credit hours)
LA 501 Landscape Architecture Theory and Practice (2 credit hours)
LA 537 Landscape Planning and Design Studio (5 credit hours)
LA 597 Research Methods (3 credit hours)

-------- an approved Ecology course (3-4 credit hours)

The following courses are required of all students who do not possess an undergraduate degree in Landscape Architecture or Architecture:

LA 241 Landform Design and Construction
LA 280 Design Communications I
LA 281 Design Communications II
LA 336 MLA Design Studio (1st fall semester, 1st spring semester)
LA 342 Site Engineering
LA 343 Landscape Construction
LA 345 Professional Internship (5 hours)
LA 346 Professional Practice
LA 438 Design Workshop II (2nd & 3rd spring semesters)
LA 513 History of World Landscapes
HORT 301 Woody Landscape Plants I

Courses listed below are required of all students with Architecture degrees:

LA 336 MLA Design Workshop I (1st fall semester)
LA 342 Site Engineering
LA 345 Professional Internship (5 credit hours)
LA 438 Design Workshop II (1st & 2nd spring semesters)
LA 513 History of World Landscapes
HORT 301 Woody Landscape Plants I

Prerequisite courses are rarely waived. Only the Assistant Head, in consultation with appropriate faculty members, may waive courses. The demonstration of high-quality, equivalent work produced elsewhere (through either formal study or experience), reference letters, or results of a proficiency exam may be used in the review process. Approval of the waiver will be placed in the student’s file.
Approved Ecology Course

All MLA students are required to complete one ecology course. Carefully review course descriptions in the suggested list and if you are uncertain about your preparation for a course, contact the instructor with your concerns/questions. Be certain to select graduate-level (400- or 500-level) courses and those that offer a minimum of 3 credit hours. Not all courses are offered every year. If you are interested in a certain course, contact the unit offering it for more information. Do not wait until your final semester to complete this requirement. If you do, your options will be very limited. You may propose an appropriate alternative to the courses listed below in consultation with the Assistant Head.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UP 405</td>
<td>Watershed Ecology and Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UP 406</td>
<td>Urban Ecology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEE 432</td>
<td>Stream Ecology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESE 445</td>
<td>Earth Resources Sustainability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG 406</td>
<td>Fluvial Geomorphology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG 408</td>
<td>Watershed Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOL 401</td>
<td>Geomorphology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB 439</td>
<td>Biogeography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB 451</td>
<td>Conservation Biology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB 452</td>
<td>Ecosystem Ecology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB 453</td>
<td>Community Ecology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA 570</td>
<td>Landscapes and Human Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRES 401</td>
<td>Watershed Hydrology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRES 403</td>
<td>Watersheds &amp; Water Quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRES 407</td>
<td>Wildlife Population Ecology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRES 416</td>
<td>Forest Biology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRES 419</td>
<td>Environment &amp; Plant Ecosystems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRES 420</td>
<td>Restoration Ecology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRES 429</td>
<td>Aquatic Ecosystem Conservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRES 439</td>
<td>Environment &amp; Sustainable Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRES 456</td>
<td>Integrative Ecosystem Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRES 465</td>
<td>Landscape Ecology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Sample Course of Study

Students entering without design backgrounds:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Spring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LA 280  Design Communications I (3)</td>
<td>LA 241  Landform Design (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA 336  MLA Design Studio (5)</td>
<td>LA 281  Design Communications II (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA 501  Theory &amp; Practice (2)</td>
<td>LA 336  Design Workshop I (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HORT 301  Woody Ornaentals I (4)</td>
<td>LA 513  History of World Landscapes (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA 342  Site Engineering (4)</td>
<td>LA 343  Landscape Construction (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA 346  Professional Practice (2)</td>
<td>LA 438  Design Workshop II (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA 537  Landscape Planning and Design Studio (5)</td>
<td>LA 597  Research Methods (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>approved ecology course (3-4)</td>
<td>Elective(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summer</strong> LA 345  Professional Internship (5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA 470  Social/Cultural Design Issues (3)</td>
<td>LA 438  Design Workshop II (5) or LA 599 Thesis (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA 599  Thesis (4) or Electives</td>
<td>Electives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students entering with BSAS or BArch degrees:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Spring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LA 336  MLA Design Studio (5)</td>
<td>LA 438  Design Workshop II (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA 342  Site Engineering (4)</td>
<td>LA 513  History of World Landscapes (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA 501  Theory &amp; Practice (2)</td>
<td>LA 597  Research Methods (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HORT 301  Woody Ornaentals I (4)</td>
<td>Elective(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA 346  Professional Practice (2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summer</strong> LA 345  Professional Internship (5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA 599  Thesis (4) or Electives approved ecology course (3-4)</td>
<td>LA 438  Design Workshop II (5) or LA 599 Thesis (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electives</td>
<td>Electives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA 470  Social/Cultural Design Factors (3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA 537  Landscape Planning &amp; Design Studio (5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students entering with BLA degrees:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Spring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LA 470  Social/Cultural Design Issues (3)</td>
<td>LA 438  Design Workshop II (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA 501  Theory &amp; Practice (2)</td>
<td>LA 597  Research Methods (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA 537  Landscape Planning &amp; Design Studio (5) approved ecology course (3-4) Elective</td>
<td>Elective(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA 599  Thesis (4) or electives</td>
<td>LA 438  Design Workshop II (5) or LA 599 Thesis (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electives</td>
<td>Electives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Specialization

Through coursework and the MLA thesis, students develop a specialization that reflects their interests and career aspirations in keeping with the wide range and rich potentials of contemporary landscape architecture. Examples of specialization undertaken by past graduates include, but are not limited to, community and urban design; ecological design; cultural heritage, history and design; public health and well-being; energy systems and infrastructure; social and environmental justice; and landscape-based practices of art.

In all cases, specialization involves the development of in-depth understanding of theoretical and practical issues pertinent to the area of inquiry, including critical questions and concerns, historical and conceptual models, and potential implications. Work is undertaken in the media, formats, and range of scales appropriate to the area of inquiry.

Specialization: community and urban design

Building on theory related to social and cultural issues, this specialization focuses on place-based design and action research. Areas of interest covered include cultural diversity, community revitalization, and social and environmental justice. Theory and models of urban design are explored, with particular attention to social and ecological implications. The primary scales of inquiry are those of neighborhood and urban core, although regional issues are also addressed. Coursework is appropriately interdisciplinary, drawing on architecture, planning, and other fields.

Recommended Courses
ANTH 557 Social Construction of Space
ARCH 423 Social and Behavioral Factors for Design
ARCH 424 Gender and Race in Contemporary Architecture
GEOG 483 Urban Geography
LA 570 Landscapes and Human Health
RST 545 Sociology of Leisure
SOC 447 Environmental Sociology
SOC 565 Megacities of Global South
UP 474 Neighborhood Revitalization
UP 481 Urban Communities and Public Policy
UP 473 Housing and Urban Policy Planning

Specialization: cultural heritage history and design

This specialization focuses on issues surrounding cultural heritage landscape. Coursework addresses landscape history, preservation, and heritage management. Inquiry covers a range of scales, from site to region. Coursework is appropriately interdisciplinary, drawing on architecture, archaeology, anthropology, and other fields, while intersecting with the CHAMP (Cultural Heritage and Museum Practices) program on campus.
Recommended Courses
ARCH 418  History of the Urban Environment
ARCH 419  Historic Building Preservation
ARCH 510  History of World Landscapes
ARCH 511  Seminar in Ancient Architecture
ARCH 512  Seminar in Medieval Architecture
ARCH 513  Seminar in Renaissance and Baroque Architecture
ARCH 516  Architecture Seminar 1800-2000
ARCH 518  Recording Historic Buildings
ARCH 519  Conservation of Building Materials
ARTH 415  The Archaeology of Greece
ARTH 416  The Archaeology of Italy
ARTH 460  Museum Management
ARTH 462  Museum Theory and Practice (same as ANTH 462)
ARTH 462  Collections, Museums, and Patrons
LA 427  American Vernacular Cultural Landscape
LA 460  Heritage Management
LA 593  Islamic and South Asian Landscapes
LA 594  Cultural Heritage Landscapes
RST 570  Cultural Aspects of Tourism
UP 420  Planning for Historic Preservation

Specialization: ecological design

The specialization in ecological design proposes a creative merging of natural processes with human needs and concerns. Ecology and resource conservation are framed as bases for design. Strategies of conservation, regeneration, and stewardship are applied at multiple scales, applying new technologies to support sustainable landscapes and communities.

Recommended Courses in addition to those listed under Approved Ecology Courses
ATMS 421  Earth Systems Modeling
GEOG 480  Principles of GIS
HORT 456  Sustainable Landscape Design
NRES 474  Soil and Water Conservation
UP 519  Advanced GIS
Joint Degree Programs - MLA/MUP & MLA/MBA

A joint degree program is a campus-approved program in which a student concurrently pursues two specifically identified degrees, and those degrees are conferred simultaneously. The total time for the two degrees can be decreased by a predetermined maximum through the acceptance of required courses in one program as electives in the other, if so approved. A list of approved joint degree programs and individual program requirements can be found in the Programs of Study, including any exceptions to the simultaneous conferral rule.

A student interested in a pursuing joint degree should consult both departments, as they must be admitted separately to each program as a joint degree candidate. A student in a joint degree program must be admitted to each degree program and be enrolled in each program for at least one term after admission, which could be spring, summer or fall, and must complete the minimum requirements for each degree.

Students may propose a joint program combining the MLA with the Master of Urban Planning (MUP) or the Master of Business Administration (MBA). Such students must submit a proposal to the Graduate Coordinator describing the interdisciplinary value of the proposed joint program and show how the second degree serves as a specialization in the landscape architecture curriculum. Typically students are required to complete a number of Urban Planning or Business courses prior to applying to a joint program. Both units must approve the proposal. The proposal, plan of study, and a petition are submitted to the Graduate College for approval. Students who are on academic probation may not apply for a joint program.

If an MLA student is taking primarily UP or MBA courses it is our department policy not to fund them in that semester(s). For ease of scheduling and meeting concurrent enrollment requirements students in a joint program typically focus on one program in any given semester. For continued funding, a fellowship student must make adequate progress towards the completion of the MLA degree.

**MLA/MUP**: Students must complete all MLA degree requirements, including any required 200- and 300-level prerequisites. At least 24 hours of 400- and 500-level credit must be in Landscape Architecture courses. In addition, at least 40 hours must be in Urban Planning course work. The student must complete a minimum of (a) 88 total hours of graduate-level credit, or (b) a minimum of 40 graduate-level hours under the UP rubric and 40 graduate-level hours for the MLA degree. 24 hours of the landscape architecture course credit must be taken under the LA rubric. At the department’s discretion up to 8 hours of graduate-level UP course work may be applied to the MLA degree. The student will complete a joint MLA thesis/MUP thesis project, working under either the LA or UP rubric. The committee chair must be full-time in either Landscape Architecture or Planning. One member must be from the other unit.

**MLA/MBA**: Students may choose to earn their major degree and simultaneously complete an MBA, with 12 fewer required hours than when pursuing both degrees independently. Students must be enrolled in the MBA program for three terms and complete all the requirements of their primary degree. Interested students should see the joint program requirements and contact the MBA program for more information.
Limited / Full Standing

Applicants with at least 3.00 grade point averages (on a 4.00 scale) for the last sixty hours of undergraduate study are admitted to this program under full graduate standing. Applicants with grade-point averages below 3.00 or low TOEFL/IELTS scores are very rarely considered for admission. When accepted, such students are admitted under limited status. Limited status for GPA implies probationary admittance, with elevation to full graduate standing contingent upon successful completion (minimum 12 hours and a GPA of at least 3.00) of the first semester in the program. Students with low TOEFL/IELTS scores are required to take an English as a Second Language Placement Test and generally required to enroll in non-credit “English as a Second Language” courses and take a reduced academic load in the first semester. In keeping with Graduate College policy, fellowship and assistantship opportunities are not available to students on limited status.

Graduate College/Department Minimum Grade Point Average

The Department requires a minimum GPA of 3.00 to continue in the program. This minimum is also enforced by the Graduate College. Students who have a semester GPA and/or an overall GPA below 3.00 at the end of any semester of enrollment will be placed on probation. Such students are not eligible for department-sponsored assistantships. Once a student is placed on probation, he/she will have one semester in which to raise his/her overall GPA to 3.00. Failure to do so will result in dismissal by the Graduate College. A student admitted on limited status due to a low undergraduate GPA must meet the department minimum GPA at the end of the first semester of registration or be dismissed by the Graduate College. For more information, see the Graduate College Probation Policy.

Annual Assessment

In accordance with Graduate College policy (http://www.grad.illinois.edu/policies/annualreview) and per Graduate College policy requiring that a graduate student be making satisfactory academic progress to hold an assistantship, the Department of Landscape Architecture conducts an annual review of all MLA students. An annual review helps a student progress through the program by allowing timely identification of deficiencies, clarification of expectations for academic performance, and identification of opportunities for improvement.

Financial Aid

Opportunities for merit-based financial aid include fellowships and assistantships that provide tuition and partial fee waivers. It is Department policy to distribute financial support, in whatever form, as widely as possible. Award of financial support for a given semester or year does not imply continued support. University and Creative and Performing Arts fellowships are normally for one semester only. In general, the Department places a higher priority on financial assistance for students still in their two or three year "normal" enrollment expectancy than for those continuing to enroll beyond that time; particular skills will sometimes override this consideration in the case of assistantships. University-wide openings can be found at the GSAC web page (www.gsac.illinois.edu).
Continuing and required "normal progress" towards the degree, full-time enrollment, a grade point average of 3.00 or better, and no EX (excused) grades more than one semester old are prerequisites for any financial support, except in extraordinary circumstances. Additional factors such as outstanding performance not reflected in GPA, amount of course work taken each semester, number of EX grades or dropped courses, and appraisals by course instructors, may also be used for evaluation, particularly in the case of candidates of roughly comparable GPAs.

It is University policy that fellowships, assistantships, and tuition/fee waivers be awarded on the basis of academic merit and, where pertinent, qualifications for a specific task. Except in special, explicit exceptions, financial need is not a criterion. Check the Graduate Student Handbook for limits on the number of hours carried per semester when holding an assistantship.

Financial Aid for Incoming Students

Since the application form is used both for admission to the Graduate College and as an application for a graduate appointment, all applicants are automatically considered for financial aid opportunities. Most aid is awarded on the basis of academic achievement or the ability to perform a specific job. An award of financial aid for the first semester/year is not a guarantee of aid for the semester/year thereafter.

University Fellowships include a tuition and fee waiver and are allocated through a complex campus competition system. The department normally nominates a candidate and an alternate; an extremely high GPA (e.g., above 3.85) and outstanding references are required. A Fellow is also expected to perform teaching or research duties for a part, but not all, of his or her stipend.

Graduate College Fellowships (stipend plus full tuition and partial fee waivers) are for under-represented minority students who show potential for success in graduate study, but who, because of deficiencies in their undergraduate preparation, are not ready to serve as assistants or to compete successfully for awards based on academic achievement. These are also awarded in an all-University competition for which the department may nominate a limited number.

Creative and Performing Arts Fellowships (full tuition and partial fee waiver, plus a stipend of $6,000 – one semester only) are awarded competitively. Criteria for selection are based primarily upon creative achievements. Newly admitted students receive priority. The portfolio and reference letters are particularly important and must indicate extraordinary creative achievements. Awards are for one semester only.

Kluesing Fellowship (full tuition and partial fee waiver, plus academic year stipend of $10,000) is given by the department in memory of Cherie Kluesing, a former faculty member. The portfolio and reference letters are particularly important and must indicate extraordinary creative achievements. May be awarded for up to three consecutive years (contingent upon progress toward completion of degree).

Diffenbaugh Trust Fund Fellowships are available to legal residents of the State of Missouri (past or present) or any graduate of a high school, college, or university located in the State of Missouri. Fellows and alternates will be selected on the basis of academic excellence and scholarly, scientific, or creative promise. Two fellowships per year are provided in a university-wide competition. Preference is given to incoming students but continuing students are eligible.
Teaching, Graduate, and Research Assistantships (tuition waiver, partial fee waiver, and salary). See “Financial Aid for Continuing Students,” below.

Financial Aid for Continuing Students

Teaching, Graduate, and Research Assistantships (tuition waiver, partial fee waiver, and salary) are employment contracts between a student, the Department and, in some cases, an individual faculty member, and are awarded on the basis of the applicant's ability to perform the expected assignment. They are usually awarded on a one-semester basis. Continuing students receive priority although a limited number of assistantships may go to new students with suitable backgrounds for the work.

Teaching and Research Assistantships vary in number from semester to semester. Possibilities for continuation of an assistantship are contingent upon performance and the availability of funds. Assistantships for an entire academic year are awarded in some cases where the assignment requires personnel continuity.

Assistantships under the Graduate College Work-Study Program can be for research or administrative duties but not for teaching. The student must demonstrate financial need (FAFSA) to be eligible for this program. The process required is detailed and time consuming; students who think they are eligible for the program must fill out all the forms (available in the University Fellowship Office) required several months before any anticipated support—for example, by February for fall support. Given financial eligibility, the criteria and evaluation are the same as for any non-teaching support. It is to the advantage of the student that students potentially eligible for such support apply as early as possible.

Other Forms of Aid are brought to the attention of the department from time to time. These will be posted along with application instructions. Decisions for screening applicants for such aid will usually be made by the Graduate Coordinator according to his/her interpretation of the criteria that accompany the announcement.

Awards

The Beatrice C. Horneman Award is awarded by the Zonta Club of Evanston, Illinois, and offers a $500 scholarship award in the name of alumnae Beatrice C. Horneman. The candidate must be a female graduate student in the Landscape Architecture Department and is chosen for academic performance and demonstrated design talent.

ASLA National Student Awards are presented to graduate students in their final year of study. Students present examples of graduate work in design, writing, and research to the ASLA Graduate Awards Committee. Nominees must be outstanding as measured by our program’s standards of excellence and must have demonstrated the highest level of academic scholarship and accomplishments in skills related to the art and technology of landscape architecture.

The Edward L. Ryerson Traveling Fellowship promotes excellence in landscape architecture through travel and study outside of the United States. A fellowship of up to $6,000 is awarded annually to one (or more) student(s) in the BLA or MLA program. The faculty reviews all
proposals. Winners are selected on the basis of academic record, promise for leadership, and the quality of the proposal.

The Fiel Fellowship promotes excellence in landscape architecture through study and travel in the United States. For graduate students, the travel often supports thesis fieldwork. The prize is given in memory of George and Dorothy Fiel.

The Pauline Tilton Kennedy Prize was established in memory of former BLA student, Pauline Tilton Kennedy and promotes excellence in landscape architecture through study and travel. For graduate students, the travel often supports thesis fieldwork.

The Natalie B. Alpert Prize is an annual award of up to $500 in recognition of Natalie Alpert’s long and distinguished career in landscape architecture, including her tenure as a faculty member in the Department. The prize is awarded to the best history/theory paper and/or landscape design. Specific submission requirements will be announced in the selected class(es).

The Chalet Nursery Prizes recognize excellence in plant knowledge and planting design. One prize is given to the student with the highest cumulative average in HORT 301 and 302. The other prize is awarded to the best Planting Design created in the Chalet Competition. Each prize is $500.

The Dan Ryan Prize was established in memory of Dan Ryan, a member of the Class of 2002. It is given to a student enrolled in LA 281 and LA 234 who exhibits outstanding graphic skills and a willingness to help others.

The Gary Kesler Prize recognizes excellence in LA 342 – Site Engineering.

**Thesis**

All MLA students are required to successfully complete LA 501/Theory and Practice of Landscape Architecture before registering for LA 597 Research Methods. LA 501 is taken the first semester in residence. Two-year and two-and-a-half-year students should register for LA 597 Research Methods in their first year of study and three-year students in their second year of study. The purpose of this course is to assist the student in topic selection, research, proposal preparation, and committee selection. It will introduce basic literature search techniques, evaluative tools, and research methods. Towards the end of the course students will submit either a thesis proposal (if they wish to pursue the Thesis Option) or a research paper (if they plan to pursue the Coursework Option). Only those students with an approved proposal and the support of a committee may proceed with the thesis.

For students choosing the Thesis Option in the MLA program, the thesis is the culmination of master's level study and is a contribution to the field. The student, under the supervision of a committee, must pursue independently and in depth a work of particular relevance for landscape architecture that will accomplish one or more of the following goals:

1. Demonstrate an innovative application of knowledge within the field; and/or
2. Analyze, critically examine, and/or empirically test ideas/theories; and/or
3. Creatively synthesize, expand and/or develop designs/theories.
The thesis provides for a complete expression of ideas through a broad range of products that may include a design, an experiment, a management plan, a textual analysis, or a research model. A thesis proposal must clearly explain how the topic, issue, and/or question under investigation will accomplish at least one of the above. The completed thesis must reasonably justify that the goal has been achieved. The format should be an appropriate complement of written and visual materials, in proportionate amounts to be determined by the nature of the project. The same effort, intellectual rigor, and quality of work are expected, regardless of the approach, product, and/or format.

A student in the Thesis Option is required to complete eight credit hours of LA 599 to fulfill the degree requirements for graduation. Four hours of thesis (LA 599) credit will be applied towards the required eighteen credit hours of 500-level course work for the MLA degree. Additional hours, beyond the required eight, will not count towards completion of degree requirements. A student is required to complete all thesis requirements within five years of initial enrollment.

**Topic Selection**  Developing a thesis topic requires careful thought and investigation. Students should rely on their previous experience and course work to identify topics that are personally interesting and suitable for graduate study.

**Proposal**  Through class work and consultation with instructors and other relevant people, the student shall select one area of interest, focus upon a thesis topic within that area, and prepare a proposal that identifies the topic and procedures. The proposal should contain an introduction to the topic (question) to be explored, justification for and purpose of the study, a critical literature review, proposal methodology, and, if appropriate, the type of documentation to be developed. A time schedule indicating each activity should also be prepared. A copy of the approved proposal and the completed “Thesis Proposal Approval” form must be submitted to the department office.

**Committee**  The thesis supervisory committee normally is composed of three faculty members. The student must identify an appropriate member of the Landscape Architecture faculty to supervise the work (the committee chair), and secure that faculty member’s agreement to accept the responsibility. The chair should be selected for his/her interest in the topic and special expertise that will contribute to the development of the thesis.

It is recommended that the chair be identified early in the semester. Working with her/his chair, the student defines the project that will be undertaken. The chair typically will suggest other appropriate committee members.

The committee chair must be a member of the Landscape Architecture faculty; other members of the committee need not be. If the chair holds a zero time appointment in our department, at least one of the other committee members must hold a full-time appointment in the department. When appropriate, students are encouraged to invite faculty members from other departments to serve on their committees. One non-University member can serve on a committee, when approved by the chair and the Graduate Coordinator.

The committee chair is responsible for working closely with the student throughout the entire thesis process, providing appropriate direction and advice on a regular basis. The other two
members will normally play lesser roles providing support in their areas of expertise. Regardless of responsibilities, the chair should be consulted regularly and will determine if the thesis is ready for review.

Students wishing to change the composition of the committee must petition the Department. The committee chair, Graduate Coordinator, and Department Head will normally approve petitions. In the event these individuals are the subjects of the proposed change, the Head will designate another member of the faculty to act in their place. It is the responsibility of the individual who desires the change to initiate action. A “Petition to Change Thesis Committee” form must accompany the petition. These forms are available in the office.

LA 599/Thesis Research

Thesis students must enroll in LA 599 /Thesis Research during the first semester after their thesis proposals are approved. Enrollment in LA 599 is not permitted without an approved thesis proposal and the support of a committee. In LA 599, each student will undertake and complete thesis research and creative and/or scholarly exposition. The Thesis Committee will help guide and critique student work; however it is each student’s responsibility to make satisfactory progress. LA 599 is graded satisfactory (S) or unsatisfactory (U). The final grade will be determined by consensus of the faculty following the final review. Students should also add their names to the Graduation List when nearing completion. This is done on Banner very early in the semester in which the student plans to graduate.

Preliminary Committee Reviews When the committee chair determines that the thesis is complete; the student will meet with the entire committee to review and evaluate the work. Other preliminary reviews may be scheduled at the request of the student and/or as the committee chair or committee members see fit. The committee will review the final draft of the thesis for presentation and format.

Departmental Review The completed thesis and the Certificate of Committee Approval (CCA) form are given to the committee chair first, then the committee members, and finally to the Department Head (or designee) for final review and signatures. All signatures (chair, all committee members, and head) must be acquired in this order and all are required for deposit approval. The chair determines when it is appropriate to submit the thesis to the Head. The Department Head will evaluate the thesis and, if necessary, negotiate any differences with the committee chair. The Assistant Head or designee will review the thesis for format. Students are strongly encouraged to send a copy of their title page to the Thesis Office, well in advance of anticipated deposit, for their review.

Review The thesis is submitted electronically to the Graduate College for approval and deposit. The Graduate College requires a hard copy of the Certificate of Committee Approval (CCA) form with the wet signature of the Head. The student is solely responsible for depositing his/her completed thesis with the proper authorities in accordance with their schedules and procedures, and for meeting the Graduate College requirements regarding thesis format.

Deposit deadlines are listed in the Graduate College Academic Calendar and on the Graduate College web page. Normally the Graduate College reviews theses for format up to and including
the day of the deposit deadline. Students are strongly encouraged to have their title pages
reviewed well in advance of deposit.

**Thesis Format**

The Department does not restrict the student to the traditional thesis format. Drawings, images,
films, or other media are acceptable to complement the written product, the portion of each to
be determined by the nature of the project. Generally, when the bulk of the thesis is in non-
written format, the written part of the thesis should allow the reader to understand the content
and potential use of the thesis, its format, sources of information, methods used to develop its
conclusions, and its physical location. In cases where such information is contained in the non-
written portion, the written part shall consist of the abstract, an identification of the format of
the non-written part, and its location and means of retrieval. The manual *Instructions for
Preparation of Theses* is available on-line from the Graduate College Thesis Office and should be
used as a guide for format of the written document.

**Thesis Submission Deadlines**

The student should allow sufficient time for committee, Department, and Graduate College
review to meet submission dates for grades and graduation. Students should remember that
members of the faculty are normally not on appointment during the summer and are usually
unavailable for thesis consultation. Work to be conducted during the summer will require special
prior arrangements. Also, before selecting a Chair and committee members, students should
inquire about scheduled sabbaticals and planned leaves of absence.

**Thesis Deposit**

All students depositing theses or dissertation in the Graduate College must do so electronically.
This allows the Graduate College to reduce confusion about deposit requirements, enhance
communications with departments about deposits, and reduce the time between depositing,
archiving, and distribution of theses.

The Thesis Office is located at 206 Coble Hall. Students are strongly encouraged to review the
Graduate College’s *Handbook for Graduate Students Preparing to Deposit*.

**Thesis Evaluation**

Awarding a grade for the thesis is the responsibility of the committee chair. It is assumed that
such a grade reflects the consensus of the committee; where significant disagreement exists, the
committee chair should inform the Graduate Coordinator. One of two grades is awarded after
final submission: S for satisfactory or U for unsatisfactory. Students whose theses are
unsatisfactory and/or are making poor progress will receive a U. Students have five years, from
initial enrollment, in which to complete all requirements for graduation. Requests for additional
time will be denied.
At the end of each year, the Graduate Coordinator will present information to the faculty about the status of each student. This will include the number of semesters in the program, GPA, assigned mentor, thesis chair, and thesis committee members. Faculty input will be solicited. A student not making adequate progress on the thesis will receive a letter from the Graduate Coordinator identifying deficiencies. Such students must address these concerns and demonstrate adequate progress by the end of the next semester or they will be dropped from the program.

Residency

Students are occasionally tempted to take permanent employment before completing the thesis work, intending to complete the thesis while on the job. This approach is strongly discouraged. Away from campus, distractions are maximized; essential resources are missing; and the faculty advisor is severely hampered in rendering useful critiques.

Assignment of Agents

While the thesis must be an individual work, the student may assign an agent to secure necessary documents and to perform liaison work for the Graduate College thesis review.

In assigning the above tasks to others, the thesis student remains responsible for the acts of his/her agent. Landscape Architecture faculty and staff will not serve as agents of the student regarding the above.

Exceptions

For legitimate reasons (other than those of convenience), exceptions to these policies and procedures (such as requests to change advisors and requests to present work to a thesis jury over advisor’s objections) will be considered upon written petition to the Graduate Coordinator. Approval or disapproval of such requests will be made through a vote by the MLA Program committee.

Additional Advice

The thesis committee chair and/or committee members may require the student to hire an editor, at the student’s expense, to improve the writing style and/or correct grammatical, spelling, and/or punctuation errors in the thesis. All expenses associated with this must be borne by the student.

The thesis committee members should receive a copy of the student’s thesis. Copies to committee chairs and members may be in paper or digital format, at their discretion.

The Graduate College has a program of modest grants for Thesis Project Support and Conference Travel Support. Deadlines occur once per semester and awards are made through competition. Information about those grants can be found in the on-line Graduate College Newsletter. Students may apply for and/or receive an award more than once during their graduate tenure.
Department Office

The Department office is located in 101 Buell Hall. Information and forms regarding records, registration, campus procedures, and competitions are available there.

The Department’s copy machine is located in 101 Buell Hall. The copy machine is programmed to require access codes and may be used only by teaching or research assistants, under the direction of a faculty member. Students are not allowed to use the Department’s copy machine for personal copying.

The confidential nature of office records precludes student access to the office if no secretary/staff member is present. Normal office hours are 8:30-12:00 and 1:00-5:00, Monday through Friday.

Assigned Space

Studio space is limited. Students enrolled in design studios and those holding teaching assistantships within the department are given first priority for studio space.

Keys

Upon request, students may receive keys to 200 Mumford Hall. Keys are available in Room 101 Buell Hall. A refundable deposit fee of $10.00 per key is required. All course-related keys must be returned at the end of each semester; new keys will not be issued without the return of outstanding keys. Student IDs are used to access Buell Hall. Students will not be cleared for graduation until all keys have been returned.

Mail

Students may receive mail through the Department of Landscape Architecture:

101 Temple Buell Hall
611 East Taft Drive
Champaign, IL 61820

Bulletin Board

Information of interest to graduate students and employment notices are posted on the bulletin board in the hall of the third floor of Buell Hall.
Media Equipment

Some media equipment is available for use in conjunction with department course work. Any student borrowing equipment is responsible for its proper use and care, including the repair or replacement of items that may be damaged or lost during the time of the loan. Equipment is issued by the Department Office Manager in Room 101 Buell Hall. Overnight use must be faculty member-approved and coordinated with those who may be reserving the equipment for the following day.

University Libraries

The City Planning & Landscape Architecture Collection is located in the Funk (ACES) Library. The main University library, the largest state university library in the country, is located one block from Buell Hall. Information about the University libraries can be found at

http://gateway.library.illinois.edu

Policy Determination

Generally, once every other week, faculty meet during the lunch hour at the departmental meeting. This is the Department’s primary information vehicle: announcements and reports may be made, input solicited, committees assigned, problems discussed, and decisions made on day-to-day matters. With advance notice, special departmental meetings may be held for major issues.

Each year, students in the BLA, MLA, and PhD programs normally elect one or more representatives responsible for reporting and disseminating information to the student body. There is also student representation on other important committees such as the Student Advisory Committee and Search Committees. Please refer to the department By-Laws for a more complete explanation of these committees.

Grievances

Various forms of appeal are available to individual students who feel that they have received unfair treatment in academic or administrative dealings with the Department. Alleged capricious grading issues are addressed internally. Students are strongly encouraged to use all appropriate avenues for informal resolution for other grievances, such as alleged inappropriate application of policy or being improperly terminated from a University appointment. If a student is unable to resolve such an issue, he/she may elect to file a formal grievance.

Consult The Code on Campus Affairs and Regulations and The Handbook for Graduate Students for more information on grievance policies and procedures:

http://www.admin.illinois.edu/policy/code/
Faculty

Reflecting the increasing breadth and complexity of the profession itself, the faculty includes design professionals as well as scholars and practitioners in related fields, such as architecture, urban planning, ecology, social and educational psychology, and art history. Two-thirds of the core faculty members have a doctoral degree. Opportunities for independent and interdisciplinary study are available in many areas. Such diverse academic pursuits contribute to a dynamic educational environment and complement the diversity of the students themselves, who come from a variety of academic backgrounds.

Faculty members in the Department of Landscape Architecture devote varying portions of their time to teaching, research, and service at the undergraduate and graduate levels. They bring to the Department a rich range of academic, professional, and personal experiences in regions across the United States and abroad. In addition to the permanent faculty, the Department invites prominent scholars and practitioners to participate in the academic programs as lecturers, critics, and visiting instructors for periods ranging from a day to an entire semester.

Faculty Contact Information

All faculty members may be reached by mail at:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department of Landscape Architecture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>101 Temple Buell Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>611 East Taft Drive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Champaign, Illinois 61820</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

or by phone at (217) 333-0176, or by fax at (217) 244-4568.
NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The commitment of the University of Illinois to the most fundamental principles of academic freedom, equality of opportunity, and human dignity requires that decisions involving students and employees be based on individual merit and be free from invidious discrimination in all its forms.

The University of Illinois will not engage in discrimination or harassment against any person because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, order of protection status, genetic information, marital status, disability, sexual orientation including gender identity, unfavorable discharge from the military or status as a protected veteran and will comply with all federal and state nondiscrimination, equal opportunity and affirmative action laws, orders and regulations. This nondiscrimination policy applies to admissions, employment, access to and treatment in the University programs and activities.

University complaint and grievance procedures provide employees and students with the means for the resolution of complaints that allege a violation of this Statement. Members of the public should direct their inquiries or complaints to the appropriate equal opportunity office.

Policy Council
Revised June 24, 2010