

# MLA Handbook



Master of Landscape Architecture

College of Fine and Applied Arts  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

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August 2017

*Cover art by MLA graduate Phillip Burke.*

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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](http://www.landarch.illinois.edu).

## The MLA Program

The objectives of the MLA Program at the University of Illinois are to provide each student with 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 has 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 a comparable accredited BLA degree and an exceptionally strong portfolio enter a two-year post-professional program. Applicants with other design backgrounds will enter a two-and-a-half to three-year program. These students will be required to complete some prerequisite courses. All students who enter without a design background should expect a three-year program that includes prerequisite courses in the foundation skills related to landscape architecture. 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/>)
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).
6. Three letters of reference.
7. A Statement of Intent.

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:

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## 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, and examples of 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 Academic Coordinator prior to registration for the first semester. At that time, courses are selected. The Academic Coordinator and the Chair of the MLA Program Committee will 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 also recommended.

## MLA Program of Study

Graduate studies consist of an integrated program of course work, studios, and specialization through thesis or coursework. 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 developed 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 8 hours of LA 590 credit may be counted towards the degree. Students without previous landscape architecture internship experiences are required to complete a three-month internship for five hours of academic credit. Typically, this is completed in a summer semester. Students can choose to do a Minor in Heritage Studies administered by CHAMP (Collaborative for Cultural Heritage Management and Policy) or other minors.

Students must successfully complete LA 501/Theory and Practice and LA 597/Research Methods in order to choose either the Thesis Option (register for LA 599 /Thesis) or the Coursework Option (develop a specialization through coursework). 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 will be denied.

## Courses

Required Courses of ALL MLA students:

LA 438	Design Workshop Studio (taken once by thesis students, or twice by non-thesis students, 5 hours)
LA 470	Social/Cultural Design Issues (3 hours) or other approved course (NRES 472)
LA 501	Landscape Architecture Theory and Practice (2 hours)
LA 537	Landscape Planning and Design Studio (5 hours)
LA 597	Research Methods (3 hours)
-----	an approved methods course (3-4 hours)
-----	an approved Ecology course (3-4 hours)

The following courses are required of all students who do not possess a comparable accredited undergraduate degree in Landscape Architecture (BLA):

LA 241	Landform Design and Construction
LA 280	Design Communications I
LA 281	Design Communications II
LA 336	MLA Design Studio (1 <sup>st</sup> fall semester & 1 <sup>st</sup> spring semester for those in the 3-year program, 1 <sup>st</sup> fall for those in the 2.5-year program)
LA 342	Site Engineering
LA 343	Landscape Construction
LA 345	Professional Internship (5 hours)
LA 346	Professional Practice
LA 438	Design Workshop II (2 <sup>nd</sup> spring semester for all students, + 3 <sup>rd</sup> for non-thesis students)
LA 513	History of World Landscapes
LA 537	Landscape Planning and Design Studio (2 <sup>nd</sup> fall semester)
HORT 301	Woody Landscape Plants I

Prerequisite courses are rarely waived. Only the Academic Coordinator, in consultation with the MLA Program Committee, 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.

## Course of Study MLA – entering Fall 2017

All MLA students, regardless of the length of their program, must have a minimum:

48 credit hours of graduate work (courses with 400- or 500- level numbers)

24 credit hours in graduate-level landscape architecture coursework (LA ---)

18 credit hours in the 500 series

A maximum of 8 credit hours of LA 590 may be counted towards the degree.

A maximum of 8 credit hours of LA 599 may be counted towards the degree.

If you are doing a thesis, you will complete 8 hours of LA 599. How you divide the hours is a decision you will make with your thesis chair. You should not take both LA 599 & LA 537 in the same semester. If you wish to take a Design Workshop (LA 438) in your final spring semester, focus on your thesis the preceding fall semester (register for 6-8 hours of LA 599 instead of just 4).

### 3-year Program

LA 280 Design Communications I (3) LA 336 MLA Design Studio (5) LA 501 Theory & Practice (2) HORT 301 Woody Ornamentals I (4)	LA 241 Landform Design (3) LA 281 Design Communications II (3) LA 336 Design Workshop I (5) LA 513 History of World Landscapes (4)
LA 342 Site Engineering (4) LA 346 Professional Practice (2) LA 537 Landscape Planning & Design Studio (5) ----- approved ecology or methods course (3-4)	LA 343 Landscape Construction (4) LA 438 Design Workshop II (5) LA 597 Research Methods (3) ----- approved ecology or methods course (3-4)
Summer LA 345 Professional Internship (5)	
LA 470 Social/Cultural Design Issues (3) or NRES 472 LA 537 Landscape Planning & Design Studio (5) (optional) LA 599 Thesis (4) or electives elective(s)	LA 438 Design Workshop II (5) or LA 599 Thesis (4) electives

### 2.5-year Program

LA 336 MLA Design Studio (5) LA 342 Site Engineering (4) LA 501 Theory & Practice (2) HORT 301 Woody Ornamentals (4) LA 346 Professional Practice (2)	LA 438 Design Workshop II (5) LA 513 History of World Landscapes (4) LA 597 Research Methods (3) ----- approved ecology or methods course (3-4)
Summer LA 345 Professional Internship (5)	
LA 599 Thesis (4) or electives ----- approved ecology or methods course (3-4) LA 537 Landscape Planning & Design Studio (5) elective(s)	LA 438 Design Workshop II (5) or LA 599 Thesis (4) electives
LA 470 Social/Cultural Design Factors (3) or NRES 472 LA 537 Landscape Planning & Design Studio (5) (optional) electives	

### 2-year Program

LA 470 Social/Cultural Design Issues (3) or NRES 472 LA 501 Theory & Practice (2) LA 537 Landscape Planning & Design Studio (5) ----- approved ecology or methods course (3-4) elective	LA 438 Design Workshop II (5) LA 597 Research Methods (3) ----- approved ecology or methods course (3-4) electives
LA 537 Landscape Planning & Design Studio (5) (optional) LA 599 Thesis (4) electives	LA 438 Design Workshop II (5) or LA 599 Thesis (4) electives



## Approved Ecology and Methods Courses

All MLA students are required to complete one ecology course and one methods course. Selection of these should reflect thesis and professional interests. Carefully review course descriptions for prerequisites. If you are uncertain about your preparation for a course, contact the instructor with your concerns/questions. Some courses are approved for both ecology and methods, however the same course cannot be used to satisfy both. 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 these requirements. If you do, your options will be very limited. You may propose an appropriate alternative to the courses listed below. Please contact the Academic Advisor prior to enrollment.

- M satisfies the Methods requirement
- E satisfies the Ecology requirement
- ME may be used to satisfy either the Methods *or* the Ecology requirement

rubric	title	category
ANTH 453	Landscape Archaeology	M
ANTH 460	Heritage Management	M
ARCH 419	Historic Building Preservation	M
ARCH 518	Recording Historic Buildings	M
ARCH 563	Social/Behavioral Research	M
ART 550	Writing with Video	M
ATMS 421	Earth Systems Modeling	M
CEE 432	Stream Ecology	E
CPSC 440	Applied Statistical Methods	M
ESE 445	Earth Resources Sustainability	E
GEOG 406	Fluvial Geomorphology	E
GEOG 408	Watershed Analysis	M or E
GEOG 480	Principles of GIS	M
GEOG 483	Urban Geography	E
GEOL 401	Geomorphology	E
IB 439	Biogeography	E
IB 451	Conservation Biology	E
IB 452	Ecosystem Ecology	E
IB 453	Community Ecology	E
LA 460	Heritage Management	M
LA 505	Methods	M
LA 570	Landscapes & Human Health	M
LA 587, 590	Graduate seminars	depends on topic
NRES 401	Watershed Hydrology	M or E
NRES 403	Watersheds & Water Quality	M or E
NRES 407	Wildlife Population Ecology	E

NRES 416	Forest Biology	E
NRES 419	Environment & Plant Ecosystems	E
NRES 420	Restoration Ecology	E
NRES 429	Aquatic Ecosystem Conservation	M or E
NRES 439	Environment & Sustainable Development	M or E
NRES 454	GIS	M
NRES 456	Integrative Ecosystem Management	E
NRES 465	Landscape Ecology	M or E
NRES 499	Wetland Ecology and Management	E
NRES 474	Soil & Water Conservation	M
SOC 447	Environmental Sociology	E
UP 405 *	Watershed Ecology	E
UP 406 *	Urban Ecology	E
UP 418 *	GIS	M
UP 420	Planning for Historic Preservation	M
UP 446	Sustainable Planning Seminar	E
UP 466	Energy, Planning & Built Environment	M
UP 473	Housing & Urban Policy Planning	M
UP 478	Community Development Workshop	M
UP 505	Urban & Regional Analysis	M
UP 508	Survey Design	M
UP 519	Advanced GIS	M
*	strongly recommended	

## Specializations

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*

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

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*

LA 460	Heritage Management
LA 427	American Vernacular Cultural Landscape
LA 594	Cultural Heritage Landscapes
LA 593	Islamic and South Asian Landscapes
UP 420	Planning for Historic Preservation
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 560	Collections, Museums, and Patrons
RST 570	Cultural Aspects of Tourism

Specialization: ecological design

This 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*

*See Approved Ecology Courses*

## Joint Degree Programs - MLA/MUP & MLA/MBA

A joint degree is a campus-approved program in which a student concurrently pursues two specifically identified degrees, and those degrees are conferred simultaneously. For graduate students this is a combination of a graduate degree with one of the following: another graduate degree, an undergraduate degree or a professional degree. 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.

Students interested in pursuing joint degrees 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 academic year after admission and must complete the 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 Academic 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 MLA students are taking primarily UP or MBA courses it is 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 and their major department office 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 are very rarely considered for admission. When admitted, such students are placed on limited status. Limited status 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. 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 are 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](http://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 I (incomplete) 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* (base rate tuition waiver, partial fee waiver, and salary). See “Financial Aid for Continuing Students,” below.

## Financial Aid for Continuing Students

*Teaching, Graduate, and Research Assistantships* (full 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. Assistantships 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. International students must earn a score of 5 or higher on the EPI to be considered for a TA position. All first-time TA's must attend the Teaching Academy prior to teaching.

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 Academic Coordinator according to his/her interpretation of the criteria that accompany the announcement.

## Awards

*ASLA National Student Awards* are presented to graduate students in their final year of study. Students submit thesis abstracts and examples of graduate work in design, writing, and research. The faculty selects nominees to present 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 \$7,000 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 the thesis fieldwork. The \$6,000 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 the 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 completed in LA 513/ARCH 510. Specific submission requirements are listed in the course syllabus.

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

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 this 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 of the MLA program is required to complete eight credit hours of LA 599 to fulfill the degree requirements for graduation. 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.

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 a thesis.

**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 and a copy of each is provided at the end of this document.

### 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 successful completion of LA 597, 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. 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. The University's "Format Approval" form is available on-line. 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. If the thesis is not deposited by the deadline, the student will officially graduate at the next graduation period.

### 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. 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*. Information is also available at:

[www.grad.illinois.edu/thesis/thesishandbook.html](http://www.grad.illinois.edu/thesis/thesishandbook.html)

Important dates are listed in the Graduate College Academic Calendars, found at:

[www.grad.illinois.edu/calendar.htm](http://www.grad.illinois.edu/calendar.htm)

### Thesis Evaluation

Awarding a grade for the thesis is the responsibility of each 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 Academic 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.

### 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 the thesis 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 assigned at the beginning of each fall semester. Students enrolled in design studios are given first priority for studio space.

## Keys

Upon request, students may receive keys to 200 Mumford Hall. Keys are available from the Department receptionist in 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 approved by a faculty member 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. The day and location of these meetings will be posted on the bulletin boards.

Each year, enrolled students in the BLA, MLA, and PhD programs normally elect 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/>  
<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:

Department of Landscape Architecture  
101 Temple Buell Hall  
611 East Taft Drive  
Champaign, Illinois 61820

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



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS at URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

## 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

## § 1-110 Policy for the Provision of Reasonable Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

(a) The University provides reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities admitted to study at the University in accordance with the following procedures. As the term is used herein, “reasonable accommodations” refer to those academic adjustments, services, and aids provided to otherwise qualified students with disabilities to facilitate equal access to University programs and activities. The Division of Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) or the Center for Wounded Veterans in Higher Education (CWWHE), as applicable, coordinates the University’s efforts to provide these reasonable accommodations. DRES and CWWHE will consult as necessary to facilitate the processing of requests for reasonable accommodations.

(b) In general, students are responsible for informing the University of their status as a person with a disability and their need for reasonable accommodations. Students with disabilities who are not veterans should direct their requests for reasonable accommodations to the DRES Student Services Office by phone at (217) 333-4603, or [disability@illinois.edu](mailto:disability@illinois.edu). Student with disabilities who are veterans of the U.S. armed forces should direct their requests for reasonable accommodations to the CWWHE at (217) 300-3515 or [cwvhe@ahs.illinois.edu](mailto:cwvhe@ahs.illinois.edu). The applicable unit will determine what is a reasonable accommodation based upon an individual student’s needs. For academic accommodations, DRES or CWWHE, as applicable, will consult with the faculty member for whose course the accommodations are sought. The University may decline requests for accommodations that impose an undue hardship on the campus or that require the fundamental alteration of academic standards, programs, or coursework.

(c) In order to be considered for reasonable accommodations, the student must meet the following requirements:

- (1) The student must submit a completed Application for Services to DRES or CWWHE, as applicable. Students may obtain applications from: DRES: in person at the Rehabilitation-Education Center at 1207 South Oak Street, Champaign IL, or online at [disability.illinois.edu](http://disability.illinois.edu). CWWHE: in person at 908 West Nevada Street, Urbana, IL, or online at [woundedvetcenter.ahs.illinois.edu/](http://woundedvetcenter.ahs.illinois.edu/).
- (2) The student must have a disability and provide documentation of a disability in accordance with the applicable documentation criteria.

(d) To facilitate timely review of a student’s request for reasonable accommodation, the student or prospective student who is requesting accommodations to access University programs and activities must submit a completed Application for Services to DRES or CWWHE, as applicable, as soon as possible. Some accommodations, such as interpreter, real-time captioning services, or the conversion of print-based educational materials to alternative accessible formats can require substantial lead time to schedule or prepare. Therefore, it is recommended that the student return the DRES or CWWHE Application for Services and discuss accommodation needs with DRES or CWWHE personnel at least six weeks before the date on which the student may first require the accommodations.

(e) A student may appeal to the Director of DRES or CWWHE, as applicable:

- (1) an accommodation recommendation by DRES or CWWHE if the student deems such recommendation to be unsatisfactory;
- (2) implementation of a DRES or CWWHE accommodation recommendation if the student deems such implementation ineffective. A student may appeal a determination of the DRES Director or the CWWHE Director to the Dean of the College of Applied Health Sciences.

(f) A student may also direct questions or concerns regarding accommodation decisions by DRES or CWWHE or other campus units to the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Access (ODEA), which is located at 1004 South Fourth Street, Champaign, IL or by phone at (217) 333-0885.