

### 3. GRADUATE PROGRAM OPTIONS: A FIRST PROFESSIONAL MASTER'S OR POST PROFESSIONAL MASTER'S DEGREE?

The department makes a distinction between **First Professional Master's** students and **Post Professional Masters students**. First Professional Master's students are those who hold an undergraduate degree *other than a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture*, and are working towards the completion of an M.L.A. (see Section 4 for details). Post-professional Master's students are those who hold an accredited Bachelor's of Landscape Architecture (B.L.A. or B.S.L.A.) and are working towards the completion of the advanced post-professional M.L.A. (see Section 5 for details).

### 4. THE FIRST PROFESSIONAL MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAM

Although requirements and time may vary with each individual, students with undergraduate degrees, but no background in design, can expect to spend three years and one term (10 terms total) in the department to earn the M.L.A., beginning with the First-Professional MLA summer entry program.

The department recognizes that graduate students, especially those pursuing the First Professional Master's have extremely varied backgrounds and may have special requirements. Based on their undergraduate courses, work experience, and background in design-related disciplines, students may be allowed to substitute other courses for a limited number of required courses. Students who wish to do so must show equivalent competency in those areas, normally through previous course work or professional experience.

In addition to departmental requirements, students must fulfill all requirements of the Graduate School to receive their degree (<http://gradschool.uoregon.edu/policies-procedures>). This includes the provision that at least 24 of the required graduate credit hours (i.e., 500 or 600 course level) must be taken as graded (i.e., not Pass/No Pass), and maintaining at least a 3.00 grade point average (GPA) in all graduate courses taken with the graded option.

*The First Professional Master's program begins in Summer Term of the student's first year, typically starting the third week of June. See Advising Sheets on the following pages.*

#### THE FIRST PROFESSIONAL MASTERS CURRICULUM:

The curriculum provides required and elective sequences in Design and Planning; History, Literature and Theory; Plants; Landscape Analysis and Planning, including Landscape Ecology; the Technologies Sequence; and Landscape Media and Technologies workshops.

In addition, elective courses that fulfill degree requirements may be taken in other departments and programs throughout the university, including: Architecture; Planning, Public Policy, and Management; History of Art and Architecture; Geography; History; Biology; and Computer Science.

**The Design and Planning Program:** The department allocates a significant portion of faculty resources to project-oriented instruction, and has a long history of success at design studio education. All regular faculty offer or consult in studios and participate in midterm and week-long end-of-term reviews of student work. The final year's studio sequence, a large-scale planning project followed by an independently conceived Master's Project or Thesis, is especially strong in its culmination of the program of study and as final preparation for professional work.

**The History, Literature and Theory Program** focuses attention on theory, fundamental concepts, historical perspectives and ways of thinking that underpin all aspects of landscape architecture.

The curriculum includes a set of four required courses including a two-term sequence on the History of Landscape Architecture, as well as an array of electives that explore different areas of literature and theory in the field.

**The Plants Program**, and in particular the 8 credit hour sequence of fall and winter plants, emphasizes knowledge of native plants and local plant communities and horticultural plant materials. The program integrates plant identification with an introduction to planting design. Our Urban Farm, which provides hands-on opportunities to explore the culture of soil and plants, appropriate technology, and the special problems of agriculture in an urban setting, has become very popular and attracts students from all over campus.

**The Landscape Analysis and Planning Program** provides landscape planning classes that cover history, theories and methods related to Oregon's unique land use planning system, zoning, property rights and other critical issues related to land conservation and development. The introductory and advanced landscape ecology classes provide our students with a sound knowledge of landscape-scale ecological knowledge. The department also requires coursework in Geographic Information Systems, teaching the industry standard, ArcGIS.

**The Technologies Program** covers site engineering, landscape materials and detailing, irrigation, computer-aided design software, professional practice and other topically oriented classes. Careful sequencing and coordination between the courses and a focus on both classroom and on-the-ground projects has resulted in meaningful and well-integrated program content.

**Landscape Media and Technologies Workshops** begin with the development of basic hand graphic and digital tools, and build to complex uses of advanced digital representation and 3-D design software. Technologies workshops on special topics ranging from stormwater management to writing for designers and planners are offered on a regular basis.

#### **The Master's Project or Thesis**

The Masters Project (LA 699) or Thesis (LA 503) is completed during the third year. This is an independent project of high academic standard presenting original work that contributes to the body of knowledge in Landscape Architecture. The topic may be selected from a wide range of theoretical to practical design issues. It may be an original investigation, an original interpretation of existing scholarship, or an application of innovative strategies for the solution of a specific design challenge. Most importantly, the project should demonstrate a creative engagement in environmental transformation. *All projects must include a written component that sets out the problem, goals and objectives, methodology, findings and conclusions of the project.* A five-course sequence helps prepare students to complete their Master's Project and culminates in the two-term LA 699 Master's Project or LA 503 Thesis. See "The Master's Project" brochure available from the department office (should we make this available from the LA website rather than the office?). The student's choices of Master's Project topic and Area of Concentration (see below) are intended to be mutually supportive.

#### **Computer Requirement**

Digital tools are a necessary tool for all landscape architects. The department requires all students to have unlimited access to their own personal computer. Because of the professional application of complex graphic programs and large data files for most coursework, the department's computer requirements exceed the average user's computing needs. See the [AAA computing page](#) for recommended specifications and departmental requirements.