

5. THE POST PROFESSIONAL MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAM

The two-year post Professional Master's degree program leading to the Master of Landscape Architecture (M.L.A.) is intended for students prepared to do advanced graduate work in landscape architecture and contribute original research to the profession. Students entering this program are expected to have completed a professionally accredited degree in landscape architecture. Students with professional BLA degrees are typically in residence for two years to satisfy course requirements.

- **OPTIONS For:**

- **STUDENTS WITH A BACHELOR OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE**

Students entering the program with a five-year B.L.A. are expected to spend two years in residence in the department. The first year is normally spent in required coursework and the second in working on the Master's Project.

- **STUDENTS WITH A FIVE-YEAR BACHELOR OF ARCHITECTURE**

Those with a Bachelor of Architecture are expected to spend a minimum of two years in the Department, although coursework is individually programmed to build additional background in landscape architecture. Many Bachelor of Architecture students find that it takes up to one additional year to complete the post-professional M.L.A requirements.

THE POST PROFESSIONAL MASTERS CURRICULUM:

A central aspect of the Post Professional Master's program is the student's concentration on studies and original work in one of five areas of landscape architecture: design theory, landscape history, landscape ecology, landscape planning and urban design. These areas are broad enough to include many particular research problems for master's projects. While these concentration areas are naturally related, each involves a different set of skills and understanding developed through department courses and focused elective work outside the department. The five concentration areas are those in which faculty members, due to their academic training and professional and research experience are best equipped for collaboration with graduate students.

Required coursework includes: one planning and design studio, Landscape Research I and II, and Mentored Research with faculty. In addition, students must complete five classes or 20 credits in an Area of Concentration. The Master's Project or Thesis and its prerequisite Master's Research course sequence must also be completed for a minimum of 22 credits.

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.

Areas of Concentration:

The Area of Concentration (AOC) courses represent a focused inquiry in advanced topics that Master's students undertake while forming and developing their Master's Projects. The following areas reflect the strengths of the faculty, but should not limit the topic areas for student projects. Projects sometimes combine aspects of two or more areas of concentration, for instance, addressing ecological design theory or urban landscape planning history. In this case, it is up to the student, working with their Advisor, to identify how a combination of courses from different areas supports his or her master's project. When students begin the MLA program, they should consult their departmental advisor to begin planning their Area of Concentration (AOC) coursework and to receive approval for AOC course selection. At the time when a student is assigned a Master's Project Advisor, responsibility for AOC course approval shifts to this person. At any time, students may consult with other department faculty they feel

could help them craft their Area of Concentration. To be approved, an AOC must be graduate level (i.e. have a 5XX or 6XX course number) and must be demonstrably related to the student's master's project topic and supportive of the project's development. When in doubt or whenever you have questions, please see your Advisor.

Design Theory: The transformation and enhancement of outdoor environments to more beautiful, expressive, and supportive places involves developing creative artistry, applying an understanding of places and their evolutionary possibilities, and thinking clearly with sensitivity to peoples' needs and values. This concentration is intensive in design criticism and in theories of design process, ideas and content.

Landscape History: This critical dimension of landscape architecture seeks to understand every landscape as a unique place in time and meaning. It combines an understanding of how landscapes have evolved as cultural and vernacular environments as well as how they have evolved as deliberate expressions of social norms and cultural aesthetics through history and among cultures. These understandings are applied to theories of design and planning as well as to the preservation of culturally significant landscapes.

Landscape Planning: Analyzing large landscapes and directing their management and land use patterns to meet social and environmental ends requires understanding of land tenure, use traditions and institutions, and knowledge of the science and values inherent in regional natural resources and human activities. For this analysis, computer geographic information systems are used to synthesize information and generate landscape plans. Examples include river management, wetlands preservation, public forest plans, urban growth management, scenic resource management and regional ecological enhancement.

Landscape Ecology: This rapidly evolving discipline focuses on how landscape pattern, process and change interact to create land mosaics that maintain the rich diversity of life and the foundations for human well-being. Understanding key links between spatial and temporal patterns and flows of organisms, materials, energy and information at a variety of scales is the basis for maintaining or restoring landscapes that embody ecological integrity and cultural vitality.

Urban Design: Designing cities, and designing in cities, requires an understanding of the interaction between natural and cultural processes. This field stretches across disciplines, and combines skills from architecture, landscape architecture, planning, and finance. This concentration focuses on the processes of city forming, and develops skills to analyze and design urban form as the expression of cultural and civic values, at a specific time, in a specific location. In this analysis, ecological processes, climate, and regional building typology inform the design of blocks, neighborhoods, cities and streetscapes that function economically, culturally, and ecologically.

The Master's Project or Thesis:

The Masters Project (LA 699) or Thesis (LA 503) is completed during the second 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. The student's choices of Master's Project topic and Area of Concentration are intended to be mutually supportive.