

Ten-Year Review of the
Department of Landscape Architecture,
College of Architecture and Urban Planning
University of Washington, Seattle

PROGRAMS:

Master of Landscape Architecture (MLA)
Bachelor of Landscape Architecture (BLA)

Conducted for the Graduate School of the
University of Washington, Seattle, by:

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February – March, 2002

Outline

- I. Summary of Process
- II. Findings
 - A. Recent History
 - B. Areas of Strength
 - C. Issues of Concern
- III. Recommendations
- IV. Appendices

SUMMARY OF PROCESS

In autumn of 2001 the Graduate School appointed a committee to conduct a ten-year review of the degree programs of the Department of Landscape Architecture. The committee included, from the University of Washington, Assistant Professor Louise M. St. Pierre of the Industrial Design Program, School of Art; Associate Professor John M. Marzluff of the Ecosystem Sciences Division, College of Forest Resources; and Professor John M. Findlay (committee chair) of the Department of History. External members of the committee included Professor Eliza Pennypacker, Department of Landscape Architecture and Office of Campus Planning and Design, The Pennsylvania State University; and Professor Darrel Morrison, Department of Landscape Architecture, University of Georgia. All members of the committee received a packet of materials, including the ten-year self-study report by the Department of Landscape Architecture.

The committee's work began with a meeting on January 11, 2002, during which the on-campus members met with Dean Marsha Landolt and Associate Dean John T. Slattery of the Graduate School; Dean Robert Mugerauer of the College of Architecture and Urban Planning; Acting Dean George Bridges of the Office of Undergraduate Education; and Associate Provost for Academic Planning Debra Friedman. The meeting reviewed the nature of the ten-year review process, and discussed specific issues and concerns regarding the Department of Landscape Architecture. Afterwards, internal members of the committee met with one another to discuss issues of concern, communicated those issues to external members of the committee, and met twice with Associate Professor Iain Robertson, Chair of the Department of Landscape Architecture. Professor Robertson provided the committee with the additional information it had requested, and also explained the changes that had recently affected the Department.

The work of the committee culminated during the site visit on February 5-6, 2002. The itinerary for the site visit is included (Appendix 1). The committee met individually with each member of the Department's faculty, met collectively with staff members, met with groups of students (divided into a group of first-year, MLA and BLA students, and a group of second- and third-year, MLA and BLA students), toured the Department's studio facilities, reviewed recent theses and design projects, toured the Department's web page, and met for lunch with Dean Mugerauer. The committee also met with recent alumni of the Department (recipients of both the BLA and MLA degrees) and with landscape architecture professionals from the community,

particularly those in a position to hire the Department's alumni and to help us evaluate the Department. The site visit concluded with a report to Dean and Associate Dean of the Graduate School, the Associate Provost for Academic Planning, and Dean of the College of Architecture and Urban Planning, and the entire faculty and staff of the Department of Landscape Architecture. Members of the committee then worked together on this report. Professors Morrison and Pennypacker provided letters of their own, commenting on the Department from their perspective as external members of the committee (Appendices 2 and 3).

FINDINGS

The Department of Landscape Architecture at the University of Washington is a relatively small unit on campus, even within the College of Architecture and Urban Planning. Yet its programs are generally effective and cohesive. The Department features a talented, rather youthful faculty that possesses considerable promise. It attracts enthusiastic students and serves their educational needs well. The Department has earned a very favorable reputation within the landscape architecture profession around the state, and it enjoys a strong academic reputation nationally. In sum, it is doing a lot of things well. The committee commends this overall success. At the same time, we believe that some attention to a few areas of concern ought to enable the Department to build nicely upon its current strengths, exploit additional opportunities, and attain more effectively some of the goals it has set for itself.

A. Recent History

This review caught the Department of Landscape Architecture at a rather unusual time. In the 18 months or so prior to this evaluation, the Department had completed a lengthy strategic plan, hired three new tenure-track members of the faculty, and undergone successfully a process of professional re-accreditation for its BLA program. Because of these events, the Department had done a lot of thinking about its direction and its future. As a result, the ideas expressed to us about its mission and programs seemed remarkably cogent. The committee also got the impression that the rigors of planning, accreditation, and hiring and socializing new assistant professors had eclipsed temporarily some other duties.

Additionally, the committee suspects that the recent transformation of the Department had rendered obsolete some of the information we had received about it. For example, as part of our review materials, the committee received the summary results of exit questionnaires submitted to the Graduate School by recipients of the MLA between 1993 and 2001. Responses to these questionnaires raised some doubts about the quality of the MLA program. For example, recent graduates were distinctly less satisfied with the overall quality of the program than were students from the College and the University as a whole. While we have not discounted the results of these questionnaires entirely, we think that the relatively low level of enthusiasm expressed by recent graduates may have been a reflection of conditions that no longer exist. For instance, prior to hiring the three new assistant professors this year, the Department depended substantially upon course offerings by part-time and temporary lecturers. Moreover, prior to the completion of the strategic plan, the Department did not have such a clearly defined intellectual focus.

Today, the Department relies almost exclusively on permanent, tenure-track faculty, and its focus on Urban Ecological Design has become a selling point to students. We fully expect that, once the new assistant professors become integrated into the Department and once the new intellectual focus has become even more clearly established, responses on the exit questionnaires will prove more favorable.

In short, when considering Landscape Architecture right now, it is important to keep in mind that the Department has recently changed direction in a significant way and, we are confident, for the better. At the same time, it is no simple thing to gain perspective on changes that have been so recently implemented. It will take a few more years before the implications of recent planning and hiring decisions become apparent.

B. Areas of Strength

1. Students

The review committee was impressed with the quality and the morale of both the undergraduate and graduate students in the Department of Landscape Architecture. The Department gets many more applicants than it can accept, and is able to be selective in the admissions process. First-rate students enroll in the BLA and MLA programs, and their work (design projects, M.A. theses) made a very favorable impression on the review committee. The enthusiasm of the students, for the Department and for their topic of study, was very high. Students went out of their way to express their satisfaction to the review committee, with only a couple of notes of discontent (concerning the balance between ecology and design in the curriculum, the relative merits of teaching faculty, and the short supply of funding for graduate-student support).

Students' evaluations of the program were one of the committee's concerns coming into the site visit. Exit interviews of recent graduates had indicated that recent MLA's were less satisfied with the Department of Landscape Architecture than other MA's and PhD's were with their respective departments at the University of Washington. So the review committee addressed this concern with a group of about five recent recipients of the BLA and MLA degrees. These alumni were quite positive in their comments on the Department. They explained that the responses on exit questionnaires were not more favorable for two reasons. First, the surveys were given just as students entered a rather tight employment market, and students perhaps lacked confidence in their ability to compete for jobs. But these alumni assured us that any lack of confidence was unfounded. MLA's and BLA's from the University of Washington did relatively well on the job market, and eventually discovered that their training had in fact established a good foundation for them. Second, the surveys came after MLA students has spent their final year in the program focusing on researching and writing a thesis. Some felt that the thesis requirement had detracted from other training that they deemed more useful, while others felt the thesis requirement stood them in good stead for many of the tasks they were expected to perform as professional landscape architects. Two or three years after graduation, the recent alumni had become less critical of the thesis requirement. Moreover, the Department is broadening its definition of the master's thesis to encourage projects that are more design-based.

We anticipate that in the future third-year MLA students will not worry so much that the thesis requirement detracts from needed professional training.

In observing the high morale of both current and former students, the committee noted two factors that help explain the generally positive feeling about the Department. First, Landscape Architecture at the University of Washington, much more than most other units on campus, is the right field in the right place at the right time. Like much of the rest of the population, particularly in the Pacific Northwest, BLA and MLA students are concerned about the environmental challenges that our society faces. Training to become landscape architects gives them a chance to rescue, even improve, the natural world around them, while at the same time they can exercise creativity through using their design skills. Local dilemmas, such as the fate of endangered species of wild Pacific salmon and steelhead, are things that they get to address in their studies as well as their professional lives. In other words, becoming a landscape architect offers many personal and cultural rewards—with monetary gain not commonly ranking high among them. The Department benefits from students' commitment and idealism, and from their willingness to make sacrifices in pursuit of personal and professional goals.

Second, high morale is not solely something that students bring to the Department. Rather, Department faculty have worked to cultivate it. BLA and MLA students repeatedly told the committee that they appreciated: the Department's intellectual focus on Urban Ecological Design; the personal attention given to students during the admissions process, in academic and career advising, in the classroom as well as in office hours and thesis advising; the inclusion of students on Departmental committees; and all the other ways that the Department had encouraged students to feel included in the Landscape Architecture community. To put it differently, the enthusiasm of students for the Department reflects in large part the efforts of the Landscape Architecture faculty.

2. Faculty

The review committee agreed that, in terms of faculty, the Department of Landscape Architecture is on the upswing. The latter 1990s were years of some faculty turnover as well as considerable reliance upon part-time or temporary lecturers. While the Department came through this period in relatively good shape, it must have been difficult to plan for the future and find stability. More recently, however, several advances have occurred to generate more stability, focus, and direction. The Department secured faculty salary increases that helped to address the notable disparities that had existed between Landscape Architecture and other units in the College of Architecture and Urban Planning. Moreover, it has hired new people successfully. Kristina Hill and Daniel Winterbottom earned tenure and promotion relatively quickly, and can be counted on to provide leadership in coming years. The appointments of Assistant Professors Jeffrey Hou, Lynne Manzo, and Nancy Rottle—each beginning in September of 2001—also impressed the review committee. Each brings a different set of strengths and perspectives to the Department, and together they strike us as talented and full of promise for the future. The Department today relies much more on tenured and tenure-track faculty than before, and can anticipate greater stability. The Department has also attained a striking degree of cohesion. It has been conscientious about integrating new faculty into the

operations of the Department. Its efforts at strategic planning and re-accreditation sharpened the intellectual focus of the program (developing an intellectual emphasis on urban ecological design) and apparently put all members of the faculty on the same page. The Department often appears to act as a committee of the whole, which may not be the most efficient means of doing business but does allow everyone to have input into decisions. Everyone generally accepts the overall direction of Landscape Architecture (without, of course, forgoing provocative debates about the precise meaning of urban ecological design), and members of the faculty agreed that there exists a pleasing degree of mutual respect within the Department.

The committee feels that much of the credit for the Department's recent successes is due to its chair, Iain Robertson. His six years of service as chair have coincided with the changes spelled out above. He has imparted to the Department—and especially its relationships with students—his own style of individualized attention, respect for differences, and inclusion. The committee regards Professor Robertson as resourceful and creative, and a strong advocate for the Department.

3. Staff

The committee echoes faculty and students in its appreciation for the support the Department receives from its staff. Vicky Reyes and JoAnne Edwards bring continuity, institutional memory, and a high standard of service to the program. Mark Barratta promises to rationalize the College's use of computer resources. His plans may not provide the Department much of the immediate relief it seeks, but they offer hope of a more sensible and predictable technological regime down the road. The Department has already made successful strides toward developing a web presence. Applicants find its admissions process almost entirely on-line, and students have begun to utilize its web resources to good effect.

4. Support from the Professional Community

The review committee made a point of talking with landscape architects from around the Seattle area, particularly those in a position to hire recent BLA's and MLA's and to take students on as interns. (We also discussed these questions with Assistant Professor Nancy Rottle who, before being hired by the Department, had also been in the position to employing BLA's and MLA's, and taking on interns.) These professionals had some suggestions for improving the program, but they were unanimous in saying that graduates from the Department of Landscape Architecture had become "more finely tuned in all facets" over the previous five years or so. They have more discipline and rigor, and are less sloppy. They characterized recent BLA's and MLA's from the University of Washington as excellent "problem solvers" who possessed confidence, independence, and good communication skills. They pointed out that, although some students were not enamored of all the research and writing required by the program, research and writing skills are indispensable for the profession.

Support for the Department from the professional community off campus extends to a demonstrated willingness to volunteer time and resources to the program. Established

practitioners agree to serve as mentors to interns and provide practicum opportunities, and they generally appreciate being asked to return to campus to participate in Departmental instruction, serve as judges, and otherwise interact with students, faculty, and alumni. In addition, they indicated that almost all professional offices make donations to various causes, and that many offices would likely be quite interested in contributing to departmental scholarships, especially to reward excellence in those areas of activity most aligned with donor interests.

C. Issues of Concern

There are several areas, the committee feels, to which the Department ought to give concerted attention in order to address specific problems. Before listing those areas, however, we wish to note that the Department's strategic plan has already identified some of these issues, and in several cases the Department has begun to address the concerns. For instance, some dissatisfaction among MLA students stems from the perception that researching and writing a thesis in their final year detract from the studio work and practical training that many feel are more important at that stage. The Department has begun to offer students the option to produce more design-oriented theses. We applaud this change and wonder if it could not be accelerated and articulated more clearly in Departmental guidelines. At the same time, we would not wish to see the Department make the thesis itself optional.

1. Development and Outreach

One set of issues revolves around development and outreach. Like all departments at the University of Washington, Landscape Architecture operates in a world of severe funding constraints. It has not yet found the resources, for example, to ensure the return of Lecturer Roxanne Hamilton in coming years. Moreover, its graduate students are woefully underfunded. Exit questionnaires indicate that recent MLA's leave the University with significantly more education-related debt than do students from other programs in the College and around the University. This shortage of funding exacerbates another concern about the Department—its relatively low level of visibility on campus. The Department aspires, for example, to attract more non-majors to its undergraduate survey courses, yet it lacks the funding necessary to employ in those courses the Teaching Assistants needed to do the work that the enrolment of additional undergraduate students would entail.

The Department's "external relations" are by no means solely a matter for concern. Landscape Architecture is inherently interdisciplinary, and the program has cultivated ties with other programs. Its students benefit by taking courses regularly in several other departments, and its faculty take part in numerous initiatives that connect them to other programs on campus. However, the review committee heard numerous times from people who felt that Landscape Architecture needed to become more visible on campus, needed to attract more interest from students (at the undergraduate level in particular), needed to insert itself more into discussions on campus and in the community because it had something distinctive to offer.

The committee also agreed that the Department is not doing enough on its own to raise money from non-state sources. We note that the faculty has had some success in attracting support for research and design projects, but additional money is needed. A lengthy section of its Strategic Plan is devoted to "Marketing," but that section seems mechanistic and perhaps not altogether well-suited to development efforts in an academic setting. Moreover, the Department has done comparatively little to implement that portion of the plan. When and if the Department does more in the way of development, the committee fears that it will find itself competing against the UW Center for Urban Horticulture, which has a considerably more established program of development and community outreach. Finally, the people we talked to both inside and outside the University tended to agree that the professional Landscape Architecture community—while supportive of the program in many ways—generally lacked the money to donate on a large scale to the Department.

2. Interdisciplinary Collaboration

As stated in the last section, landscape architecture is an inherently interdisciplinary profession, and the Department enjoys useful interaction with some units on campus; but both the Department and the Committee feel that more interdisciplinary ties would benefit students, faculty research, access to major funding agencies, and visibility campus-wide. Numerous faculty in the Department voiced frustration over their unsuccessful efforts to collaborate with Architecture. At the same time, many expressed interest in collaborating more with the Center for Urban Horticulture; and at least one faculty member suggested the desirability of collaborating more with Civil Engineering on issues of stream restoration. Interdisciplinary collaboration is an arena of such potential benefit to the department, and so central to its new focus on Urban Ecological Design, that the Committee believes this must be addressed.

3. Diversity

Another set of concerns revolves around the question of how the Department of Landscape Architecture contributes to University efforts to serve the diverse populations of Washington state. As appears to be typical of Landscape Architecture programs around the country, the BLA and MLA student populations are not very diverse, comparatively speaking. In terms of curriculum and service, the Department's most prominent foray into multicultural education has been made by Lecturer Roxanne Hamilton's courses concerning Native American landscapes. Ms. Hamilton has earned the trust of Indian tribes around Puget Sound, and one of her courses builds upon this relationship to teach students about cultural landscapes. During our site visit, one concern faced by the Department was the absence of funding beyond the 2001-2002 academic year for Ms. Hamilton.

The committee could not reach consensus on how to approach this matter. On the one hand, Ms. Hamilton's relationships with native groups may be irreplaceable; her courses concerning Indian landscapes are what the Department points to first when asked about incorporating diversity into its programs; and some of the work produced in her studios has won national design awards. It would be unfortunate if the University could not continue this linkage to native tribes. On the

other hand, very little money has been found, within or without the University, to keep this program going. Moreover, it is telling that, when the Department created its three tenure-track positions to be filled by searches during 2000-2001, it apparently did so without defining one of them in a way that would permit Ms. Hamilton to be a competitive candidate. In addition, the committee heard comments suggesting that a) the courses offered by Ms. Hamilton were not as rigorous intellectually as other Department courses; b) that the Department needed to define "cultural landscapes" so that the landscapes of non-Indian groups were considered as well; and c) that other members of the faculty could—indeed were eager to—take on the teaching of cultural landscapes, although doing so would not necessarily entail continuing Ms. Hamilton's focus on native peoples. For example, Professor Winterbottom's design/build projects both within and outside the United States—a community demonstration park on reclaimed land in the Cascade community of Seattle, and a Lavandaria in Santa Ursula, Mexico—could well provide another basis for courses on cultural landscapes.

The committee does not wish to make a recommendation regarding the future of Lecturer Roxanne Hamilton. We do note with concern, however, that the Department's primary success in the matter of "diversity" rests on a very narrow and precarious base. No one member of a Department, and particularly not a non-tenure-track member of the faculty, should carry so much of the burden in this important area. Finally, more needs to be done to attract and retain students of color to the Department, while recognizing that this is a nationwide problem in Landscape Architectural education and practice.

4. Faculty Development

Another set of issues may be grouped together under the rubric of faculty development. First, during the site visit the Department was following its strategic plan by drawing up new guidelines for promotion and tenure. The guidelines developed for Landscape Architecture are necessarily complicated, because they need to take account of the different ways in which Departmental faculty will make creative contributions (scholarship, professional practice, design). In the committee's opinion, however, those guidelines were not being drawn up quickly enough. There are plenty of models to follow, within the College, around the campus, and in other departments of landscape architecture. Assistant professors need to have a clear idea of what is expected of them.

Another concern stems from the small size of the Department and its relatively young faculty. Landscape Architecture in the very near future will depend upon Associate Professors to serve as Chair. But this demanding job will necessarily limit a person's scholarly or creative productivity. As a result, those Associate Professors who serve as Chair run the risk of inhibiting their own professional development and retarding their promotion to Professor. Can the Department and College find ways of protecting chairs, including the current one, from the toll that administrative duties take?

Still another issue is the manner by which Associate Professors in the Department will be considered for promotion to Professor. Although Professor Streatfield has served Landscape Architecture well for a long time, it is asking too much of him to be the main person responsible

for reviewing the Associate Professors. The College of Architecture and Urban Planning needs to establish a procedure for assisting in promotion from Associate Professor to Professor that calls upon Professors from other units.

Finally, while the Department has been preoccupied with recruiting new faculty in the last year or so, it now needs to turn its attention to the matter of retention. Other universities will likely agree with the high regard in which the review committee holds the relatively youthful faculty in Landscape Architecture. The current times of straitened finances in Washington state will only make it easier for other institutions to hire away strong faculty. The Department and College need to be aware of this risk and make plans for how to address it.

5. Computing Technology

Contemporary practices in Landscape Architecture are technology-intensive, with a growing number of firms performing much of their design work, as well as presentations, via 2-D, 3-D, and video "walk-throughs" created on the computer. From photo simulations to ecological systems analyses, the computer is proving to be an efficient and extremely helpful tool to the profession. At the same time, design and presentation work crafted by hand and pencil remains a time-honored practice of significant value. Consequently, Landscape Architecture is currently in an era where both hand work and computer skills must be mastered by future practitioners and researchers.

Currently the Department has no ongoing, effective strategy to ensure that its students and faculty have the hardware and software they need to accomplish their work. If this continues, the Department risks failure to place its graduates in the growing number of firms who demand computing expertise—which is increasingly offered by other departments nationwide. It is critical that such a strategy be developed, and that it ensure ongoing upgrades of equipment and programs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- a. The MLA and BLA programs in the Department of Landscape Architecture should be continued and supported for the next ten years. The Department is fundamentally sound, and is indeed improving by most important measures.
- b. The Department should do more for itself in terms of raising funds. More specifically, it should more aggressively campaign to raise money from private donors and foundations, and it should consider offering continuing-education classes or other kinds of courses that might bring revenue to the Department.

In asking for donations, the Department can identify several prominent needs to prospective donors: money to support graduate students; money to recruit minority students; money to support Teaching Assistants, which would in turn permit the Department to increase the size of its undergraduate courses and attract more students;

money to pay for Lecturers (and perhaps give permanent faculty partial relief from teaching, and help in the effort at retention); money to sponsor symposia, workshops, and other events that would increase the Department's visibility; and money to realize goals relating to computing technology. In other words, raising additional funds can help alleviate each of the concerns identified by the review committee.

- c. The Department should aggressively increase the number of undergraduate courses that attract sizeable enrolments. Doing this would increase the visibility of Landscape Architecture on campus and strengthen the Department's efforts to recruit students from underrepresented groups into the major, while also enhancing its credit-hour production and teaching efficiency.

Ideally, these courses will have (or will eventually be allotted) adequate support in the form of Teaching Assistantships. But the committee notes that there are ways of conducting classes of 200 or 250 students that do not require more than one or two T.A.'s. Teaching large classes should not be the responsibility of one member of the faculty. The Department hopes that Assistant Professor Lynne Manzo will develop one such course in the area of environmental psychology. Professor David Streatfield's existing courses on the history of landscape architecture also seem well-suited to larger audiences. In any case, more than one or two members of the faculty need to be responsible for offering large courses for undergraduates.

- d. The Department should broaden its approach to diversity and multicultural education.

Offering large undergraduate lecture classes and raising money for scholarships targeted for students from disadvantaged backgrounds may help the Department attract and retain more students from underrepresented groups. In addition the department should broaden its range of offerings addressing multicultural landscapes and promulgate such offerings as opportunities for a multicultural experience. This could be accomplished, in part, with relative ease by ensuring that some design/build studios consistently focus on multicultural landscapes, simply building upon the types of projects already being undertaken. Other courses may also prove appropriate for this type of enrichment.

- e. If it has not done so by now, the Department should immediately put into place guidelines for tenure and promotion that are flexible enough to account for the different forms of creative and scholarly contributions that Landscape Architecture faculty can and will make.

- f. The Department should develop more strategic interdisciplinary collaborations with other units that recognize the mutual benefit to be derived. In particular, the Department and the University should consider the potential for a relationship between Landscape Architecture and the Center for Urban Horticulture. While some may see an uncomfortable overlap between the audiences, intentions, and prospective funding sources of these two units, the Committee believes that it would be wise to develop mutually beneficial ties that could advance the efforts of each unit through symbiotic approaches to projects, programs, and outreach. In addition, the Committee encourages the Department to seek such ties with other units that can help to advance

the breadth and depth of the Department's teaching, research, outreach, and development efforts. Success in these efforts may lead to future recognition by other currently less-willing units (including the Department of Architecture) to recognize the prospective benefits and undertake collaborative initiatives. The review committee considers the Department's collaboration with the School of Art in the Public Art Program as an example of how this interdisciplinary outreach can benefit Landscape Architecture as well as the University.

One member of the review committee suggests that greater interdisciplinary collaboration ought to provide students with more exposure to the biological sciences, and in particular plant science, taxonomy, ecological science, restoration ecology, and conservation science. That this curriculum offers fewer courses on plants than most other programs was mentioned by several people who spoke to the review committee. However, other interviewees felt that the curriculum should pay more attention to design than to science.

- g. The Department should develop a funding strategy to ensure that faculty and students have appropriate access to evolving computing technology. A current proposal in the College would provide funds for wiring and software via a student fee, and would require students to use their own laptops. This would be an excellent strategy for the Department of Landscape Architecture to adopt.
- h. In its self-study, the Department indicates that it aspires to be one of the best programs in Landscape Architecture in the country, but at the same time it resists the idea of placing itself in a set of national rankings. The review committee learned that there are in fact no widely accepted rankings of Landscape Architecture departments in the United States. However, we did get the impression that other programs, such as that at the University of Virginia, produce landscape architects who are more widely recognized for the excellence of their training. The Department should more openly identify selected national leaders in the field, pay closer attention to why they have been successful, and consider strategies to achieve similar success.
- i. The College should in the near future award Associate Professor Iain Robertson a sabbatical leave to ensure continuation of his professional development in the midst of his service as chair, provided he continues serving in that capacity. Should another Associate Professor succeed him as chair, his or her professional development ought to remain a concern of the Department and College.

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
The Graduate School
Department of Landscape Architecture Program Review
February 4, 5 and 6, 2001

Monday, February 4

7:00 p.m. Review Committee Executive Session

Tuesday, February 5
Room 202 Architecture Hall

Note: Recent work by BLA and MLA students will be posted on the second floor of Gould Hall throughout the site visit.

8:30 a.m.	Continental Breakfast
9:00 a.m.	Iain Robertson, Chair, Department of Landscape Architecture
10:00 a.m.	David Streatfield, Professor
	<i>Break as needed</i>
10:30 a.m.	Lynne Manzo, Assistant Professor
11:00 a.m.	Jeffrey Hou, Assistant Professor
11:45 a.m.	<i>Lunch</i> - Review Committee and Recent graduates Mark Epstein, MLA, David Evans and Associates Jennifer Feaster, BLA, Allworth Nusbaum Rob Lloyd, MLA, Mithun Anita Madtes, BLA, Gustafson Partnership Miranda Maupin, MLA, Seattle Public Utility <i>Faculty Club (Music Room)</i>
1:00 p.m.	1 st year BLA/MLA Students <i>Meet in Gould 312 (studio)</i>
1:30 p.m.	Kristina Hill, Associate Professor <i>(Architecture Hall 202)</i>
2:00 p.m.	Roxanne Hamilton, Lecturer
2:30 p.m.	<i>Break</i>
3:00 p.m.	2 nd , 3 rd year BLA/MLA Students
3:30 p.m.	Nancy Rottle, Assistant Professor
4:00 p.m.	Tour of studio facilities <i>Gould Hall</i>

- 4:45 p.m. Local Landscape Architecture Firms
Jeff Girvan, Berger Partnership
Pam Kliment, Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation
Brad Kurokawa, Nakano Associates
Barbara Swift, Swift and Co.
Susan Dolan, National Park Service (5:30 arrival)
- 6:45 p.m. Executive session; dinner

Wednesday, February 6
Room 202 Architecture Hall

- 8:30 a.m. Breakfast with Staff
Mark Barratta, JoAnne Edwards, Vicky Reyes
- 9:30 a.m. Daniel Winterbottom, Associate Professor
- 10:00 a.m. Scott Melbourne, tour of LA web page
- 10:30 a.m. Julie Johnson, Assistant Professor
- 11:00 a.m. Discussion of recent UW LA work
- 11:30 a.m. Richard Horner, Research Associate Professor
- 12:15 p.m. LUNCH - Review Committee with Bob Mugerauer, Dean of
College of Architecture and Urban Planning
Faculty Club (Music Room)
- 3:00 p.m. Committee Executive Session
- 4:00 p.m. Exit Interview (*202 Architecture Hall*)
Iain Robertson and department faculty
Bob Mugerauer, Dean, College of Architecture
And Urban Planning
Debra Friedman, Associate Provost for Academic Planning,
Office of the Provost
Marsha Landolt, Dean, The Graduate School
John Slattery, Associate Dean, The Graduate School
Heidi Tilghman, Assistant to the Dean, The Graduate School
George Bridges, Acting Dean and Vice Provost,
Undergraduate Education
- 5:00 p.m. Exit Interview (no departmental representatives)
Associate Provost for Academic Planning
Dean, College of Architecture and Urban Planning,
Dean and Vice Provost, Associate Dean, and
Assistant to the Dean, The Graduate School
Dean and Vice Provost, Undergraduate Education

PENNSTATE



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Dean and Vice Provost Marsha L. Landolt
The Graduate School
G-1 Communications Building
Box 353770
Seattle, Washington 98195-1240

March 18, 2002

Dear Dean Landolt:

It is my pleasure to submit this letter outlining my observations of the University of Washington Department of Landscape Architecture. Let me first clarify that I bring to this effort a twenty-year perspective as a faculty-member in Landscape Architecture at Penn State, with seven of those years spent as department head.

The University of Washington has had a quietly respected program and faculty for many years. Some of their small number of faculty are quite well known in academic circles of Landscape Architecture: Professors emeritus Sally Schauman and Rich Haag are legends, as is Professor David Streatfield; and Associate Professor Kristina Hill is rapidly becoming a significant national presence. While the UW program has not been central on the national academic "radar," I believe it is considered rigorous and respectable, especially at the graduate level.

Certain recent changes in the Department present the potential for this small entity to become a national contender. First, the newly-declared focus on Urban Ecological Design is an extremely intelligent step. This move represents a most logical convergence of professional opportunities: it seizes upon the issue of reclamation of cities (considered our profession's next great challenge), gives it a slant toward ecological sustainability (rapidly becoming our new "modus operandi"), and does this within the context of our nation's ecological mecca, the Pacific Northwest. Simply put, this focus presents to thoughtful students an extremely enticing opportunity to address 21st century thinking in Landscape Architecture. Strangely enough, few departments of Landscape Architecture nationwide articulate a single focus of their activities—especially not in a simple title as compelling and concise as UW has done. I truly believe that this will serve the Department extremely well. Another recent change to be commended is the enviable hires recently made by the Department. All three of the new Assistant Professors in the department possess considerable expertise and promise. As a department head, I would have worked hard to recruit these individuals, and Professor Robertson and the Department deserve considerable credit in successfully signing not one but three remarkable additions. I believe that this, too, speaks extremely well for the Department and its new direction.

Indeed, this department possess a number of characteristics that many other departments crave. Many of these are mentioned in our report, but bear repeating here:

- A faculty body galvanized by a new focus;

- Great breadth of expertise among the faculty, coupled with mutual respect;
- Unusually mature students with high enthusiasm and morale;
- Outstanding thesis work, as well as award-winning undergraduate work;
- An unusually knowledgeable and engaged staff;
- Location in a city and region perfectly attuned to Landscape Architecture in general, as well as the new focus of this department;
- A particularly creative and respected professional community eager to help.

From my perspective it would be useful for the Department to take its considerable assets to the next level to become a recognized and respected unit within the University of Washington and to move to a more central position on the national radar. Again, many of these recommendations appear in general statements in our report but bear repetition with some additional detail here. I will preface this section by clarifying that these very specific suggestions are based on my experience, and they may or may not be fully applicable to the UW Department; but I offer them based upon my observations of the Department's current status and direction:

- The Department needs to adopt a savvy marketing strategy. First and perhaps foremost, the Department should work to become better known at the University. This can be accomplished by ensuring that their current excellent projects and research are promulgated in all the internal publications of UW: internal newspapers, research publications, alumni magazines. Additionally the Department could host events for the University and local community on issues of wide interest, such as "The Sustainable City." And, of course, creation of additional courses open to the University at large can create very useful recognition as well as a recruiting tool. Second, the Department should actively guide its MLA's to publish their work, which would help provide the Department a great deal of excellent exposure with a fairly low investment. The simple fact is that, like many departments of Landscape Architecture, the UW Department is already doing wonderful things; they must now get the word out—especially to their own community—to be valued as they deserve.
- Interdisciplinary alliances present great opportunities to departments of Landscape Architecture, and UW offers many possibilities. This, too, is a means to "spread the word" to a larger constituent base, as well as a means to expand educational offerings in efficient ways, enhance research and outreach opportunities, and gain access to different funding sources. At Penn State, we've established formal alliances with the Department of Architecture and with the School of Forest Resources that have resulted in three Centers: the Center for Watershed Stewardship, the Hamer Center for Community Design Assistance, and the Stuckeman Center for Design Computing—all of which provide our department access to arenas that might otherwise be beyond our reach. The key to successful alliances, of course, is for two units to recognize the mutual benefit to be derived. From my perspective, UW offers a wealth of opportunities for such alliances; the hard first step is to think through the benefits as well as the perceived pitfalls, then make a successful proposal to another unit.
- The Department absolutely must develop a technology plan for its faculty and students. This is essential because today's graduate must have computing skills to be competitive in the marketplace. Fewer and fewer of the nationally respected consultants I'm currently working with present "hand work" to Penn State in their design submissions. And, while many of us place greater value on work composed

with pencil than with mouse, the fact is that our students need a very firm foundation in design technology. The Department of Architecture's idea to require student laptops, coupled with the College's idea to use a student fee for wiring and software is an excellent model—one, in fact, employed at Harvard and under consideration at Penn State.

- If the Department is not doing so already, I highly recommend gathering data from other departments of Landscape Architecture on key issues or ideas under consideration by the Department. The Department's current efforts at developing P&T guidelines, as well as questions about developing a strategy for design computing, are types of issues about which I regularly queried counterparts in other institutions, to the considerable benefit of my Department.

I will close by saying that my visit to the UW Department of Landscape Architecture showed me a department of considerable strength with enormous potential. I now better understand an experience I had about 3 years ago that I believe my UW colleagues will enjoy hearing: While department head at Penn State, I had a number of talks with a most promising prospective student considering our BLA/MLA program (our alternative to UW's professional MLA). As always, I encouraged the young man to look carefully at programs nationwide to ensure that his decision to attend Penn State would be grounded in "fit" between his goals and our offerings, rather than expediency (he was a State College resident at the time). To my surprise, he returned from his explorations, thanking me for that advice, and announcing that he would attend the University of Washington. I thoroughly enjoyed learning on my visit to UW that my prospective student, Craig Skipton, is currently an excellent student at UW who is confident that he made the right choice.

Respectfully submitted,



Eliza Pennypacker
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Appendix 3

Date: Fri, 15 Mar 2002 14:01:55 -0500
From: darrelmo@arches.uga.edu
To: jfindlay@u.washington.edu
Subject: Landscape Architecture Review

Dear Professor Findlay:

As one of the external reviewers in the Ten-Year Review of the Department of Landscape Architecture within the College of Architecture and Urban Planning at the University of Washington in Seattle, I wish to provide the following observations, in addition to the Review Committee's observations, which I believe are very well-presented in the Review Team Report.

First, I would like to note that the perception of the Department of Landscape Architecture and its programs at the University of Washington is very favorable, even from this farthest portion of the continental United States. My own personal favorable impressions of the programs there were not only reinforced, but indeed strengthened by the additional information and insights gained through studying the various documents, and most of all, by the visit in February. Let me expand briefly on my observations.

The identification of "Urban Ecological Design" as a focus is an important and, I think, an exemplary step for a Landscape Architectural program to take. A small program cannot be all things to all people, and hence, the value of identifying a central theme is great. At the Master of Landscape Architecture degree level, I would be happy to see similarly clearly-defined foci at other schools, so that potential graduate students could immediately find the schools that offer programs that cover the areas they most want to pursue. And while "Urban Ecological Design" provides a focus, it is not overly limiting in terms of the scope it offers. Seattle and environs seems to be the perfect setting for such a program, with its juxtaposition of "natural" landscapes and a rich urban fabric.

As noted in our team report, I would encourage the Department to work even more closely with the Urban Horticulture Center, in that many of the aims and programs of that unit are so compatible with, or integral to, urban ecological design. Doing that would strengthen an already-strong program.

While I concur with the conclusion that the opportunity to pursue a more design-oriented thesis is desirable, I think it is important to maintain the possibility of students' pursuing Master's thesis topics which are research-oriented. In reviewing recent MLA theses during the visit, I was very impressed with their quality, and I would not want the Department to forego the diversity of thesis topics and types. I believe the faculty feels this way too.

Finally, it was a great pleasure to see a close-knit, and seemingly highly communicative faculty of landscape architecture working together to solve problems, and to heighten their students' experience. Being in a comparatively large program (25 full-time faculty and 450 students) myself, I must say I saw at Washington great value in a smaller program which is oriented toward quality education.

I appreciate very much the generous hospitality which I experienced during the visit in February, and wish everyone there the best.

Sincerely,
Darrel Morrison, FASLA
Professor (and former Dean)
School of Environmental Design
University of Georgia