LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE, B.L.A.

Begin Campus: University Park

End Campus: University Park

Program Description

Landscape architecture is the art of design, planning, or management of the land and of the natural and built elements upon it. As an academic discipline, it embodies creative, cultural, philosophical, and scientific knowledge bases. As a professional discipline, the practice of landscape architecture includes site design, urban design, master planning, community planning, regional planning, resource conservation, and stewardship.

The program currently is a nine-semester curriculum leading to a professionally accredited Bachelor of Landscape Architecture degree. One semester of the curriculum is spent in a required semester abroad. The program prepares graduates for entry into professional offices or pursuit of advanced study in related disciplines. The curriculum develops both the creative insight and the technical skills essential to practice and fulfills the education requirement needed in all states to be eligible to take the professional licensing examination.

What is Landscape Architecture?

Landscape architecture is an important change agent design profession for the 21st century addressing both social and environmental challenges of our times. Landscape architects are licensed professionals who design places that have beneficial impacts on the health and resilience of our ecosystems, our communities, and ourselves—places of delight, of wonder, of comfort, and of respite that include parks, plazas, campuses, gardens, memorials, green roofs, interactive installations, commercial centers, transportation corridors, waterfront developments, and so much more. In their work, landscape architects are guided by commitment to social, environmental, and economic benefit. All of this makes landscape architecture "the most exciting 21st century design profession that you've probably never heard of."

You Might Like This Program If...

- You are creative, active, involved.
- You want to be an agent of change and solve problems.
- You are passionate about sustainability.
- You are fascinated by people and cultures; inspired by history and traveling.
- You like technology and hands-on work.
- You enjoy working with a team and you want to design for the 'big' issues.
- You want to engage with art, nature, and design to unlock powerful solutions for the complex issues of today and tomorrow.

Entrance Procedures

Incoming First Year Students

Incoming first year students must apply to Penn State. Students who are accepted to Landscape Architecture will be directly admitted to the undergraduate professional degree (Larch_BLA). There is no portfolio required for incoming first year students.

Change of Major/Change of Campus Students

Change of major/change of campus students must have a cumulative GPA of 2.00 or above and are required to submit a cover letter and essay (https://arts.psu.edu/how-to-apply/#specific) by February 15. Students will be placed in either first or second year studio based on demonstrating proficiencies required for advanced placement standing.

Transfer Students

Transfer students must apply to Penn State. Transfer students are required to apply and submit a cover letter and essay (https://arts.psu.edu/how-to-apply/#specific) by February 15. Students will be placed in either first or second year studio based on demonstrating proficiencies required for advanced placement standing.

Degree Requirements

For the Bachelor of Landscape Architecture degree in Landscape Architecture, a minimum of 139 credits is required:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Education</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electives</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requirements for the Major</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 of the 45 credits for General Education are included in the Requirements for the Major. This includes: 9 credits of GN courses; 6 credits of GA courses; 3 credits of GH courses; 3 credits of GS courses.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Requirements for the Major

To graduate, a student enrolled in the major must earn a grade of C or better in each course designated by the major as a C-required course, as specified by Senate Policy 82-44 (https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#82-44).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prescribed Courses: Require a grade of C or better</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOILS 101</td>
<td>Introductory Soil Science</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LARCH 60</td>
<td>Cultural History of Designed Places</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LARCH 115</td>
<td>Design I: Intro Spatial Composition</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LARCH 116</td>
<td>Design II: Spatial Design</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LARCH 125</td>
<td>Landscape Architecture Orientation Seminar</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LARCH 145</td>
<td>Ecology and Plants I</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LARCH 155</td>
<td>Skills Lab I: Hand &amp; Digital Graphics</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LARCH 156</td>
<td>Skills Lab II: Hand &amp; Digital Graphics</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LARCH 215</td>
<td>Design III: Site Design</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LARCH 216</td>
<td>Design IV: Expanded Use, Scale, and Context</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LARCH 235</td>
<td>Design Implementation I: Grading</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LARCH 236</td>
<td>Design Implementation II: Materials</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LARCH 245</td>
<td>Ecology &amp; Plants II</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LARCH 246</td>
<td>Ridge &amp; Valley in the Field</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LARCH 255</td>
<td>Skills Lab III: Digital Graphics</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LARCH 256</td>
<td>Skills Lab IV: GIS</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LARCH 276</td>
<td>Human Dimensions of Design: History &amp; Theory</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LARCH 315</td>
<td>Design V: Expanded Use, Scale, and Context</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LARCH 335</td>
<td>Design Implementation III: Planting Methods</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LARCH 336</td>
<td>Design Implementation IV: Stormwater</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LARCH 365W  Contemporary Trends in Landscape Architecture  3  
LARCH 375  Human Dimensions of Design - Applied  3  
LARCH 386  Professional Practice  3  
LARCH 414  Design and Theory V. Advanced Landscape Architectural Design (5 per semester, maximum of 15)  15  
LARCH 424  Design Theory Seminar  3  
LARCH 499A  Design Theory Seminar  1  
LARCH 499B  Design and Theory VI: Contemporary/International Landscape Architectural Design Issues  5  
LARCH 499D  Contemporary/International Special Topics  3  

**Additional Courses**

Select 3 credits of the following:  3  
- AFR 110N  Introduction to Contemporary Africa  
- ANTH 120  First Farmers  
- CAS 222N  Foundations: Civic and Community Engagement  
- CED 155  Science, Technology and Public Policy  
- GEOG 320  Urban Geography: A Global Perspective  
- PLSC 22  
- RPTM 120  Leisure and Human Behavior  
- RSOC 11  Intro Rural Sociology  
- SOC 119N  Race, Ethnicity and Culture  

**General Education**

Connecting career and curiosity, the General Education curriculum provides the opportunity for students to acquire transferable skills necessary to be successful in the future and to thrive while living in interconnected contexts. General Education aids students in developing intellectual curiosity, a strengthened ability to think, and a deeper sense of aesthetic appreciation. These are requirements for all baccalaureate students and are often partially incorporated into the requirements of a program. For additional information, see the General Education Requirements (https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/baccalaureate-degree-general-education-program/) section of the Bulletin and consult your academic adviser.

Thekeystone symbol appears next to the title of any course that is designated as a General Education course. Program requirements may also satisfy General Education requirements and vary for each program.

**Foundations (grade of C or better is required and Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)**

- Quantification (GQ): 6 credits  
- Writing and Speaking (GWS): 9 credits  

**Breadth in the Knowledge Domains (Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)**

- Arts (GA): 3 credits  
- Health and Wellness (GHW): 3 credits  
- Humanities (GH): 3 credits  
- Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS): 3 credits
- Natural Sciences (GN): 3 credits

**Integrative Studies**

- Inter-Domain Courses (Inter-Domain): 6 credits

**Exploration**

- GN, may be completed with Inter-Domain courses: 3 credits
- GA, GH, GN, GS, Inter-Domain courses. This may include 3 credits of World Language course work beyond the 12th credit level or the requirements for the student's degree program, whichever is higher: 6 credits

**University Degree Requirements**

**First Year Engagement**

All students enrolled in a college or the Division of Undergraduate Studies at University Park, and the World Campus are required to take 1 to 3 credits of the First-Year Seminar, as specified by their college First-Year Engagement Plan.

Other Penn State colleges and campuses may require the First-Year Seminar; colleges and campuses that do not require a First-Year Seminar provide students with a first-year engagement experience.
First-year baccalaureate students entering Penn State should consult their academic adviser for these requirements.

**Cultures Requirement**
6 credits are required and may satisfy other requirements
- United States Cultures: 3 credits
- International Cultures: 3 credits

**Writing Across the Curriculum**
3 credits required from the college of graduation and likely prescribed as part of major requirements.

**Total Minimum Credits**
A minimum of 120 degree credits must be earned for a baccalaureate degree. The requirements for some programs may exceed 120 credits. Students should consult with their college or department adviser for information on specific credit requirements.

**Quality of Work**
Candidates must complete the degree requirements for their major and earn at least a 2.00 grade-point average for all courses completed within their degree program.

**Limitations on Source and Time for Credit Acquisition**
The college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require up to 24 credits of course work in the major to be taken at the location or in the college or program where the degree is earned. Credit used toward degree programs may need to be earned from a particular source or within time constraints (see Senate Policy 83-80 (https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#83-80)). For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

**Integrated B.L.A. in Landscape Architecture and M.S. in Landscape Architecture**
Requirements for the Integrated B.L.A. in Landscape Architecture and M.S. in Landscape Architecture can be found in the Graduate Bulletin (https://bulletins.psu.edu/graduate/programs/majors/landscape-architecture/#integratedundergradgradprogramtext).

**Academic Advising**
The objectives of the university’s academic advising program are to help advisees identify and achieve their academic goals, to promote their intellectual discovery, and to encourage students to take advantage of both in-and out-of-class educational opportunities in order that they become self-directed learners and decision makers.

Both advisers and advisees share responsibility for making the advising relationship succeed. By encouraging their advisees to become engaged in their education, to meet their educational goals, and to develop the habit of learning, advisers assume a significant educational role. The advisee’s unit of enrollment will provide each advisee with a primary academic adviser, the information needed to plan the chosen program of study, and referrals to other specialized resources.

READ SENATE POLICY 32-00: ADVISING POLICY (https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/32-00-advising-policy/)

**Suggested Academic Plan**
The suggested academic plan(s) listed on this page are the plan(s) that are in effect during the 2023-24 academic year. To access previous years’ suggested academic plans, please visit the archive (https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/archive/) to view the appropriate Undergraduate Bulletin edition (Note: the archive only contains suggested academic plans beginning with the 2018-19 edition of the Undergraduate Bulletin).

**Landscape Architecture, B.L.A. at University Park Campus**
The course series listed below provides only one of the many possible ways to move through this curriculum. The University may make changes in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit (accessible in LionPATH as either an Academic Requirements or What If report). Please consult with a Penn State academic adviser on a regular basis to develop and refine an academic plan that is appropriate for you.

**First Year**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 15 or 30H‡</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>LARCH 116*</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LARCH 60 (GA;US;IL)†*</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>LARCH 156*</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LARCH 115*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>SOILS 101†‡</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LARCH 125*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1 Additional Course for Major (see list)†</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LARCH 145*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3 Additional Course for Major (see list)†</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LARCH 155*</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 Additional Course for Major (see list)†</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
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</table>

**Second Year**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LARCH 215*</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>LARCH 216*</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LARCH 235*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Additional Course for Major (see list)†</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LARCH 245*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>LARCH 246*</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LARCH 255*</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>LARCH 256*</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Course for Major (see list)†</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>LARCH 276*</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LARCH 336*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Third Year**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAS 100A, 100B, or 100C‡</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>ENGL 202A, 202B, 202C, or 202D†</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LARCH 315*</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>LARCH 414*</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LARCH 335*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>LARCH 236*</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LARCH 365W*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>LARCH 375*</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Stuckeman School Academic Adviser
121 Stuckeman Family Building
University Park, PA 16802
814-865-9511
seb246@psu.edu

University Park
Sarah Watson
University Requirements and General Education Notes:

1. Additional Course for Major Selection (18 credits)
   GA: 6 Credits Required
   Select 6 credits from: AA 121 GA(3); ARCH 100 GA(3); ARCH 210 GA(3); ART 20 GA(3); ART 30 GA(3); ARTH 120 GA;IL(3); ARTH 140 GA;IL(3); LARCH 386* 3
   Additional Course for Major (see list) 1

2. Fourth Year
   Fall Credits Spring Credits
   LARCH 499A* 1 LARCH 414* 5
   LARCH 499B 5 LARCH 424* 3
   LARCH 499D 3 Additional Course for Major (see list) 1
   Foreign Language (Recommended) or Elective* 3 Additional Course for Major (see list) 1
   Elective 3
   Total Credits 139

3. Fifth Year
   Fall Credits
   LARCH 414* 5
   Additional Course for Major (see list) 1
   Additional Course for Major (see list) 1
   Elective 3
   Total Credits 12

4. Total Credits 151

* Course requires a grade of C or better for the major
† Course satisfies General Education and degree requirement
‡ Course requires a grade of C or better for General Education
# Course is an Entrance to Major requirement

1 Additional Course for Major Selection (18 credits)

GA: 6 Credits Required
Select 6 credits from: AA 121 GA(3); ARCH 100 GA(3); ARCH 210 GA(3); ART 20 GA(3); ART 30 GA(3); ARTH 120 GA;IL(3); ARTH 140 GA;IL(3); LARCH 386* 3
Additional Course for Major (see list) 1

US and IL are abbreviations used to designate courses that satisfy Cultural Diversity Requirements (United States and International Cultures).

W, M, X, and Y are the suffixes at the end of a course number used to designate courses that satisfy University Writing Across the Curriculum requirement.

General Education includes Foundations (GWS and GQ), Knowledge Domains (GHW, GN, GA, GH, GS) and Integrative Studies (Inter-domain) requirements. N or Q (Honors) is the suffix at the end of a course number used to help identify an Inter-domain course, but the inter-domain attribute is used to fill audit requirements. Foundations courses (GWS and GQ) require a grade of 'C' or better.

All incoming Schreyer Honors College first-year students at University Park will take ENGL 137H/CAS 137H in the fall semester and ENGL 138T/CAS 138T in the spring semester. These courses carry the GWS designation and replace both ENGL 30H and CAS 100. Each course is 3 credits.

Change of Major Application: A minimum grade point average of 2.0 and an essay submission to be evaluated. Students will be admitted in the fall semester only.

Submission Requirements: https://arts.psu.edu/how-to-apply/#specific

For More Information, please contact:
Robin Bierly
Stuckeman School Undergraduate Academic Adviser
127 Stuckeman Family Building
University Park, PA 16802
814-865-0345
rab55@psu.edu

Career Paths

Penn State Landscape Architecture graduates are well-prepared to join our distinguished professional alumni network with a clear path to licensure and making an immediate impact on the world. The Bachelor of Landscape Architecture (B.L.A.) program is designed to prepare graduates for either advanced study or professional careers. A B.L.A. degree provides students with a background in creativity, technical skills, and ethical considerations necessary for professional practice. Careers or graduate study can lead to a diverse array of focus areas, including sustainability, urban planning, research, social or environmental justice, design, ecology, social health and well-being, technology, construction, or community outreach.

Careers

The world is constantly changing, and landscape architects are skilled designers poised to shape, drive, and responsibly steward these changes. Penn State landscape architects are artists, ecologists, engineers, scientists, sociologists, conservationists, and often, leaders. The profession enables you to connect with your passion. Engage with art, nature, and design. Build spaces, places, and experiences. Collaborate. Solve problems. Design a better future. A B.L.A. will prepare you with leading-edge technical design principles and a deep foundation in technologies and design-thinking methods so that you can immediately enter professional practice with a wide range of opportunities.
MORE INFORMATION ABOUT POTENTIAL CAREER OPTIONS FOR GRADUATES OF THE LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE PROGRAM (https://sites.psu.edu/stuckemancareers/)

**Opportunities for Graduate Studies**

While the accredited B.L.A. prepares students for professional practice, graduates may opt to pursue advanced degrees to gain specialized expertise. Penn State's M.S. in LA is a research-focused degree in which students hone expertise in a targeted area of the profession. M.S. in LA applicants should hold an accredited professional degree in landscape architecture. Penn State also offers an online graduate certificate and a Master in Professional Studies degree program in Geodesign, an exciting, new, design and planning strategy that harnesses big data to ensure wise decisions grounded in the triple bottom line of sustainability: environmental, social, and economic good.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRADUATE STUDIES (https://arts.psu.edu/academics/department-of-landscape-architecture/)

**Professional Resources**

- The American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) (https://www.asla.org)

**Accreditation**

The BLA undergraduate curriculum is accredited by the Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board (LAAB). The mission of LAAB is to evaluate, advocate for, and advance the quality of education in landscape architectural programs. LAAB establishes standards that ensure that current and future practitioners understand, obtain and maintain the knowledge, skills and abilities required to practice landscape architecture in the future.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ACCREDITATION OF THE LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE PROGRAM (https://arts.psu.edu/accreditation/accreditation-penn-state-landscape-architecture-programs/)

**Professional Licensure/Certification**

Many U.S. states and territories require professional licensure/certification to be employed. If you plan to pursue employment in a licensed profession after completing this program, please visit the Professional Licensure/Certification Disclosures by State (https://www.psu.edu/state-licensure-disclosures/) interactive map.

**Contact**

**University Park**

DEPARTMENT OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
121 Stuckeman Family Building
University Park, PA 16802
814-865-9511
larch@psu.edu

https://arts.psu.edu/academics/department-of-landscape-architecture/