
WELCOME

This guide is intended to help students new to the graduate program in the Department of Landscape Architecture at Penn State to deal more effectively with the many questions that may arise during their stay here.

It is designed to help graduate students understand the policies, requirements, and practices governing the Master of Science in Landscape Architecture (MS in LA) degree program. This guide repeats some information that appears in the Penn State Graduate Degree Programs Bulletin; however, the bulletin is more comprehensive and remains an invaluable source of information.

This guide contains information you need now, and will use again later. Keep it for future reference.

M.S. IN L.A. GRADUATE STUDENT GUIDE

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This Graduate Student Handbook is for the guidance and convenience of graduate students, faculty, and staff in the Department of Landscape Architecture. As a reference book, it attempts to compile relevant and frequently requested information regarding the graduate programs in one volume. It is, however, not exhaustive and, in and of itself, does not constitute a contract in any way. Reference should be made to publications available from the University, the Graduate School, the College of Arts and Architecture, and the Office of International Programs (among others) for policies and procedures which may overrule those listed herein.

Every effort will be made to keep this handbook up-to-date and relevant. Students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to submit suggestions for its improvement.

This publication is available in alternative media on request.

The University is committed to equal access to programs, facilities, admission, and employment for all persons. It is the policy of the University to maintain an environment free of harassment and free of discrimination against any person because of age, race, color, ancestry, national origin, religion, creed, service in the uniformed services (as defined in state and federal law), veteran status, sex, sexual orientation, marital or family status, pregnancy, pregnancy-related conditions, physical or mental disability, gender, perceived gender, gender identity, genetic information, or political ideas. Discriminatory conduct and harassment, as well as sexual misconduct and relationship violence, violates the dignity of individuals, impedes the realization of the University's educational mission, and will not be tolerated. Direct all inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policy to Dr. Kenneth Lehrman III, Vice Provost for Affirmative Action, Affirmative Action Office, The Pennsylvania State University, 328 Boucke Building, University Park, PA 16802-5901; Email: kf12@psu.edu; Tel 814-863-0471.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

GETTING STARTED	2
BASIC STRUCTURE OF THE MS IN LA PROGRAM	2
OVERVIEW + COURSE REQUIREMENTS	3
MS IN LA THESIS.....	5
Advisor + Master’s Thesis Committee	5
The Defense	5
Presentation	5
Provision of Final Research Documents	5
Program Time Limits	5
Deliverables Schedule per Semester	6-9
ADDITIONAL GRADUATE REQUIREMENTS.....	10
Scholarship Research Integrity (SARI)	10
OTHER INFORMATION	11
Roles + Responsibilities	11
Full-Time Academic Status + Credit Load	12
Course Numbering + Related Issues	12
Course Grading.....	12
Graduate Assistantships.....	13
Summer Courses.....	13
Transferring Credits	13
Grade Point Average	14
Provisional Status	14
Research Involving Human Participants.....	14
Awards and Competitions	14
Other Funding	14
Financial Aid.....	15
General Time Limitations.....	15
Availability of Theses, Papers, and Projects	15
APPLICATION PROCEDURES	16
Penn State Graduate School Requirements	16
Landscape Architecture Department Requirements.....	16
Financial Assistance	17
Teaching Assistantships.....	17
Assistantship Decisions.....	18
DEPARTMENTAL RESOURCES + OPPORTUNITIES	19
Student Desks	19
Computers + Access Accounts.....	19
Photocopying	19
Supplies.....	19
Travel Funds	19
Learn to Teach.....	19
Study Abroad/Off Campus	19
Graduate Research Exhibition	20
Departmental, SSALA, and Professional Awards.....	20
GRADUATE STUDENT RESOURCE GUIDE.....	21
University Services	21
Academic Integrity	23
Plagiarism	23
University Policies	23
Graduate Student Policies	23



WELCOME TO PENN STATE

The Department of Landscape Architecture is part of the Stuckeman School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture in the College of Arts and Architecture at Penn State. The Stuckeman Family Building is in the middle of the College of Arts and Architecture campus, surrounded by the facilities for the Department of Art History, the Schools of Music, Theater, and Visual Arts, the Integrative Arts Program, the Palmer Museum, and several other facilities.

Completed in 2005, the 111,000-square-foot Stuckeman Family Building has a LEED Gold Rating, making it one of the first buildings on any U.S. university campus to earn that distinction. The energy efficient design reduces the building's annual energy costs by 35 percent compared to a conventionally designed structure.

The four-story building, adjacent to both the Palmer Museum of Art and the Arts Building on the University Park campus, has an exterior made of recycled copper, brick, and energy-conserving glazed windows with exterior sun-control louvers, which minimize glare inside. Interior sustainable features include lighting controls with automatic daylight and occupancy sensors and an HVAC system that relies on a natural ventilation system in appropriate weather conditions. Integrated landscape and parking design filters storm water run-off to minimize pollutants.

GETTING STARTED

The Landscape Architecture Department staff can be found in the Stuckeman School main office in 121 Stuckeman. You will be assigned a mailbox in the office and you can receive information about registration and answers to any questions you may have. The staff will also provide you with a key to your locker in the graduate studio. If you have been awarded an assistantship or fellowship, you should see the appropriate administrative assistant, located in the same office. Here, you will receive information with respect to your work assignment, your faculty supervisor, your starting date, and your stipend payments. While you are in the department office, you may want to ask the administrative assistant if the department head is available for an informal meeting.

If you want to reach the department office by phone, call (814) 865-9511. If you are phoning within the University system, you need only dial the last 5 numbers, in this case 5-9511. If you are dialing an off-campus phone from a university phone, you need to first dial 8 and then the seven-digit number. Upon arrival, you may also make an appointment to see the Graduate Program Professor in Charge (PIC), who will serve as your academic advisor until you have a thesis advisor.

The graduate studios are located on the fourth level. Graduate students have a desk and locker there. The Architecture and Landscape Architecture Library is located in 111 Stuckeman.

BASIC STRUCTURE

OF THE MS IN LA PROGRAM

Our MS in LA provides a post-professional research and scholarship focused experience for students with a baccalaureate degree in landscape architecture or a closely related discipline. The MS in LA serves the advanced research needs of the discipline and offers flexibility in developing a program of study suited to career goals in the chosen area of study. In addition to the typical MS in LA degree, a graduate option in Community and Urban Design (CMYUD) and a certificate in Geodesign are available. The CMYUD option offers students the opportunity to focus on Community Design and Planning issues. In addition the department has expertise in Design Computing, Geo-spatial Analysis, Green Infrastructure and issues related to ecological design and restoration. Students

have the opportunity to select seminars and electives to specialize in one of these topical areas. Students can also pursue a “dual title” degree in Landscape Architecture and Human Dimensions of Natural Resources and the Environment (HDNRE; see agsci.psu.edu/hdnre).

The MS in LA provides the foundation for continued graduate research at the Ph.D. level, increasingly the requirement for those entering the arena of university teaching and research. **The MS in LA is not a professionally accredited degree and therefore does not prepare graduates to take the licensure exam for professional practice of landscape architecture.**

THE UNIVERSITY'S FORMAL ORGANIZATION

Penn State University is hierarchically organized, with the Graduate School having jurisdiction over all graduate programs at Penn State. The Graduate School thus determines and monitors the minimum standards for all of the graduate programs at Penn State. The Landscape Architecture Department receives applications to its graduate program and recommends applicants to the (University's) Graduate School. The Graduate School in turn first admits students to the university and then to our graduate program.

The graduate faculty of the Department of Landscape Architecture, part of the College of Arts and Architecture, estab-

lishes the graduate program and its policies, standards, and regulations. The (departmental) Graduate Affairs Committee and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Outreach of the College of Arts and Architecture may establish additional regulations for the various graduate programs in the College. Policies established by the Department of Landscape Architecture may be more rigorous than those established by the College or the University, but not the other way around.

The graduate program in Landscape Architecture is directed by the Head of the Department and administered by the Graduate Program Professor in Charge (PIC) and staff. A Graduate Affairs Committee oversees the structure of the program.

OVERVIEW + REQUIREMENTS

The MS in LA curriculum is a two year research-focused 40 credit program including a minimum of 18 credits at the 500-level. Students are required to take graduate level coursework, including an introductory graduate colloquium (1 credit), a methods course (3 credits), a theory course (3 credits / LARCH 502), graduate seminars (12 credits), and a course in quantitative/qualitative analysis (3 credits minimum). Students must fulfill graduate electives in consultation with their advisor and also complete an M.S. thesis.

Core graduate requirements:

- LARCH 501, Research Writing in Landscape Architecture Methods (3 Credits);
- LARCH 502, Intellectual History and Theory of Landscape Architecture (3 Credits);
- LARCH 510, Graduate History/Theory Seminars (4 courses @ 3 credits each – 12 credits);
- LARCH 590, Graduate Colloquium (1 credit – taken in the first semester);
- LARCH 600, Thesis Research (1–15 credits);
- Quantitative/Qualitative Analysis Requirement (3 credits min.)

The qualitative/quantitative analysis requirement is fulfilled through successful completion of a statistics course equivalent to STAT 461 (i.e., coverage up through analysis of variance and linear regression); OR a qualitative methods course equivalent to ANTH 458 (Ethnographic Field Methods). Students should consult their advisor in selecting their qualitative/quantitative analysis course.

COMMUNITY AND URBAN DESIGN OPTION

The Community and Urban Design (CMYUD) Option provides students with in-depth inquiry into the theory and practice of community-based and urban design that responds to trends related to urban growth and change, the rise of the non-profit sector in community governance, and poverty and environmental degradation in urbanized and urbanizing areas. The intent of the CMYUD Option is to introduce students to theory, methods, and research surrounding specific topics in CMYUD. Students undertake hands-on design work and research as well as coursework in methods and computer applications, planning and policy, and ethics and society.

The core degree requirements for the CMYUD Option are the same as for MS: 40 credits, comprising seminars, electives, design, and research, but focuses student core seminars and methods on CMYUD specific courses.

In line with MS in LA course requirements for electives, a minimum of 9 credits of breadth courses at 400-500 level are required in the following subject areas:

- 3 credits in Methods and Computer Application related to community design and planning.
- 3 credits in Community and Urban Design in Planning Theory
- 3 credits in Ethics and Society

Please discuss approved elective options with the Graduate Program PIC.

See pages 6–9 for a semester-based schedule of courses and deliverables to ensure program completion.

GEODESIGN CERTIFICATE FOR MS IN LA

Our department offers an MPS inn Geodesign as well as a certificate. MSinLA students have the option to take the latter as part of their 40 credits of coursework.

Geodesign is a cutting-edge process for making wise design and planning decisions. It harnesses “big data” using GIS and other software to analyze the suitability of a property for a particular land use. You identify the criteria—grounded in goals for economic, social, and/or environmental sustainability; the software then rates your different design/planning alternatives in achieving your goals. Geodesign also utilizes a stakeholder decisionmaking strategy to engage user groups in making wise decisions through effective negotiation.

The core certificate requirements are 14 credits of coursework that can be substituted for typical MS in LA courses. Note that **all** Geodesign courses are offered only online through Penn State’s World Campus:

- 2-3 credits in Geography (Geog 482 if no GIS experience; substitute for 1st semester graduate elective)
- 3 credits in GDZ 511 (substitute for 2nd semester LArch 510)
- 3 credits in GDZ 822 (substitute for 2nd semester graduate elective)
- 3 credits in GDZ 824 or 826 (substitute for 3 x LArch 590 colloquia)
- 3 credits in Geography (Geog 483 if no GIS experience; substitute for 3rd semester graduate elective)

MS IN LA THESIS

ADVISOR + MASTER'S THESIS COMMITTEE

In the first semester the guidance of the Graduate Program PIC should be sought on approaches to identifying and confirming a primary advisor to guide the student's focused inquiry. The advisor must be selected from among the graduate faculty in the Department of Landscape Architecture (and may include cross-appointed faculty), **by the third week of the student's second semester.** A minimum of two other faculty members must be added to the Master's committee during the second semester. One must be a faculty member in the Department of Landscape Architecture, and the other can be from a unit outside the department, in a discipline related to the student's research area. In order to proceed, the student will develop a project proposal that must be approved by the full committee and a MS in LA Thesis Committee form (available from the office) needs to be submitted by the end of the second semester.

THE DEFENSE

The defense of the thesis is an examination conducted by the candidate's Master's committee. The final draft of the thesis shall be made available to committee members at least two weeks before the defense to allow time for thorough review and defense preparation by committee members. Six credits of thesis work is graded, while additional thesis credits are completed on a pass-fail basis. A favorable vote of the majority of the members of the Master's committee, as certified on the signatory page of the final document, is required for passing and award of the degree.

If a candidate fails, the committee will determine whether, and when, the student may repeat the defense.

PRESENTATION

Every MS in LA student shall make a public presentation of his/her thesis research at or near the completion of the student's curriculum. This presentation typically immediately precedes the defense. At least two weeks prior to the presentation, the candidate is responsible for having the time, place, and title posted in the department and distributed by e-mail to departmental faculty and students. **Thesis defenses are to be scheduled during the Fall or Spring Semester.**

PROVISION OF FINAL RESEARCH DOCUMENTS

All MS in LA candidates must offer to provide each member of their Master's committee a complete, bound copy of their thesis document. Each MS in LA candidate shall provide a complete set of digital files to their advisor. In addition, the Graduate Program PIC must receive two complete, bound copies, both of archival quality – i.e. hard binding and paper must conform to Thesis Guide protocols; one will be deposited in the Architecture-Landscape Architecture Library as part of its permanent collection, the other will be retained for departmental files.

PROGRAM TIME LIMITS

The Graduate School allows a maximum of eight years for completion of the master's degree, but encourages students to finish sooner. The MS in LA program is designed to be completed in two years of full-time study, and faculty will endeavor to help students adhere to this timetable. Students can – and regularly do – finish within this time frame when they manage their time well, work diligently, and maintain

FIRST SEMESTER

FALL

FIRST YEAR

MAIN TASKS FOR ON-TIME COMPLETION

- Select seminar (510) to match research interests
- Gain familiarity with research interests of faculty and develop short list of potential thesis advisors
- Discuss thesis topic with selected faculty members
- Explore possible electives for 2nd semester

COURSEWORK

502	Intellectual History + Theory (3 credits)
510	Seminar (3 credits)
590	Colloquium (1 credit)
-----	Graduate Elective (3 Credits)

SCHEDULE / DELIVERABLES

WEEK

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

SECOND SEMESTER

SPRING

FIRST YEAR

MAIN TASKS FOR ON-TIME COMPLETION

- Select seminar (510) to match research interests
- Identify and obtain written agreement from thesis advisor; discuss committee composition
- Establish thesis committee; share preliminary proposal with committee members for initial feedback and guidance
- Work with advisor and thesis committee to finalize and approve proposal by semester's end
- Submit MSLA Thesis Committee Form to department office
- Finalize elective and methods course selection for third semester

COURSEWORK

510	Seminar (3 credits) <i>Geodesign students substitute GEODZ 511</i>
501	Research and Writing (3 credits) <i>Geodesign Students take GEODZ 822</i>
-----	Elective (3 credits)

Notes:

- You may enroll in a Quant/Qual course as an elective
- CMYUD students need to confer with PIC regarding selection of electives

SUMMER

BETWEEN FIRST & SECOND YEARS

Thesis data collection should be completed in the summer, especially if it involves field work.

SCHEDULE / DELIVERABLES

WEEK

1	
2	
3	Select thesis advisor
4	
5	
6	
7	Establish thesis committee; complete paper work for thesis committee
8	
9	Schedule meeting with advisor and committee to finalize thesis proposal
10	
11	Finalize elective(s) and methods course for third semester
12	
13	Provide final thesis proposal to committee for approval
14	
15	Get thesis proposal approved

THIRD SEMESTER

FALL

SECOND YEAR

MAIN TASKS FOR ON-TIME COMPLETION

- Select seminar (510) to match research interests
- Finalize literature review for thesis
- Complete data analysis
- Complete electives and methods courses

COURSEWORK

510	Seminar (3 credits)
590	Colloquium (1 credit, <i>optional</i>)
-----	Elective (3 credits)
-----	Elective (3 credits)

Notes:

- You may enroll in a Quant/Qual course in place of an elective
- CMYUD students need to confer with PIC regarding electives

SCHEDULE / DELIVERABLES

WEEK

1	
2	Set up semester-long review schedule with thesis advisor
3	
4	
5	
6–8	Schedule meeting with thesis committee to discuss progress
9	
10	
11	
12	
13	Submit preliminary analysis to thesis committee
14	
15	

FOURTH SEMESTER

SPRING

SECOND YEAR

MAIN TASKS FOR ON-TIME COMPLETION

- Select seminar (510) to match research interests
- Make note of graduation requirements, including Graduate School deadlines for activating intent to graduate, submitting thesis for format review, and submitting final thesis.

See link for exact deadlines:

gradschool.psu.edu/current-students/etd/

COURSEWORK

510	Seminar (3 credits) <i>Geodesign students substitute Geography elective</i>
600	Thesis Research (6 credits)

SCHEDULE / DELIVERABLES

WEEK

1	
2	Schedule meeting with thesis committee to discuss progress
3	
4	
5	
6	Submit final thesis manuscript to thesis committee; schedule date of final thesis defense and publicize to faculty and students
7	
8	Final thesis defense
9	Work on needed changes, produce final document and submit to Department Head for review
10	
11	Obtain thesis approval by Department Head
12	Submit thesis to graduate school
13	
14	
15	

Please note that this schedule assumes Spring graduation. For summer graduation, students can extend the schedule by three weeks with the approval of thesis committee and department head. **Note: Final defense cannot be scheduled in the summer**

MSinLA Course Schedule with Geodesign Certificate inserted*

<p>Semester 1 FALL</p> <p>LARCH 502 (3 Cr) LARCH 510, seminar (3 Cr) LARCH 590, colloquium (1 Cr) Graduate Elective(s) (3 Cr) Geography elective for GEODZ (F-1 or F-2)</p> <p>Total: 10 Cr</p>	<p>Semester 2 SPRING</p> <p>LARCH 501 (3 Cr) LARCH 510, seminar (3 Cr) GEODZ 511 (Sp-1) LARCH 590, colloquium (1 Cr) Graduate Elective(s) (3 Cr) GEODZ 822 (Sp-2)</p> <p>Total: 10 Cr</p>
<p>Semester 3 FALL</p> <p>LARCH 510, seminar (3 Cr) GEODZ 826 (F-2) LARCH 590, colloquium (1 Cr) Quant/Qualitative Analysis (3 Cr) Graduate Elective(s) (3 Cr) Geography elective for GEODZ (F-1)</p> <p>Total: 10 Cr</p>	<p>Semester 4 SPRING</p> <p>LARCH 510, seminar (3 Cr) LARCH 590, colloquium (1 Cr) LARCH 600, Thesis Research (6 Cr)</p> <p>Total: 10 Cr</p>

*Note: GEODZ courses are 8-wks long; GEOG courses are 10-wks long

ADDITIONAL GRADUATE REQUIREMENTS

The MS in LA program is a graduate research based program that allows students to pursue their individual interest and pursue a course of study that is tailored to their specific needs. It is different from undergraduate programs in that it requires students to be self motivated and take charge of their own education. It is your responsibility to pursue your studies with dedication and integrity. As a graduate student you are responsible for making sure that you fulfill all the requirements for graduation set by your program and the Graduate School.

SCHOLARSHIP RESEARCH INTEGRITY (SARI)

From research.psu.edu/training/sari/

“The Scholarship and Research Integrity (SARI) program was launched in fall 2009 to provide graduate students with opportunities to identify, examine, and discuss ethical issues relevant to their disciplines. We are proud that Penn State is leading the way in ensuring that all graduate students at this institution will not only become accomplished scholars and researchers, but will also be prepared to conduct their professional lives with integrity and responsibility. We recognize that all scholars, from undergraduate researchers to senior investigators, confront ethical issues in their professions, and that each year, thousands of Penn State investigators conduct research and scholarly activities with integrity that would withstand the highest levels of scrutiny. Unfortunately, however, each year some Penn State personnel are involved in research misconduct allegations, inquiries, and investigations.

Advance discussion of core principles and possible scenarios can help inform choices frequently made under pressure, helping to eliminate poor decisions. Penn State has a unique opportunity – and a responsibility – to address these issues in a proactive and deliberate manner.”

“The SARI@PSU program is composed of two parts: an online course, and an interactive, discussion based component; and encompasses content that is both interdisciplinary and discipline-specific. The online portion (Part 1), offered through the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI), provides a common language and understanding of the history and principles of the responsible conduct of research. The discussion-based component (Part 2) provides an opportunity for in-depth exploration of important issues unique to each field of study. This basic structure can be adapted to create an effective program for scholars at different career stages, from undergraduate researchers, to graduate students and junior faculty, to senior scholars with years of experience. Participation by faculty and students alike will help foster a rich environment for the discussion and practice of scholarly integrity.”

Graduate students are required to complete the on-line portion as well as 5 hours of additional training before they are allowed to graduate. Completion of LARCH 501 satisfies the 5 hours of additional training requirement. SARI requirements are coordinated by the Graduate Program PIC.

OTHER INFORMATION

Quality graduate education depends upon effective student-faculty relationships characterized by mutual respect, clearly stated expectations, open lines of communications, and the existence and application of effective mechanisms for dealing with problems, should they occur. The following resources are offered for consultation when appropriate. Students are expected to assume responsibility for knowing and adhering to the regulations, policies, and requirements of the University and Graduate School as described in:

- The Graduate Bulletin, current edition, available on-line at gradsch.psu.edu. See in particular Academic Information and Procedures concerning regulations and pertinent procedures related to scholarly activities and assistantships. Please see: gradsch.psu.edu/index.cfm/current-students/student for full details on all Penn State policies regarding graduate students.
- The Thesis Guide available from the Graduate School (see gradschool.psu.edu/current-students/etd)
- Guiding Principles for Good Practice in Graduate Education available from the Graduate School (gradschool.psu.edu/faculty-and-staff/faculty/guiding)
- Other checklists, forms, and publications as may be available from the Graduate School

ROLES + RESPONSIBILITIES

The Department Head is ultimately responsible for the overall direction and soundness of all programs within the department.

The Graduate Program Professor in Charge (PIC) oversees all of the graduate programs within the department. S/he helps recruit students, meets with prospective graduate students, conducts orientation for new graduate students, advises new students on the selection of first semester course work, assigns teaching assistantships, helps coordinate research assistantships, and provides general guidance to all graduate students throughout their residency. The Graduate Program PIC conducts final checks of course audits and final research products prior to graduation, and facilitates interaction among students, faculty, centers, and the wider academic community. He/she also interacts with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Outreach at the College of Arts and Architecture, and representatives of the Graduate School.

Master's Advisors are graduate faculty who serve as primary mentors for the MS in LA graduate students. They also supervise their advisees' research efforts, head the Master's Thesis committee, and guide the selection of supporting elective courses. They also serve as the primary signatory on completed Master's theses, projects or papers. Infrequently, students may request a change of advisor, since interests sometimes shift during graduate work. The Graduate Program PIC's involvement should be sought in such instances. If appropriate, revisions will be made to the Master's committee form kept on file by the administrative assistant.

Master's Thesis Committee members play a secondary role in the graduate students' research work. They serve as readers,

comment on research proposals, review research drafts, attend Master's committee meetings, and serve as co-signatories on the final, certified document.

The Graduate Affairs Committee assists the Graduate Program PIC and Department Head in monitoring and developing the graduate programs, with an emphasis on curriculum planning, department graduate program policy, and review of graduate applicants.

Graduate Faculty have a broad obligation of involvement in all of the graduate degree programs. They are generally available for involvement in graduate student research and related activities and may be appointed by the department head to teach graduate courses. Sometimes, they receive external grants from which research assistantships may be funded.

FULL-TIME ACADEMIC STATUS + CREDIT LOAD

The University considers a full-time graduate student to be one who takes a minimum of nine credits. These nine credits may be a combination of courses, independent studies, and thesis credits. When students are appointed to teaching assistantships, however, the Graduate Bulletin stipulates the following range of minimum and maximum credits for full-time students (gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-funding/funding/assistantships):

Half-time assistantship

(average twenty hours per week): 9 to 12 credits

TAs taking credit loads higher than those noted above require the approval of the Graduate Program PIC and the Graduate School. Students who are on an assistantship and want to register/enroll for more than 12 credits should discuss this with the PIC prior to enrolling.

COURSE NUMBERING + RELATED ISSUES

Courses at Penn State are numbered from 001 to 699 with some professional courses having 700–999 designations. You may take courses at any level but can only receive credit toward the MS in LA degree for courses at the 400 level or above. **You must have earned 18 or more credits at the 500 and 600 levels to graduate.**

Please note that courses taken below the 400 level are given a grade and that grade will be averaged into your G.P.A. even if the course will not count towards your degree. You should also be aware of some special course numbers created for graduate students and some departmental restrictions regarding their use.

Larch 596 enables you to create an independent course with an instructor. Such a course results from the desire and willingness of a faculty member and a student to do a course of study not currently offered in the University at a time the student can enroll. The professor bears no institutional responsibility to offer such courses and they usually involve an extra load for the faculty. To register, the department requires that you and the faculty member have agreed upon the conditions of the course in writing. It is your responsibility to notify the departmental administrative assistant of this arrangement. Larch 596 and other "independent study" courses are intended to fill in gaps. They are not to be used to substitute for extant courses.

COURSE GRADING

To maintain your status in the graduate program, the graduate school requires that you maintain a 3.0 grade point average (G.P.A.). Thus you can receive lower than a B in a course as long as the G.P.A. is not less than 3.0.

If you fall below the 3.0 average, you are subject to being suspended from the program and Penn State at the discretion of the department. Further, if you receive one or more failing grades, you are also subject to suspension. Keep in mind that a D is a failing grade for graduate students and an F is immediate grounds for suspension. Additionally, earning a D or F in any course is grounds for denial of one or more future assistantships.

Some courses permit you to receive a pass (P) or fail (F) grade in lieu of a "quality grade," i.e., an A, B, C, D or F. Other courses permit the faculty member to assign an R grade for passing work, when the nature of continuing work does not permit a quality grade to be assigned at the end of the semester. In this case, the quality grade may be assigned at a later date. Only specific courses are authorized to assign P, F or R grades. If adequate performance has not been shown, the faculty member is authorized to assign you a D or an F in lieu of an R grade.

Penn State also authorizes the use of the DF (deferred) grade for situations in which the student was not able to complete the work within the time limits. The deferred grade is authorized only in cases where the failure to complete the work within the semester was beyond the student's control. In this case, the student must complete the requirements and receive a letter grade within the first nine weeks of the next semester or the grade will change to an F.

GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

If you have been awarded a graduate assistantship as a teaching assistant (TA) or research assistant (RA) you have already signed the contracts and are familiar with some of the conditions. TA/RAs are required to be available at least one week before the beginning of class and until a week after the last day of class, each semester. The time frame for the assistantship, 17 weeks, is longer than the 15 week academic calendar.

Check your copy of the contract and/or consult with the administrative assistant. Then, prior to the semester assigned, discuss the calendar with the faculty member you are assisting and come to an understanding of the conditions.

If you are a graduate assistant for two semesters on general funds or a fellowship, you are eligible to receive summer tuition assistance (STAP) for the summer semester if you are taking required courses. Keep this in mind as you are planning your program; it is an excellent way of covering a summer of study when you may not have an assistantship. This gives students the opportunity to take course that help towards the timely completion of their thesis.

SUMMER COURSES

The Department of Landscape Architecture does not offer graduate courses in the summer, although students may arrange independent study courses with faculty during this period. Summer is also a good time to take courses outside of the department. Other departments frequently offer basic methodology and theory courses during the summer.

TRANSFERRING CREDITS

If you have transferred into the Department of Landscape Architecture from another major/department at Penn State, there is no limit to the number of credits you may transfer in. You may transfer all courses approved by the department.

If you have transferred from another university, the Graduate School limits the number of transferable credits to ten with a grade of B and above. Non-quality grades are ineligible. The transferability of coursework outside of Penn State must meet the requirements of the Graduate School and is subject to the approval of the department.

In order to transfer credits from another institution, you must fill out the appropriate Graduate School form and have

this form approved by the Graduate Program PIC. You must then submit the form to the Graduate School for final approval. Make sure that you keep a copy of the approval notification.

GRADE POINT AVERAGE

Penn State requires a 3.0 cumulative grade point average for graduation. In addition, the Department will consider the length of time a student has been enrolled in the program and may terminate any student whose cumulative grade point average at any time is less than a 3.0.

PROVISIONAL STATUS

A student admitted as a master's degree candidate on a provisional basis must satisfy the conditions of the admission within the time period specified. Failure to do so is grounds for dismissal.

RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN PARTICIPANTS

The University is unequivocally committed to promoting, encouraging, and facilitating ethical and responsible academic and clinical research efforts of Penn State faculty, staff, and students in the broad area of general or specific measurements of human development, health, and performance. Federal, state and university regulations (Penn State Policy RPO3) require that the use of human participants in research be reviewed and approved by an Institutional Review Board (IRB). For more information see the IRB website at: research.psu.edu/orp/humans

AWARDS AND COMPETITIONS

The Annual Graduate Research Exhibition occurs each year at the end of March. It is sponsored by the Graduate School as an exhibition of graduate student research and creative

work. The work is judged and winners are awarded cash prizes. Being accepted and exhibiting your work is valuable both to you and the department, and the awards are not only financially helpful but also add prestige to your curriculum vitae or résumé.

Each year, the Graduate School awards a number of graduate teaching assistants through the Harold F. Martin Graduate Assistant Outstanding Teaching Awards. (See gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-funding/fellowships/programs/gradteach/)

The Alma Heinz and August Pohland Graduate Fellowship is awarded (\$2,500) annually to two Stuckeman graduate students entering their final year of study on the basis of a research proposal (typically for the thesis/dissertation). (See artsandarchitecture.psu.edu/philanthropy/sala_awards)

The A.E. Bye Travel Fund in Landscape Architecture was established by the late A. E. Bye ('42 B.S. L.Arch.) to provide money for graduate and undergraduate students to travel for the study of landscape architecture. (see artsandarchitecture.psu.edu/philanthropy/sala_awards)

OTHER FUNDING

Students who have been accepted to present work at a conference may apply for travel funding. To apply, you should send a link to the conference website, a copy of your acceptance letter, and a detailed budget to the Graduate Program PIC and the Department Head. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Outreach's office in the College of Arts and Architecture will provide matching funding if available; a form is available from that office. Some funding may be available from the department.

FINANCIAL AID

When you applied to this program, you were automatically considered for a Graduate Assistantship unless you indicated that you did not desire to be considered. If you were not awarded an assistantship and would like to be considered for one, make sure to inform the Graduate Program PIC and the Department Head. Please be aware that all international students have to successfully clear the American English Oral Communication Test (AEOCPT) exam prior to being able to start Teaching Assistantship duties (see aplng.la.psu.edu/programs/about-the-aeocpt). Various other forms of student aid are available and are described in the Graduate Catalog.

GENERAL TIME LIMITATIONS

The Graduate School specifies that all requirements for the master's degree must be satisfied within **eight years** of being admitted into the program. This time limitation includes all coursework completed elsewhere and transferred to this program.

AVAILABILITY OF THESES, PAPERS, AND PROJECTS

All theses, papers and projects done as part of the graduate program in Landscape Architecture are available to the public through the University libraries.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

All application materials need to be uploaded at the Penn State Graduate School website. Applicants must meet all requirements for both the Penn State Graduate School and the Landscape Architecture Department.

PENN STATE GRADUATE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

- Application to the Pennsylvania State University Graduate School for admission (gradsch.psu.edu/index.cfm/apply/)
- **Transcripts:** Copies of transcripts, degree/study certificates and diplomas in the language of instruction from all institutions of higher education attended, both undergraduate and graduate, should be uploaded online as part of the Graduate School Application. If English is not the language of instruction, copies of all transcripts/documents in the English translation also must be uploaded.

Please note that once an applicant has accepted an offer of admission, he/she will be notified by the Graduate School that official/original transcripts/documents and their official English translation must be sent from the originating institutions for review by the Graduate School, in order to finalize an admission decision. Notarized copies are not sufficient.

- **Scores from the Graduate Record Examination (GRE):** Please request ETS to electronically submit to: PSU institution code 2660 and Landscape Architecture Department code 4405.
- **TOEFL scores** from non-native speakers of English need to be submitted to: PSU (institution code 2660). The department of Landscape Architecture requires a minimum acceptable score for the TOEFL of 577 for the paper-based test, or a total score of 90 with a 19 on the speaking section for the Internet-based test (iBT), or a cumulative minimum IELTS score of 6.5. Please note that the TOEFL requirements for the department of Landscape Architecture is higher than the Graduate School requirements at Penn State. See Graduate School website for more information; all test scores must be sent from ETS.

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE DEPARTMENT REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the materials required by the Penn State Graduate School, the Department of Landscape Architecture requires submission of applicant information specific to our programs. These materials will also need to be uploaded at the Penn State Graduate School application website.

If you have any questions, or if you are unable to submit a portfolio electronically and need to make arrangements to submit a physical portfolio, please email Landscape Architecture program assistant Diana Nolten at dbs115@psu.edu.

- **Statement of Purpose:** Applicants to the MS in LA program are required to submit a statement discussing why they wish to enroll for the MS in LA at Penn State University and describing their research interests, goals, and proposed area of concentration related to one of our research centers/initiatives – the Stuckeman Center for Design Computing, The Hamer Center for Community Design, and/or to faculty research interests. Students are encouraged to contact individual faculty members whose research interests intersect with their own to find out the synergy between their interest and faculty expertise.
- **GPA reporting:** All Applicants are required to report their GPA, using the US 4.0 system, for previous degrees. If needed the GPA should be recalculated into the US 4.0 system using the link provided below for converting International GPA's to US 4.0 system. This information should then be added to your graduate school application. This link will assist you with calculating your GPA: foreigncredits.com/Resources/GPA-Calculator/.
- **Curriculum Vitae (CV):** One page CV listing educational history, research experience, employment history and any other relevant information.
- **Portfolio:** Evidence of creative work should be submitted either through a digital portfolio (not to exceed 12 MB) or through examples of writing or some other creative outlet.
- **Recommendation letters:** Three letters of recommendation from individuals familiar with the applicant's academic history; employer recommendations are also welcome.

Applications will be considered incomplete if ALL required components of the application are not uploaded.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Graduate students attending Penn State have a wide range of options for financial aid, depending on their particular needs and circumstances. The Department awards and administers a number of teaching and research assistantships through funds from the College of Arts and Architecture, the Graduate School, and the University. Faculty in the Department also receive external research grants on an ad hoc basis, often providing exciting opportunities for graduate students to serve as research assistants on cutting-edge projects.

Financial help may also be available from the Graduate School, the Office of Student Aid, and sources external to Penn State. Minority graduate scholars awards, external fellowships, and traineeships are also available. Each entails its own application process. Penn State's Student Aid Office (studentaid.psu.edu/) is the best source for information on financial aid opportunities from the local to the Federal level. Reference should be made to the Graduate Funding section of the Graduate School's current student page (gradsch.psu.edu/index.cfm/graduate-funding/).

TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS

Teaching assistantships (TAs) are awarded as available on a competitive, year-by-year basis. The Graduate Professor-in-Charge has the responsibility of coordinating teaching assistant assignments, in coordination with the Department Head, and reserves the right to award assistantships as appropriate. Criteria that are considered in making appointments include academic performance, prior TA proficiency (where applicable), and the match between the specific skills held by the graduate student and the task at hand.

MS in LA students are all eligible for half-time (20 hours per week) assistantships. Sometimes these entail two teach-

ing assistance assignments; other times they are split: 10 hours of teaching assistance, 10 hours of research assistance. All TA responsibilities extend for 17 weeks, including one week of preparation before classes begin and finals week, after classes end.

ASSISTANTSHIP DECISIONS

Just as we carefully seek a strong fit between incoming graduate students and our program, we work hard to place students in teaching or research assistantships where their interests and strengths match the tasks at hand as effectively as possible. Students who receive assistantships are assigned a TA or RA based on assessment of student credentials in combination with departmental needs. Students are not guaranteed teaching or research assistantships, but every effort is made to use those resources to support as many students as possible.

DEPARTMENTAL RESOURCES+ OPPORTUNITIES

STUDENT DESKS

Graduate students are allocated desk space in the graduate student area on the 4th floor SFB for a maximum of six consecutive semesters (not including summers) for MLA students and a maximum of four consecutive semesters for MS in LA students, whether the student is full or part-time. In light of limited desk space and the yearly cycle of new students, students occupying a graduate desk space will be asked to vacate their desks by July 1 following their last semester. Beyond this point, students still finishing their research or course work should consult their advisor. The department, however, is not obligated to provide such space.

COMPUTERS + ACCESS ACCOUNTS

All students on campus may make use of any of the many campus computer laboratories operated by the Center for Academic Computing (CAC). E-mail and Internet access are provided through a CAC Access Account. Computers with word processing, e-mail and other graphics software are provided in the graduate student computing areas. Students whose research depends upon the Stuckeman Center for Design Computing may, in addition, be granted special access to advanced computer technologies.

PHOTOCOPYING

The use of the departmental photocopy machine is not permitted for graduate student's research work. Teaching assistants may use the machine for TA-related purposes under faculty direction.

SUPPLIES

Departmental supplies are not available to students, except in the case where TAs are specifically directed by faculty to access these materials.

TRAVEL FUNDS

There are both Departmental and College travel funds available on a competitive basis for participation in, and travel to, conferences. Preference will be given to those presenting papers or participating in a panel or poster session. To apply to Departmental or College travel funds, please see the Graduate Program PIC for additional information.

LEARN TO TEACH

Our department and our university are committed to high-quality instruction. Graduate students interested in learning effective teaching methods can work with our faculty on teaching teams, and also take courses or pursue a teaching certificate through the Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence (<http://www.schreyerinstitution.psu.edu/>).

STUDY ABROAD/OFF CAMPUS

Opportunities to study off campus can be found throughout the University, including examples such as "Sustainability Issues across the Americas" (www.envi.psu.edu/news/PeruFlyerB2014.pdf) and summer studies in Tanzania, Korea, Japan, and Barcelona among others offered by the Stuckeman School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture (bit.ly/StuckemanSummer2015). Students are encouraged to seek out such opportunities as they arise.

GRADUATE RESEARCH EXHIBITION

The annual Penn State Graduate Exhibition highlights graduate research accomplishments each Spring semester. Our students typically are very competitive in the College of Arts and Architecture. Second-year MS in LA and third-year MLA students should plan to participate in the fair, and should seek to involve their graduate faculty advisor in critiquing their submission. See gradschool.psu.edu/index.cfm/exhibition.

DEPARTMENTAL, SSALA, AND PROFESSIONAL AWARDS

The **Alma Heinz and August Louis Pohland Graduate Student Fellowship** is a monetary (\$2,500) award made annually to two SSALA graduate students entering their final year of study. This is a School-wide competition in which students apply by submitting their research proposals and transcripts-to-date at the end of the Spring semester of their first year. Students are judged on their academic progress and the promise they show for academic excellence.

Graduate students may also be nominated by departmental faculty for the **College of Arts and Architecture's Creative Achievement Award**, comprising a plaque and a medal award. Students may be nominated in one of several categories.

Each year the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) recognizes outstanding students of the profession across North America. One or two graduate students may be nominated by graduate faculty, based on the strength of their overall academic progress and the proficiency of their core research. A jury comprised of ASLA representatives and faculty attend a presentation by nominees, which results in the designation of either an **ASLA Honor Award** or an **ASLA Merit Award**. Presentations of plaque awards from the ASLA are made at the annual Landscape Architecture Student Society (LASS) banquet in April.

GRADUATE STUDENT RESOURCE GUIDE

There are a number of organizations to help you at Penn State. If you are planning to live off campus, contact OTIS (Organization for Town Independent Students) at the Hetzel Union Building (HUB) – the Student Union Building. The HUB’s information desk provides a number of useful brochures, such as guides for new students published by student organizations. These provide considerable information about both the university and the town. The HUB provides other useful resources as well, such as the Penn State Bookstore, eateries, ATM machines, galleries, and study areas, as well as many scheduled activities. *The Collegian*, the Penn State student newspaper, is available in the HUB and in many other buildings on campus free of charge.

Landscape Architecture Advising for International Students: The Landscape Architecture International Student Adviser works with our international students to ensure success while navigating the U.S. academic system. Consult Professor Wu Hong for questions regarding language, expectations, CPT and OPT opportunities, or for any issues that you face as an international student.

The University Office of International Programs is located across the street from the HUB in room 222 of the Boucke Building. There is also a lounge here, where you can meet other international students.

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) is the representative body for graduate students. The mission of the GSA is to represent and support the interests of the University’s current and future graduate student community by supporting scholarly activities and providing leadership, service, and social opportunities. This volunteer organization, recognized by

the University as the graduate students’ central organization, provides services, such as graduate student orientation; programs and workshops on topics including income tax issues; student advocacy on pertinent issues; social activities, such as free movies; and publications such as *The Guide to Graduate Life*, a newsletter distributed ten times a year (four times in both fall and spring, and twice in summer); a Tax Guide; typist listing; a babysitters listing; and a health insurance pamphlet. The GSA is also charged with designating graduate student representatives to a number of committees throughout the University, thus maintaining contact between the graduate students and the many offices of the University.

The Office of Graduate Fellowships and Awards

Administration is responsible for facilitating all Graduate School funding programs and awards. Funding programs are available for both incoming and current graduate students. The Graduate School funding process, like the admissions process, is decentralized. Therefore, applicants for Graduate School funding must be nominated and supported by the academic department and college. Students should begin looking for funding approximately one year in advance of their need for funding and stay in close communication with their Department Head or Graduate Program PIC. Given that competitions for funding have particularly early deadlines, students should also investigate as many funding options as possible to avoid missing valuable opportunities.

The Office of Global Programs provides answers to questions and needs that are unique to international students. The office is located at 410 Boucke Building. See global.psu.edu

The Office of Student Aid is a good place to begin the search for financial assistance. See studentaid.psu.edu/

The Office for Disability Services provides information and assistance to students with disabilities.

See equity.psu.edu/ods

The Graduate Writing Center (GWC) provides free one-to-one peer consultations and interactive workshops for Penn State graduate students of all disciplines and all levels of writing ability. See pwr.la.psu.edu/resources/graduate-writing-center/GWC

Penn State Escort Service is operated under the auspices of Police Services and will provide an escort for students walking on campus after dark. The escort service may be reached at 5-WALK (865-9255). See police.psu.edu

Off-Campus Housing opportunities are listed in 213 HUB-Robeson Center, 865-2346.

See studentaffairs.psu.edu/offcampus

Office of Judicial Affairs is responsible for dealing with violations of the Code of Conduct including sexual assault, harassing, stalking, and physical assault. The phone number is 863-0342. See studentaffairs.psu.edu/conduct/

The Code of Conduct is available at:
studentaffairs.psu.edu/conduct

The Affirmative Action Office is committed to ensuring the University maintains an environment free of harassment and discrimination. See affirmativeaction.psu.edu

HUB-Robeson Center is the site for multiple student services including restaurants, a copy center, a bank (Penn State Federal Credit Union), STA Travel, a convenience store, the Penn State Bookstore, the Center for Arts and Crafts, Art Galleries,

and the main information desk for the University. See studentaffairs.psu.edu/hub/

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) can help students resolve personal concerns that may interfere with their academic progress, social development, and satisfaction at Penn State. Some of the more common concerns include difficulty with friends, roommates, or family members; depression and anxiety; sexual identity; lack of motivation or difficulty relaxing, concentrating or studying; eating disorders; sexual assault and sexual abuse recovery; and uncertainties about personal values and beliefs. See studentaffairs.psu.edu/counseling

Career Services, located in the MBNA Career Services Building, is fully equipped to assist graduate students in the preparation of resumes and curriculum vitae and in developing effective interviewing skills. Career Services hosts a career fair that is open to graduate as well as undergraduate students. See studentaffairs.psu.edu/career/

Research Protections is the office that oversees all research on human participants, animals, radioisotopes and biohazardous materials. You must have permission from this office prior to conducting research involving any of these subjects. Permission can not be obtained after the work has begun. See research.psu.edu/orp

Pasquerilla Spiritual Center is home to more than fifty spiritual organizations. The center is non-denominational and provides students with opportunities to explore ethical and spiritual issues. See studentaffairs.psu.edu/spiritual

Problem Resolution Graduate students occasionally have

difficulties with their advisors, their programs or an academic matter associated with their programs. The first step in problem resolution is always to talk with your advisor and then with the Graduate Program PIC or Department Head and then the Associate Dean of your college. If this does not resolve the problem, the Associate Dean of the Graduate School is available to provide guidance and maintain neutrality. Issues discussed during meetings with the associate dean will remain confidential if requested by the student. Appointments may be made by calling 865-2516.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The University does not tolerate violations of academic integrity, which include but are not limited to: plagiarism, cheating, falsification of information, misrepresentation or deception. The complete policy is available at: undergrad.psu.edu/aappm/G-9-academic-integrity.html

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is often a confusing concept. At Penn State, plagiarism means taking someone's words and presenting them as your own. Cutting and pasting from a web site is considered plagiarism. Copying verbatim from any source without using quotation marks and the full reference is plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious violation of academic integrity regardless of whether it is a homework exercise, an exam, a thesis, or a manuscript for publication. For more information, see the

section "Resources for Preventing Plagiarism" on the Penn State Libraries website: tlt.psu.edu/plagiarism

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

University policies may be viewed online. Important policies include:

- Sexual Harassment (AD85)
- Professional Ethics (AD47)
- Parking Rules (BS04)
- Intellectual Property (RA12)

See guru.psu.edu/policies

GRADUATE STUDENT POLICIES

Graduate Student Policies are available online. These include:

- Grade mediation
- Resolution of problems
- Termination of program
- Termination of assistantship
- Residency requirements

See gradsch.psu.edu/index.cfm/current-students/student