

**Department of Landscape Architecture
Implementation Plan Annual Report September 2014**

The recommendations/suggestions below were included in the Department of Landscape Architecture's 2008 Landscape Architecture Accreditation Board report following an evaluation visit to the program in October 2008. The items below were all categorized by the report as suggestions, which means that re-accreditation on the next visit cycle is not dependent on action taken by the department in response.

1. Institute long-term planning to establish clearer objectives for relating the needs of the region to the development of the department. (Standard 1)

Assessment method: Annual review of faculty research.

Results: Some faculty research is clearly focused on regional issues, while other research has no particular connection to the region, but is equally valid.

Analysis of results and reflection: Faculty research directions are the prerogative of the faculty. The questions should be: is the research relevant to their area, is it useful, and does it impact practice. Faculty research in the department meets these criteria.

Ongoing improvement actions: The Chair will continue to monitor faculty research annually.

2. Work with the College's research office to establish departmental research priorities and encourage faculty to pursue funding in support of these priorities (Standard 2).

Assessment method: Faculty Annual Performance Review.

Results: Of the six faculty, four have clearly defined research priorities. One is approaching retirement and is not pursuing a long-term coordinated research program, and another is leaving UK at the end of the 2012 academic year. Faculty members have clearly defined research priorities and are successfully pursuing their research areas.

Analysis of results and reflection: Not all research in landscape architecture involves substantial funding needs or sources. Funding is successfully pursued by faculty at levels appropriate to support their work.

Ongoing improvement actions: There will be continued mentoring of faculty. Future faculty hires will be made partly on the basis of their ability to articulate a research agenda and their perceived potential for carrying out that agenda.

3. Develop strategies to formalize faculty mentoring to insure that all faculty members receive appropriate guidance (Standard 2).

Assessment method: Evaluation of faculty through Annual Performance Review and Promotion and Tenure process.

Results: One non-tenured faculty member received active mentoring in the department in 2013-14, was reviewed for tenure, and received tenure. An institutionalized process for mentoring is under discussion, but consensus on the process has not yet been reached. All faculty engage in open discussion with the Chair and peers in regard to effective performance of assignments. The Chair and senior faculty actively mentor junior faculty members. LA faculty have been evaluated positively in APR and three promotion cases were successful from 2011-2014.

Analysis of results and reflection: Mentoring in the department is working successfully.

Ongoing improvement actions: Current mentoring of faculty will continue.

4. Identify and develop faculty search pool enrichment strategies (Standard 2).

Assessment method: Evaluation of candidate pools and resultant hires.

Results: The department developed candidate pools for faculty hires that included a higher number of suitable female and minority candidates. Three faculty hires were made from 2011-2014. Candidate pool diversity increased over previous position hires. Two of the three hires were women and two of three were members of minorities.

Analysis of results and reflection: Diligent work to broaden pools has been useful in the face of a generally non-diverse universe of candidates.

Ongoing improvement actions: The department will continue efforts to develop diverse candidate pools.

5. Provide students with additional guidance with regard to selecting course offerings in other colleges that would enrich their educational experience (Standard 3).

Assessment method: Contact with students, communication with CAFE advising services office.

Results: Advising was and is mandatory for all LA students prior to course registration. The department revised its curriculum in 2012 following the LAAB accreditation review. Conversations with other departments have taken place regarding improved advising and course recommendations for students.

Analysis of results and reflection: Student satisfaction with the applicability of out-of-college courses is higher. Communication with other departments to make better course recommendations has been productive.

Ongoing improvement actions: Communication with other departments about course offerings and coordination of advising within the department will be continued.

6. Explore alternative strategies that would productively broaden student exposure to related design disciplines (Standard 3).

Assessment method: Evaluation of collaborative experiences available.

Results: The department has been successful in working with the College of Design on collaborative student projects. Students have engaged in collaborative studio projects with students from Interior Design and Historic Preservation. However, contacts with Architecture have been unsuccessful in generating reciprocal interest.

Analysis of results and reflection: Collaboration with Interior Design students has been particularly beneficial and is continuing. While a connection with Architecture would also be useful, interest from both parties is necessary for collaboration.

Ongoing improvement actions: The department will continue to develop and encourage collaborative studio projects.

7. Identify ways to facilitate collaborative research, secure additional external funding and encourage increased scholarly productivity (Standard 4).

Assessment method: Faculty Annual Performance Review.

Results: Faculty research is more broadly based and at appropriate levels for a unit with primary teaching assignments.

Analysis of results and reflection: Effort available for research has grown within the faculty as the number of faculty has increased and has allowed teaching loads to be more distributed. Faculty have responded with appropriate levels of scholarly engagement and productivity in their areas of specialization.

Ongoing improvement actions: The department will continue the coordination of teaching loads and research effort.

8. Efforts should be made to develop strategies to enrich the applicant pool to increase the diversity of the student body (Standard 5).

Assessment method: Size and diversity of incoming classes.

Results: Diversity is low, gender balance is skewed toward males, and the overall number of students is lower than intended capacity.

Analysis of results and reflection: Website is designed to be primarily a tool for communication with prospective students. College recruiting efforts may be good for

programs closely aligned with the word “agriculture,” but do not appear to attract students interested in design. The department has hired a part-time recruiter to aid in identifying interested high school students.

Ongoing improvement actions: The department will continue the improvement and updating of website, high school recruiting, and the scheduling of LA 111 to serve as a potential recruiting environment for transfer students.

9. The departmental web site should be improved so that it functions more effectively as a departmental recruitment tool (Standard 5).

Assessment method: Periodic review of website information and operation.

Results: The department website was redesigned to function as a more effective student recruiting tool and is regularly updated.

Analysis of results and reflection: The website is better at communicating information of interest to prospective students. Whether the website now functions as a departmental recruitment tool is difficult to measure.

Ongoing improvement actions: Improvement and updating of website will continue.

10. Departmental communication with alumni needs to be formalized and expanded to include a broader representation of alumni in departmental affairs to encourage greater levels of alumni participation in fund raising and development activities (Standard 6).

Assessment method: Communication with alumni to assess the relationships between alumni and department.

Results: Alumni are included in strategic planning, they attend LA public lectures and career fairs, and they continually collaborate with the department in professional service activities, and are engaged in student instruction and enrichment.

Analysis of results and reflection: Alumni contributions to the department through juries, lectures, adjunct teaching, and financial contributions to scholarship funds are outstanding. Cooperation with alumni and their sense of the progressive direction of the department have maintained this valuable relationship.

Ongoing improvement actions: Communication and partnering with alumni will be continued and encouraged.

11. Opportunities to expand intra-college collaboration should be explored to build a foundation for more productive teaching and scholarship (Standard 8).

Assessment method: Periodic discussion and evaluation of intra-college partnerships by LA faculty.

Results: Partnerships within the college are strong and include work with the Arboretum, the NRES program, CEDIK, water resources, collaborative research projects, design of college facilities, and college faculty leadership.

Analysis of results and reflection: Faculty members in LA are actively engaged with other faculty and administration in CAFE.

Ongoing improvement actions: Continued engagement will be a priority of the department.

12. Explore methods to share departmental community based activities to the larger College and University community (Standard 8).

Assessment method: Review of publications, popular press, websites, and other reporting on community engagement activities.

Results: The department has worked to make community engagement well-recognized at the College level. It has been less successful at disseminating community based activities at the University level, but is still adequately represented.

Analysis of results and reflection: College and University leadership involved with community engagement are aware of and collaborate with the department in developing engagement work.

Ongoing improvement actions: The department will continue fostering partnerships within the College and University.

13. Work with College and University to identify additional resources that can be directed to meet the expanding demand for community assistance work (Standard 8).

Results: The department continues to provide community design assistance tied to service-learning projects in studios. As outlined in the department's strategic plan, a faculty position with extension responsibilities was created and filled. That faculty member has broadened community assistance by working with paid student interns during the summers to provide community design assistance and communicate project results to additional communities.

Analysis of results and reflection: Community design assistance is at an appropriate level relative to the size of the department faculty.

Ongoing improvement actions: The department will continue with its current engagement trajectory.

14. Work with the College to identify additional space to facilitate group projects and model construction (Standard 9).

Assessment method: Monitoring success in further developing quality student work space.

Results: Current facilities provide adequate space for model building. The department has developed, with the financial assistance of the College, a digital collaboration space for landscape architecture students in a loft above the studio spaces.

Analysis of results and reflection: Current Landscape Architecture spaces are working as intended.

Ongoing improvement actions: Ongoing monitoring of space needs will continue within the department.

15. Consider developing a course or working with other departments or colleges to develop a course in software applications specifically for the needs of LA students (Standard 9).

Assessment method: Development of a course and ongoing assessment of student outcomes.

Results: A faculty member with strength in digital graphic technology was hired in 2011 and developed a course in computer aided design and drafting. This course has clear application to the needs of landscape architecture students.

Analysis of results and reflection: Student work in other courses clearly exhibits the improved learning facilitated by the computer aided design and drafting course.

Ongoing improvement actions: The department continues to evolve existing graphics courses and has additionally added a course in advanced three-dimensional modeling.