MLA Handbook
2024-2025

KELP FOREST ECOLOGY

MARINE HEATWAVE

0°   0.5°   1°   1.5°   2°   2.5°   3°
SEA SURFACE TEMPERATURE ANOMALY °C

REDWOOD FOREST ECOLOGY

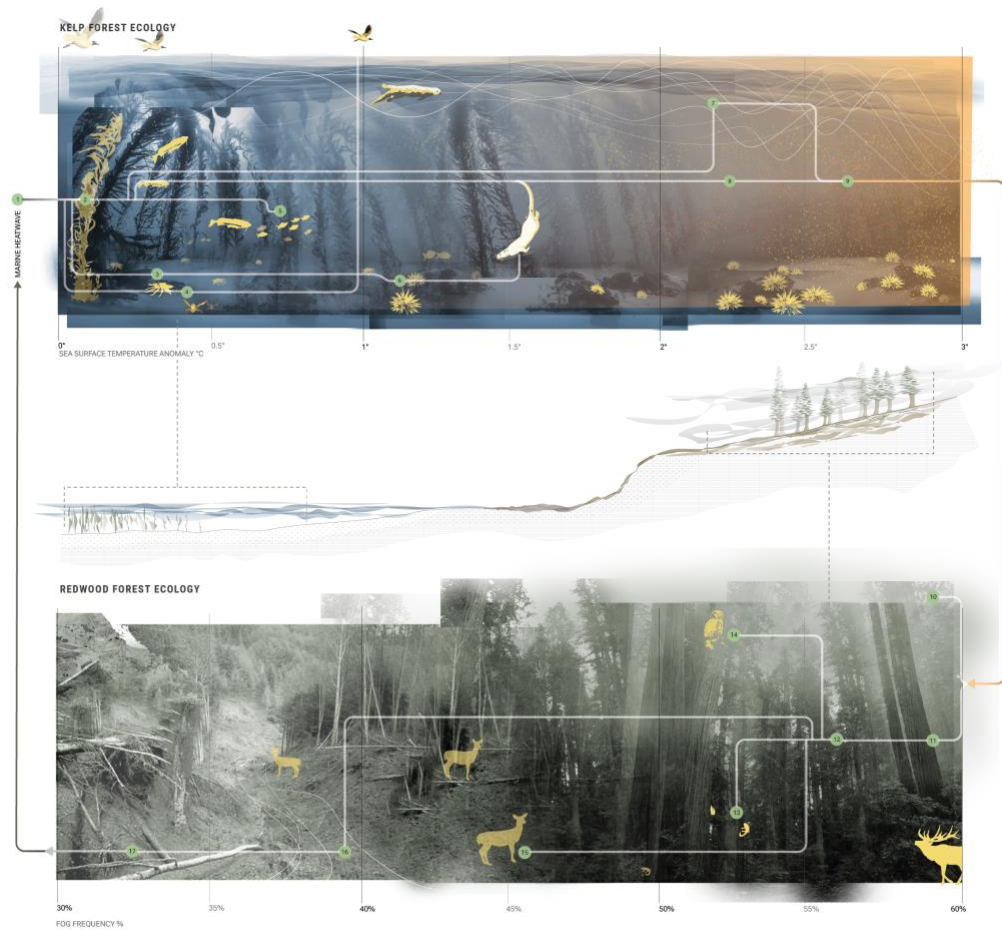30%   35%   40%   45%   50%   55%   60%
FOG FREQUENCY %

Department of Landscape Architecture

College of Fine and Applied Arts

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Land Acknowledgement

We recognize and acknowledge that the University of Illinois is located on the lands of the Peoria, Kaskaskia, Piankashaw, Wea, Miami, Mascoutin, Odawa, Sauk, Mesquaki, Kickapoo, Potawatomi, Ojibwe, and Chickasaw Nations. These lands were the traditional territory of these Native Nations prior to their forced removal; these lands continue to carry the stories of these Nations and their struggles for survival and identity.

As a land-grant institution, the University of Illinois has a particular responsibility to acknowledge the peoples of these lands as well as the histories of dispossession that have allowed for the growth of this institution for more than 150 years. We are also obligated to reflect on and actively address these histories and the role that this university has played in shaping them. This acknowledgement and the centering of Native peoples is a start as we move forward for the next 150 years.

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Cover image: Maija Mallula (MLA candidate, 2025). Detail image from "Lost Coast," LA534 Design Workshop, Spring 2024.

WELCOME

The Department of Landscape Architecture at the [University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign](#) (UIUC) is composed of faculty, staff, and students dedicated to important global design challenges in the 21st century. We are committed to raising awareness about wide-ranging environmental, social, economic, and aesthetic design issues and to responding to those issues through research-based, creative site design. This handbook[1] is designed to give current and prospective students practical information about the Master of Landscape Architecture program including curriculum, financial aid, and departmental resources and policies.

Broadly speaking, the landscape architecture profession is responsible for designing, planning, and managing a broad range of projects that protect, regenerate, and celebrate ecological and human systems from small urban gardens and public spaces to large-scale reforestation, coastal restoration, and climate adaptation plans. That scope draws upon knowledge from across the arts, humanities, science, engineering, and technology to generate built works, framework plans, and critical policies that protect and revitalize human life, biodiversity, and the planet.

Landscape design has been practiced around the world for centuries. In the United States, the name "landscape architecture" was given to the profession in the 1860s by Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux (designers of Central Park in New York) and the profession was further formalized through the establishment of the American Society of Landscape Architects in 1899. In the U.S. context as well as around the world, the profession has grown to encompass a wide range of activities and services in response to changing cultural, environmental, and economic contexts, and it continues to expand in the face of emergent and critical issues in the 21st century.

UIUC is large, with a total student population over 50,000 (one third of whom are graduate students), but the Department is a small tightly knit unit with an MLA enrollment of around 40 students and 10 faculty members shared by the BLA, MLA, MSUD, and PhD programs. The Department's context within a major research university affords access to the extraordinary resources benefitting the wide-ranging concerns and interdisciplinary nature of landscape architecture; and within that large university context, our department is small enough that students receive direct personal attention from teachers and advisors. In addition to the course curriculum, the Department offers teaching assistantship opportunities, research opportunities, portfolio development workshops, career fairs, traveling fellowships, and professional advising.

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[1] This handbook will be issued yearly, with minor updates made to the handbook throughout the year as needed. The most current version will always be available on the website (with the revision date listed on the last page).

The university is nestled between the two cities of Urbana and Champaign which are vibrant with cafés, restaurants, movie theaters, and parks. On campus, the academic and cultural opportunities are excellent and diversified. For instance, the University Library has one of the best landscape architecture and urban planning collections in the country, within a library system that is one of the largest in the nation. Major landscape architects regularly visit campus to serve on design reviews and lecture about their work. The Krannert Art Museum has constantly changing art and design exhibitions; student and faculty work is displayed in Temple Buell Hall and the Link Gallery. The Krannert Center for the Performing Arts offers a rich variety of exciting performances and events throughout the year. The Campus Recreation facilities for students are also extraordinarily well-equipped.

The University

Since its founding in 1867, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign has earned an international reputation for its distinguished faculty, outstanding resources and academic programs, and broad research capabilities.

Graduate study is offered in more than 100 programs, and enrollment includes over 18,000 graduate and professional students from every state in the United States and from 124 countries. Academic resources are among the finest in the world. Along with those of the Library of Congress and Harvard University, the University Library ranks among the largest public and academic collections in the nation. Its computerized catalog provides easy access to more than 14 million volumes and 24 million other items housed in the Main Library, Undergraduate Library, 26 departmental libraries, and 7 virtual libraries.

The Graduate College

The Graduate College is one of 16 major academic units at the University of Illinois. Staff members at the Graduate College work closely with individual students, faculty, and staff to provide support at all stages of graduate education, from admissions through thesis/dissertation deposit and degree certification. They also administer fellowships and offer special programming to help students compete for prestigious external awards and develop strong professional skills to position them well for future careers. Graduate students and faculty at Illinois enjoy an intellectual environment that reaches across the arts, sciences, humanities, social sciences, and engineering to create, challenge, and transform knowledge. Our graduate community is international in its composition and global in its impact. The Graduate College is a member of the Council of Graduate Schools, the Big Ten Academic Alliance, the Midwest Association of Graduate Schools (MAGS), and the Illinois Association of Graduate Schools (IAGS).

The Department

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign was among the first institutions in the nation to offer an educational program in landscape architecture, with a degree program in place by 1907. Today, the Department of Landscape Architecture sponsors one of the leading graduate-level, research-based design programs in the country. Its first-professional Master of Landscape Architecture (MLA) degree program is fully accredited by the Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board (LAAB). Accredited Bachelor of Landscape Architecture (BLA), Master of Sustainable Urban Design (MSUD), and Ph.D. programs are also offered by the Department. All four programs are STEM-designated. The Department has trained prominent practitioners in the United States and world, and many of its students have also gone on to teach in and direct professional programs at U.S.-based and international universities.

The core faculty members of the Department bring a rich range of academic, professional, and personal experiences in regions across the United States and abroad. Faculty are distinguished globally for wide-ranging scholarly, professional, and creative expertise including community and urban design, ecological and sustainable design, landscape architectural history and methods, cultural heritage, contemporary landscape theory, social and environmental justice, and public health. Opportunities for independent and interdisciplinary study with individual faculty members are available in several areas, which contributes to a dynamic educational environment and complements the diversity of the students themselves, who come from a variety of academic backgrounds.

Students, faculty, and staff interact in a wide range of other ways, including service on Department committees, attendance at invited lectures, participation in workshops and charrettes, activities of the University of Illinois Student Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA), all-department gatherings at the start of each semester, and annual Sasaki Day events—a design competition, distinguished lecture, banquet, and awards and recognitions ceremony held on the first Wednesday of May.

In addition to the tenure-stream faculty, the Department invites prominent scholars and practitioners to participate in the academic programs as lecturers, critics, and visiting instructors, for periods ranging from a day to an entire semester. Affiliated faculty members represent numerous other disciplinary units from across the university.

The Department of Landscape Architecture is one of seven academic units in the College of Fine & Applied Arts, along with the School of Architecture, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, School of Art & Design, School of Music, Department of Dance, and Department of Theatre.

Additional information may be found at our departmental website: https://landarch.illinois.edu.

The MLA Program

The objective of the MLA program at the University of Illinois is to provide each student with fundamental skills and proficiency in the core methods of the profession of landscape architecture and the central and emergent priorities of contemporary practice.

Students in the MLA program come from diverse backgrounds in the arts, humanities, and sciences as well as a wide range of design disciplines. Some are recent graduates, whereas others are experienced design practitioners or second-career aspirants from entirely different disciplines. Those with a LAAB-accredited first professional BLA degree enter our two-year post-professional program. Applicants with other backgrounds enter our three-year LAAB-accredited, first-professional MLA program. All students who enter without a design background should expect a three-year program that includes first-year courses in the foundation skills of landscape architecture.

LAAB-accreditation indicates that a program meets established educational goals as well as the LAAB mandated standards for landscape architectural education. A LAAB-accredited MLA degree satisfies the education requirement in all jurisdictions of the United States for professional licensure in landscape architecture. Students who earn a LAAB-accredited degree can sit for the licensure examination, typically after completing two years of professional practice. For more information please see Accreditation and Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board (LAAB), or contact the MLA Program Chair for additional details.

Advising for New and Continuing Students

The Department is committed to supporting all students in their academic, professional, and personal development and to creating an environment in which all students feel welcome and comfortable. Academic Programs and Student Affairs Coordinator Dr. Lori Davis advises MLA students in selecting classes and navigating institutional processes. She also helps connect students with information and resources aimed at supporting their development and success. More information can be found through the Landscape Architecture Advising website.

MLA Curriculum

The MLA curriculum includes a wide range of studio-, lecture-, seminar-, and lab-format courses that engage students in design, representation, history, theory, materials, and technology. Required lecture-, seminar-, and lab-format courses provide essential information about critical issues and methods, and studios provide opportunities to synthesize, apply, and explore those through design. Required courses must be taken for a grade; credit-no credit is not an option for required courses.

Program of Study and Degree Requirements

All MLA students enter the Pre- or Post-professional program, each with a distinct but overlapping program of study. Students *without* an LAAB-accredited Bachelor of Landscape Architecture degree enter the 3-year Pre-professional program. Students *with* an LAAB-accredited Bachelor of Landscape Architecture degree enter the 2-year Post-professional program. Sample programs of study for the Pre- and Post-professional programs are provided on pages 20-25.

Students with an undergraduate degree in another design discipline (e.g. architecture, urban design, environmental design) may be accepted into an "advanced" Pre-professional program where equivalent work previously achieved may allow the student to complete the program in 2.5 years instead of 3 years. Waivers are granted most commonly through previous formal study, demonstrated through transcript review, reference letters, and/or results of proficiency exams. Students may be notified in their MLA program acceptance letter of advanced placement. Students may also consult with the Academic Programs and Student Affairs Coordinator to request a course waiver during their enrollment in the program. Only the Academic Affairs Coordinator, in consultation with the MLA Program Chair, may waive courses. Approval of any waiver(s) will be recorded in the student's academic file.

For the Pre-professional program, a total of 90 credits of courses is taken over 3 years, approximately 15 per semester. For the Post-professional program, a total of 60 credits of courses is taken. For both programs, MLA students must complete a minimum of 48 credit hours of courses with 400- or 500-level numbers:

·   A minimum of 24 credit hours must be in 400- or 500-level landscape architecture coursework.
·   At least 18 credit hours must be at the 500 level (in any subject).
·   Up to 8 credit hours of LA 590 Directed Research may be counted towards this requirement.
·   Students in the thesis track are required to complete a minimum of 10 credit hours of LA 599 Thesis Research. Credit is not awarded for hours in excess of 10.

As a core requirement, all MLA students (regardless of length of program) must successfully complete:

·   LA 501 Landscape Architecture Theory & Practice
·   LA 513 History of World Landscapes
·   LA 533 Planning & Design Studio I
·   LA 534 Design Workshop G-I
·   LA 482 Advanced Communication in Design
·   LA 597 Research Design & Methods
·   Ecology course (400- or 500-level; 3 credits or more)
·   Methods course (400- or 500-level; 3 credits or more)
·   Social/Cultural Issues course (400- or 500-level; 3 credits or more)

The full list of required courses for the Pre- and Post-professional programs is provided at the end of this handbook under "Program of Study."

LA 597 Research Design & Methods is taken by all MLA students in their penultimate spring semester of study. The purpose of LA 597 is to assist students in developing graduate-level research methods that may be applied toward future design studios or to a thesis.

All MLA students are required to complete one ecology course, one methods course, and one social/cultural issues course at the graduate-level (400- or 500-level), with a minimum of 3 credit hours each. See the Academic Programs and Student Affairs Coordinator for a list of recommended courses. Courses not on that list may be chosen with approval of the Academic Programs and Student Affairs Coordinator (in consultation with the MLA Program Chair). Some courses may be approved for more than one requirement; however, one course cannot be used to satisfy more than one requirement. Selection of ecology, methods, and social/cultural issues courses should reflect professional and specialized interests. Students are advised to review course descriptions carefully for prerequisites and to contact the instructor with concerns/questions. Not all courses are offered every year. If you are interested in a certain course, check the course catalog for more information or contact the unit offering the course. Depending on the topic, elective courses offered by the Department may be used to meet the ecology, methods, and/or social/cultural issues course requirements with pre-approval of the Academic Programs and Student Affairs Coordinator.

Specialization

During their course of study, MLA students have the opportunity to develop specialization that reflects their interests and career aspirations in keeping with the wide range and rich potential of contemporary landscape architecture. Examples of specialization undertaken by past graduates include, but are not limited to, community and urban design, ecological design, cultural heritage, digital technology, history and design, historic preservation, public health and well-being, energy systems and infrastructure, social and environmental justice, and landscape-based art practices. Students can develop specialization through elective coursework and personal foci within required courses. Undertaking a thesis in one's final year of the program also provides an opportunity to develop specialization through in-depth understanding of theoretical and practical issues pertinent to the area of inquiry, including critical questions and concerns, historical and conceptual models, and potential implications.

Two Pathways in the Final Year: Design Studio or Thesis

In their final year of the program, MLA students may take one of two paths: advanced design studio sequence or thesis.

Design Studio

One pathway in the MLA student's final year is to take advanced-level graduate Design Studio (Fall) plus a second Design Workshop (Spring):
- LA 537 Planning & Design Studio II (5 credit hours)
- LA 539 Design Workshop G-II (5 credit hours)

The goals of continuing design studios in the third year include: advancing one's general design knowledge and skills, learning to engage more complex landscape systems through design, developing facility with a wider range of site and systems analysis tools, integrating research methods into design studio problems, and using tools to evaluate landscape performance of proposed designs. Students in this track also choose a Spring design workshop where studio design skills and knowledge are further developed and applied to a variety of design problems such as public space, public health, climate change, food systems, disaster recovery, and design fabrication. Design workshop options often include opportunities to take interdisciplinary studios and to work with affiliate faculty in allied fields.

Thesis

Another pathway for MLA students involves undertaking a thesis:

• LA 599 Thesis Research (taken for 2 semesters, Fall and Spring; 5 credit hours each)

The thesis path entails working with a thesis committee under the supervision of a faculty advisor (aka the thesis committee chair) to pursue in-depth, independent work of relevance to landscape architecture and accomplishing one or more of the following goals:

• Demonstrate an innovative application of knowledge within the field
• Analyze, critically examine, and/or empirically test ideas/theories
• Creatively synthesize, expand upon, and/or develop designs/theories

The MLA thesis provides for a complete expression of ideas through a broad range of products that may include a design, an experiment, a management plan, a textual analysis, and/or a research model. A thesis proposal must clearly explain how the work will accomplish at least one of the goals listed above. The completed thesis must reasonably justify that this has been achieved. The format should be an appropriate complement to written and visual materials, in proportionate amounts to be determined by the nature of the project. The same effort, intellectual rigor, and quality of work are expected regardless of the approach, products, and/or format.

Topic Selection | Developing a thesis topic requires careful thought and investigation. Students should rely on their previous experience and coursework to identify topics that are personally interesting and suitable for graduate study.

Proposal | Thesis proposal development is supported in LA 597 Research Design & Methods taken in Spring semester. Through that process and consultation with instructors and other relevant experts, the student identifies a topic and question of interest and prepares a proposal that describes those as well as the work to be undertaken. The proposal should contain an introduction to the topic and question to be explored, justification for and purpose of the study, a critical literature review, proposed method(s), and, if appropriate, the type of documentation to be developed. A schedule of anticipated steps for completing the work should also be prepared. Thesis Proposal Guidelines are available to support students in developing their proposals. A copy of the approved proposal and a completed Thesis Proposal Approval form must be submitted to the Department via the MLA Program Chair, by May 15th preceding the thesis year.

Committee | Each thesis committee shall be composed of three faculty members. The student must identify an appropriate faculty member to supervise the work (the thesis committee chair) and secure that faculty member's acceptance of the responsibility. The thesis committee chair must be both a member of the Landscape Architecture faculty and a member of the Graduate Faculty. Other members of the committee need not be members of the Landscape Architecture faculty or the Graduate Faculty. If the chair holds a zero-time appointment in the Department, at least one of the other committee members must hold a full-time appointment in the Department. The chair and other committee members should be selected for interest in the topic and special expertise that will contribute to the development of the thesis. When appropriate, students are encouraged to invite faculty members from other departments to serve on their committees. One non-University member may serve on a committee when approved by the chair and the MLA Program Chair. Before selecting a chair and committee members, students should inquire about scheduled sabbaticals and planned leaves of absence.

The thesis committee chair is responsible for working closely with the student throughout the entire thesis process, providing appropriate direction and advice on a regular basis. The other two committee members will normally play lesser roles by providing support in their areas of expertise. Regardless of responsibilities, the chair should be consulted regularly and will determine if the thesis is ready for review.

LA 599 Thesis Research | Only those students who have completed LA 597 and who have an approved thesis proposal and the support of a chair and committee may enroll in LA 599 Thesis Research. Each thesis student enrolls in the section of LA 599 Thesis Research specific to their chair. Thesis students are expected to enroll in LA 599 Thesis Research during the first two semesters after their thesis proposals are approved. In LA 599, each student will undertake and complete thesis research and creative and/or scholarly exposition. Each thesis committee will help guide and critique student work; however, it is each thesis student's responsibility to make satisfactory progress. Thesis students enroll in a total of 10 hours of LA 599 divided over two successive semesters. Any hours of LA 599 beyond the required 10 will not count towards completion of degree requirements.

Funding for Thesis Research |The Graduate College provides information about fellowships and grants that may pertain to thesis research as well as conference travel support. Deadlines occur once per semester, and awards are made through competition. The Department also offers several travel fellowships that can be used to support thesis research. For more information and instructions on how to apply, see the call for applications issued by the Department each spring semester.

Thesis Format |The Department does not restrict theses to the traditional written format. Drawings, models, videos, and/or other media are acceptable along with text components. The proportion of content in different formats is to be determined by the nature of the project. Generally, when the bulk of the thesis is in non-written format, the written portion of the thesis should allow readers to

understand the content and significance of the thesis along with its format, sources of information, and the methods used to develop its conclusions. In cases where such information is contained in the non-written portion, the written part shall consist of the abstract, a description of the format of the non-written part, and any pertinent notes concerning means of retrieval. Additional information about acceptable formats is available through the Thesis Office of the Graduate College. See https://grad.illinois.edu/thesis.

Thesis Editing | The thesis committee chair or other committee members may require the student to consult the University's Writing Center and/or to engage an editor to improve the writing style and to correct grammatical, spelling, and punctuation errors in the thesis. Any expenses associated with thesis editing must be borne by the student.

Thesis Committee Reviews | When the thesis committee chair determines that the thesis is complete, the student will meet with the entire committee to review and evaluate the work. Other preliminary reviews may be scheduled at the request of the student and/or as the chair or members see fit.

Departmental Approval | When the thesis is completed and ready for approval and deposit, the student completes the Thesis/Dissertation Approval (TDA) form and gives it first to the thesis committee chair, then to the other committee members, and finally to the Department Head (or designee) for final review and signatures. All signatures (chair, other committee members, and Department Head) must be acquired in that order, and all are required for deposit approval. The chair determines when it is appropriate to submit the thesis to the other committee members and the Department Head. The Department Head will evaluate the thesis and, if necessary, negotiate any differences with the thesis committee chair. After the thesis has been approved and the Thesis/Dissertation Approval form signed, a copy of the thesis must be submitted to the Departmental thesis reviewer for a format check, typically conducted by the Office Administrator. This step helps ensure that the submission will not be rejected by the Graduate College for technical reasons.

Submission to the Graduate College for Review and Deposit | The thesis is submitted electronically to the Graduate College for approval and deposit. The student is solely responsible for depositing the completed thesis to the Graduate College in accordance with their schedules and procedures and for meeting the Graduate College requirements regarding thesis format. See the Graduate College's thesis deposit guidelines for details. Upon successful deposit, the thesis student should deliver a copy of the final thesis document to each committee member.

Deadlines for Deposit | Deadlines for deposit are updated and published online by the Graduate College. Normally the Graduate College undertakes thesis format reviews up to and including the day of the deposit deadline. However, students are strongly encouraged to send a copy of their title page to the Graduate College Thesis Office for review well in advance of anticipated deposit and to submit as far as possible in advance of the deadline. If the thesis is not deposited and accepted by the Graduate College by the deadline, the student will officially graduate at the first graduation period after the thesis

has been accepted. To meet deadlines for deposit, grade submission, and graduation, each thesis student should allow sufficient time for committee, Department, and Graduate College review. Students should remember that members of the faculty are normally not on appointment during the summer and are usually unavailable for thesis consultation. Work to be conducted during the summer will require special prior arrangements.

Thesis Evaluation/Grading | LA 599 is graded *satisfactory* (S) or *unsatisfactory* (U). The grade is assigned by the thesis committee chair and should reflect the consensus of the thesis committee members.

Alternative opportunity for academic research: Students seeking for-credit research opportunities, but for whom the Thesis Path does not fit their goals, might consider enrolling in LA590 Directed Research. LA590 Directed Research is a semester long elective in which students may pursue independent research under the supervision of a landscape architecture faculty member. Enrolling in LA590 does not substitute for the Thesis Path in the MLA Curriculum, but it does provide a valuable opportunity to pursue special research topics of interest that supplement other coursework. Please contact the MLA Student Advisor Dr. Lori Davis with questions.

Graduate Minors

There are numerous, optional Graduate Minors outside of Landscape Architecture which students may pursue.

Joint MLA/MUP Program

A joint degree is a campus-approved program in which a student concurrently pursues two specifically identified degrees, and those degrees are conferred simultaneously. The Department of Landscape Architecture and the Department of Urban & Regional Planning offer a joint MLA/MUP program. Students interested in pursuing the joint program should consult both departments as they must be admitted separately to each program.

Students in the joint MLA/MUP must be enrolled in each unit program alternately for at least one academic year after admission, and they must complete the requirements for each degree. For ease of scheduling and meeting requirements, students in the joint degree program typically focus on one program in any given semester. It is department policy not to fund students in the joint degree program during the time they are enrolled in the alternate program.

Limited / Full Standing

Applicants with grade point averages of at least 3.00 (on a 4.00 scale) for the last sixty hours of undergraduate study are admitted to the MLA Program with full graduate standing. Applicants with

grade-point averages below 3.00 are placed on limited status, meaning probationary admittance with elevation to full graduate standing contingent upon successful completion (minimum 12 hours and a GPA of at least 3.00) of the first semester in the program.

Students who are required to demonstrate English proficiency through TOEFL or IELTS scores must obtain a TOEFL score higher than 102 or IELTS scores higher than 7 to be admitted on full status. Students who are required to demonstrate English proficiency and score lower than this are admitted on limited status pending completion of one or two English as a Second Language courses as determined by the English Placement Test upon arrival to campus. In keeping with Graduate College policy, fellowship and assistantship opportunities are not available to students on limited status.

Graduate College/Department Minimum Grade Point Average

See the Graduate College Policy on Academic Standing in section 3.2 of the Graduate College Handbook.

Annual Academic Progress Reviews

In accordance with Graduate College policy, the Department of Landscape Architecture conducts annual reviews of all MLA students. An annual review helps each student progress through the program by allowing timely identification of deficiencies, clarification of expectations for academic performance, and identification of opportunities for improvement. At the end of each year, the Academic Affairs Coordinator will present information to the MLA Program Chair and Department Head about the status of each student. This will include the number of semesters in the program, GPA, and, when appropriate, identification of the thesis chair and other thesis committee members.

Per Graduate College policy, a graduate student must be making satisfactory academic progress to hold an assistantship.

Degree Completion and Graduation

To obtain the MLA degree, each student must complete all requirements within five years of their initial enrollment in the program. After that time, requests to complete degree requirements will be denied.

August and December graduates are welcome to participate in the first May departmental commencement ceremony occurring after the MLA degree is conferred. Students who wish to participate in the May departmental commencement ceremony prior to degree conferral must be in good standing and on track to graduate by the following August or December.

Financial Aid

Opportunities for merit-based financial aid—including assistantships, fellowships, scholarships, and prizes, some of which provide tuition and partial fee waivers—can be found on the Department's website. It is Department policy to distribute financial support, in whatever form, as widely as possible. Award of financial support for a given semester or year does not imply continued support. University- and College-sponsored fellowships are normally for one semester only. In general, the Department places a higher priority on financial assistance for students still in their two- or three-year "normal" enrollment expectancy than for those continuing to enroll beyond that time; particular skills will sometimes override this consideration in the case of assistantships. University-wide opportunities can be found on the Funding and Fellowships page of the Graduate College website, which also includes information about the full range of fellowships and competitive grants offered by Graduate College. The Fellowship Finder is a useful tool for exploring other possible sources of funding.

Except in extraordinary circumstances, prerequisites for financial support include continuing normal progress towards the degree, full-time enrollment, a grade point average of 3.00 or better, and no I (incomplete) grades more than one semester old. Additional factors such as outstanding performance not reflected in GPA, amount of course work taken each semester, or dropped courses, and appraisals by course instructors may also be used for evaluation, particularly in the case of candidates with roughly comparable GPAs.

It is University policy that fellowships, assistantships, and tuition/fee waivers be awarded on the basis of academic merit and, where pertinent, qualifications for a specific task. Except for special, explicit exceptions, financial need is not a criterion.

Financial Aid for Incoming Students

Since the graduate application form is used both for admission to the Graduate College and as an application for graduate appointments, all applicants are automatically considered for financial aid opportunities. One exception is the Department-based Cherie L. Kluesing Fellowship (scroll down to "Awards for MLA students" for this listing), for which a separate statement of interest is solicited. Most aid is awarded on the basis of academic achievement or the ability to perform a specific job. An award of financial aid for the first semester/year is not a guarantee of aid for any semester/year thereafter.

Financial Aid for Continuing Students

Teaching, Graduate, and Research Assistantships are employment contracts between a student, the Department and, in some cases, an individual faculty member, and they are awarded on the basis of the applicant's ability to perform the expected assignment. Assistantships are usually awarded on a one-semester basis. All assistantships come with a stipend. Those at 25% to 67% levels include a full tuition waiver and a partial fee waiver. Detailed information about tuition waiver policies is included in the Graduate College Handbook.

Continuing students receive priority, although a limited number of assistantships may go to new students with suitable backgrounds for the work. To be eligible for a teaching assistantship, students who are not native speakers of English must meet proficiency criteria established by the Office of the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. Students in that circumstance are encouraged to start the assessment and development process as early as possible in their degree. Contact the Academic Affairs Coordinator for more information. All first-time teaching assistants must attend the Graduate Academy for College Teaching.

Teaching and research assistantships vary in number from semester to semester. Teaching assistants available in any given semester are announced by email in the second half of the preceding semester. Possibilities for continuation of an assistantship are contingent upon performance and the availability of funds. Assistantships for an entire academic year are awarded in some cases where the assignment requires personnel continuity.

The Graduate College page on assistantships provides information about various types of assistantships and links to other assistantship resources, such as the Assistantship Clearinghouse.

Assistantships under the Federal Work-Study (FWS) Program can be for research or administrative duties but not for teaching. Be advised that the process is detailed and time-consuming, so start the process as early as possible.

Other forms of aid are brought to the attention of the Department from time to time. These will be posted in the Opportunities Blog so be sure to sign up and then indicate you're interested in receiving notifications when new items are posted.

Department-Based Awards

Through the generosity of alumni, friends, and partner organizations, the Department is pleased to offer a variety of fellowships, scholarships, and prizes.

Awards based on academic performance and for which no application is solicited include:

> *Gary Kesler Prize*: Established in honor of emeritus faculty member Gary Kesler, it is awarded annually to a student who exhibits excellence in the mastery of technical principles in landscape architecture as demonstrated in LA 342 Site Engineering.

> *Illinois Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects Certificates of Honor and Merit*: Awarded to nominated MLA students based on all-around high standards of work and thought, outstanding academic performance, exceptional professional promise, and presentation to a review panel.

Natalie B. Alpert Prizes in Landscape Architecture: Given in memory of former faculty member Natalie Alpert, these awards recognize student excellence in two areas: history and design. The *Natalie B. Alpert Prizes in the History of Landscape Architecture* are awarded for research papers written in the course LA 314/513: History of World Landscapes. The *Natalie B. Alpert Prize for Design in Landscape Architecture* are awarded for exceptional performance in studio design contexts, the specific context for which is determined annually by the faculty.

Sigma Lambda Alpha Honor Society Membership: Formed in the late 1970s by the Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture (CELA), requirements for membership include sound character and a very strong academic record.

Awards for which applications are solicited annually from interested students include:

Edward L. Ryerson Traveling Fellowship in Landscape Architecture: Supports international travel and study and is awarded based on the merit of students' proposals and their academic records.

George and Dorothy Fiel Fellowship: Supports student travel and research for the study of historical and contemporary works in the United States. It is awarded based on the academic merit of the student and the intellectual merit of their proposal.

*Pauline Tilton Kennedy Prize***:** Supports independent study of contemporary and historical landscapes. It is awarded based on the combined intellectual strength of a proposal and the academic merit of the student.

Landscape Architecture Renaissance Scholarship: Recognizes the holistic value for students of participation in sports, music, and interdisciplinary study, and it encourages ongoing engagement in those activities as a sustaining part of university student life.

Departmental Main Office

The Department's main office is located at 101 Temple Buell Hall. Normal office hours are 8:30-12:00 and 1:00-5:00, Monday through Friday. Offices for the Department Head, the Academic Affairs Coordinator, and the Office Manager are housed within the main office. The main office suite includes a Department library/resource room and a conference room available for use by department members. The confidential nature of office records precludes student access to the main office if no staff member is present.

Studio Spaces

Studio desks are allocated at the beginning of both Fall and Spring semesters with students assigned to desks within the same studio space for the duration of the semester. Desks are also allocated to Thesis students and collocated for ease of connecting and meeting together.

Computers

Students in the MLA program are required to have a laptop capable of running software used in our courses. Students cannot expect to rely exclusively on university-provided workstations and must have a laptop for in-class tutorials and workshops. Recommended specs for equipment are determined by the Department's Space & Tech Committee and kept on file by the Academic Programs and Student Affairs Coordinator. While some software is provided, students should also expect to purchase some applications needed for coursework and not otherwise available through campus services.

Access to Department Buildings

Student ID cards are used to access Temple Buell Hall via the west entrance. Upon request, students enrolled in courses at 200 Mumford Hall may receive keys requisite to access. Keys are available from the Department's Office Manager at the main office (101 Temple Buell Hall). A refundable deposit fee of $10.00 per key is required. All course-related keys must be returned at the end of each academic year or at the end of the fall semester for students graduating in December. New keys will not be issued without the return of outstanding keys.

Bulletin Board

Information of interest to graduate students, including employment notices, are posted variously on the north corridor bulletin board on the third floor of Temple Buell Hall and on the Opportunities Blog.

Media Equipment, Printing, and Fabrication Resources

Some media equipment is available for use in conjunction with department coursework. Any student borrowing equipment is responsible for its proper use and care, including the repair or replacement of items damaged or lost during the time of the loan. Equipment is issued by the Department's Office Manager at 101 Temple Buell Hall. Overnight use must be approved by a faculty member and coordinated with those who may be reserving the equipment for the following day.

Printing services are available through the Print/3D Print Labs at 20 Temple Buell Hall.

With permission of the School of Architecture and requisite orientation/training, MLA students are normally granted access to the School's Woodshop and DigiFab Shop.

With permission of the School of Art and Design and requisite orientation/training, MLA students are normally granted access to the wide range of labs supported by the School. See the School's website for current information about access, training, and fees.

Other useful fabrication resources are available at the CU Community Fab Lab, located on campus adjacent to the School of Architecture Woodshop and DigiFab Shop, and at the Siebel Center for Design shop and media studio, located at the west end of the arts quad, a short walk from TBH.

University Libraries

The City Planning & Landscape Architecture Collection and the City Planning & Landscape Architecture Virtual Library are located within the Funk (ACES) Library. A vast range of landscape-related works and resources are also available at the Main Library, the Undergraduate Library, and the Ricker Library of Architecture and Art. All of these libraries are located within one block of Temple Buell Hall.

Policy Determination

The faculty and designated student representatives hold a Committee of the Department Meeting approximately every other week. This is the Department's primary deliberation and information vehicle: announcements and reports may be made, input solicited, committees assigned, problems discussed, and decisions made on short- and long-term matters. With advance notice, special departmental meetings may be held for major issues. The times and locations of such meetings will be announced to members of the Department in advance using its standard methods of communication.

Each year, enrolled students in the BLA, MLA, and PhD attend faculty meetings as representatives responsible for reporting and disseminating information to the student body. There is also student representation on other important committees such as the Student Advisory Committee; the Events Committee; the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee; and ad hoc faculty search committees. Please refer to the Department By-Laws (available at the Main Office) for a more complete explanation of these committees.

Grievances

Various forms of appeal are available to individual students who feel that they have received unfair treatment in academic or administrative dealings with the department. Students are strongly encouraged to use all appropriate avenues for informal resolution of other grievances, such as alleged

inappropriate application of policy or being improperly terminated from a University appointment. If a student is unable to resolve such an issue, they may elect to file a formal grievance.

Consult the Student Code and the Graduate College Handbook for more information on grievance policies and procedures.

University Policy Statements

Academic Integrity
All students are accountable to the principles of academic integrity as defined in the Student Code.

Accommodations
To obtain disability-related academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids in any course, students should contact both the instructor and the Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) (1207 S. Oak Street, Champaign, IL 61820, (217) 333-1970, or via email at disability@illinois.edu) as soon as possible. See also § 1-110 of the Student Code for the University's Policy for the Provision of Reasonable Accommodations for Students with Disabilities.

Emergency Preparedness Recommendations
Recommendations about how to prepare for emergencies can be found at https://police.illinois.edu/?s=emergency+preparedness. Campus building floor plans can be found at http://police.illinois.edu/emergency-preparedness/building-emergency-action-plans/.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
Any student who has suppressed their directory information pursuant to Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) should self-identify to the instructor in any course to ensure protection of the privacy of their attendance in that course. See https://registrar.illinois.edu/academic-records/ferpa/ for more information on FERPA.

Nondiscrimination Statement
The commitment of the University of Illinois to the most fundamental principles of academic freedom, equality of opportunity, and human dignity requires that decisions involving students and employees be based on merit and be free from invidious discrimination in all its forms. See the University of Illinois Nondiscrimination Statement for detailed information about this policy.

Sexual Misconduct Policy and Reporting
The University of Illinois is committed to combating sexual misconduct. Faculty and staff members are required to report any instances of sexual misconduct to the University's Title IX and Disability Office. In turn, an individual with the Title IX and Disability Office will provide information about rights and options, including accommodations, support services, the campus disciplinary process, and law

enforcement options. A list of the University employees who, as counselors, confidential advisors, and medical professionals, do not have this reporting responsibility and can maintain confidentiality can be found at https://wecare.illinois.edu/resources/students/#confidential. Other information about resources and reporting is available through the university's We Care site: https://wecare.illinois.edu.

Course of Study: Samples by program level

MLA Pre-Professional Degree (3-year program): Design Studio Path

Year 1			
Fall		**Spring**	
LA 433 Graduate Foundation Studio	5	LA 434 Graduate Site Design Studio	5
LA 280 Design Communications I	3	LA 281 Design Communications II	3
LA 250 Site Analysis	3	LA 513 History of World Landscapes	4
LA 501 Landscape Arch Theory & Practice	4	LA 241 Landform Design & Construction	3
English as a Second Language (if required)	0	English as a Second Language (if required)	0
Total Credits	15	Total Credits	16

Year 2			
Fall		**Spring**	
LA 533 Planning & Design Studio I	5	LA 534 Design Workshop G-1	5
LA 342 Site Engineering	4	LA 343 Landscape Construction	4
LA 482 Adv. Communications in Design	4	LA 597 Research Design & Methods	3
LA 352 Woody Landscape Plants	4	Social/Cultural Issues course	3
Total Credits	16	Total Credits	15

Year 3			
Fall		**Spring**	
LA 537 Planning & Design Studio II	5	LA 539 Design Workshop G-2	5
LA 452 Planting Design	3	Methods course	3
LA 346 Professional Practice	2	Elective	3
Ecology course	3	Graduate Seminar or Elective	3
Total Credits	13	Total Credits	14

MLA Pre-Professional Degree (3-year program): Thesis Path

Year 1				
Fall			**Spring**	
LA 433 Graduate Foundation Studio	5		LA 434 Graduate Site Design Studio	5
LA 280 Design Communications I	3		LA 281 Design Communications II	3
LA 250 Site Analysis	3		LA 513 History of World Landscapes	4
LA 501 Landscape Arch Theory & Practice	4		LA 241 Landform Design & Construction	3
English as a Second Language (if required)	0		English as a Second Language (if required)	0
Total Credits	15		Total Credits	15

Year 2				
Fall			**Spring**	
LA 533 Planning & Design Studio I	5		LA 534 Design Workshop G-1	5
LA 342 Site Engineering	4		LA 343 Landscape Construction	4
LA 482 Adv. Communications in Design	4		LA 597 Research Design & Methods	3
LA 352 Woody Landscape Plants	4		Social/Cultural Issues course	3
Total Credits	16		Total Credits	15

Year 3				
Fall			**Spring**	
LA 599 Thesis Research	5		LA 599 Thesis Research	5
LA 452 Planting Design	3		Methods course	3
LA 346 Professional Practice	2		Elective	3
Ecology course	3		Graduate Seminar or Elective	3
Total Credits	13		Total Credits	14

MLA Pre-Professional Degree (2.5-year Sample program): Design Studio Path

Year 1				
Fall			**Spring**	
LA 433 Graduate Foundation Studio	5		LA 434 Graduate Site Design Studio	5
LA 352 Woody Landscape Plants	3		LA 597 Research Design & Methods	3
LA 250 Site Analysis	3		LA 513 History of World Landscapes	4
LA 501 Landscape Arch Theory & Practice	4		LA 241 Landform Design & Construction	3
English as a Second Language (if required)	0		English as a Second Language (if required)	0
Total Credits	15		Total Credits	15

Year 2				
Fall			**Spring**	
LA 533 Planning & Design Studio I	5		LA 539 Design Workshop G-2	5
LA 342 Site Engineering	4		LA 343 Landscape Construction	4
LA 482 Adv. Communications in Design	4		Ecology course	3
LA 452 Planting Design	3		Social/Cultural Issues course	3
Total Credits	16		Total Credits	15

Year 3	
Fall	
LA 537 Planning & Design Studio II	5
LA 346 Professional Practice	2
Methods course	3
Elective	4
Total Credits	14

MLA Pre-Professional Degree (2.5-year Sample program): Thesis Path

Year 1			
Fall		**Spring**	
LA 433 Graduate Foundation Studio	5	LA 434 Graduate Site Design Studio	5
LA 352 Woody Landscape Plants	3	LA 597 Research Design & Methods	3
LA 250 Site Analysis	3	LA 513 History of World Landscapes	4
LA 501 Landscape Arch Theory & Practice	4	LA 241 Landform Design & Construction	3
English as a Second Language (if required)	0	English as a Second Language (if required)	0
Total Credits	15	Total Credits	15

Year 2			
Fall		**Spring**	
LA 599 Thesis Research*	5	LA 599 Thesis Research*	5
LA 342 Site Engineering	4	LA 343 Landscape Construction	4
LA 482 Adv. Communications in Design	4	Ecology course	3
LA 452 Planting Design	3	Social/Cultural Issues course	3
Total Credits	16	Total Credits	15

Year 3	
Fall	
LA 537 Planning & Design Studio I or II	5
LA 346 Professional Practice	2
Methods course	3
Elective	4
Total Credits	14

MLA Post-Professional Degree (2-year program): Design Studio Path

Year 1			
Fall		**Spring**	
LA 533 Planning & Design Studio I	5	LA 534 Design Workshop G-1	5
LA 501 Landscape Arch Theory & Practice	4	LA 597 Research Design & Methods	3
LA 482 Adv. Communications in Design	4	Social/Cultural Issues course	3
Methods or Ecology course	3	Graduate Seminar Elective	3
Total Credits	16	Total Credits	14

Year 2			
Fall		**Spring**	
LA 537 Planning & Design Studio II	5	LA 539 Design Workshop G-2	5
Ecology or Methods course	4	Elective	3
Elective	3	Elective	4
Elective	3	Elective	3
Total Credits	15	Total Credits	15

MLA Post-Professional Degree (2-year): Thesis Path

Year 1				
Fall			**Spring**	
LA 533 Planning & Design Studio I	5		LA 534 Design Workshop G-I	5
LA 501 Landscape Arch Theory & Practice	4		LA 597 Research Design & Methods	3
LA 482 Adv. Communications in Design	4		Social/Cultural Issues course	3
Methods or Ecology course	3		Graduate Seminar or Elective	3
Total Credits	16		Total Credits	14

Year 2				
Fall			**Spring**	
LA 599 Thesis Research	5		LA 599 Thesis Research	5
Ecology or Methods course	4		Elective	4
Elective	3		Elective	3
Elective	3		Elective	3
Total Credits	15		Total Credits	15

Handbook updated – May 15, 2024