

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Chartered as a Land-Grant University in 1869, Purdue University continues to feature its School of Agriculture as a central focus and a core entity. Residing in this school's Department of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture, the first graduates of the landscape architecture program were awarded their Bachelor of Science (BSLA) degrees in 1968. The program has enjoyed continued accreditation from the American Society of Landscape Architects/Landscape Architecture Accrediting Board since 1971.

The immediate academic family of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture within the School of Agriculture contributes to the BSLA program its context while recognizing, supporting, and facilitating the program's growth and development toward fulfilling its professional missions. This association instills in-depth understanding of plant materials and thoughtful sensitivity to ecology, the environment, and natural resources. Strong administrative and faculty support at the department, school, and university levels continues to encourage the program to fulfill its mission with distinction. Opportunities for a broad-based education are abundant at Purdue, and education in the history, theory, and practice of landscape architecture is sound in the curriculum. Purdue's international reputation in the sciences, in engineering, and in technology offers educational resources of superior quality and value to the program.

The education of a landscape architect at Purdue is particularly attentive to the uniqueness that can be drawn from Indiana and the region, natural processes, history and theory, site dynamics, professional practice, and new connections that encourage novel approaches to problem solving and visionary development of the profession of landscape architecture. Within this framework, the program is focused on preparation for professional practice through a cooperative education model as a characteristic of distinction. A talented faculty with a broad range of interests, experiences, and accomplishments in education, research, and professional practice deliver and continually develop a rigorous program, and enhance their own national and international competitiveness. They lead students in collaborative and multidisciplinary team endeavors and push the envelope of pedagogy of design education. Faculty and student engagement in community service through service learning continues to receive recognition at the department, school, university, and community levels.

The program is keenly interested in global understanding and international education. The study-abroad and international exchange program opportunities it provides enriches student learning experiences, and render the program as an active player in the university's international education initiative.

Purdue seeks students for the program who demonstrate strong aptitude for creativity and design, and interest in the natural and built environments along with a passion for sustainable integration of the two. Indeed, the students have demonstrated innovative thinking, and national competitiveness and recognition. The program's alumni are represented by a wide range of successful professional practitioners as well as educators. They have made their mark nationally and internationally in advancing the profession, the disciplinary richness and boundaries, and quality of life in the built and natural environments.

## **A. PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

### **Purdue Landscape Architecture Program: Learning, Discovery and Engagement**

Following is a brief overview of the landscape architecture program at Purdue University. While most of it describes the current state of the program, it also includes some hints at a vision for the future. We desire to maintain a strong, responsive and vibrant program while keeping an eye on the needs and direction of the profession, the environment and society.

The Landscape Architecture Program is part of the Department of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture within the School of Agriculture at Purdue University. The LA Program draws strength from this position. Our relationship with the Horticulture faculty provides our students with excellent access to knowledge of plants and our relationships within the School of Agriculture and associated natural resource programs give our students many other relevant learning opportunities. Horticulture faculty and their knowledge of plants are very strong partners.

Purdue University is a great place to study landscape architecture. It offers a sound education in the history, theory and practice of landscape architecture. Students are provided a rigorous sequence of courses in design, construction technology, graphic communication and plant knowledge. These courses are complemented by a liberal array of courses in the basic and earth sciences, humanities and art.

Purdue seeks students who have a high aptitude for creative design and a keen interest in people, the environment, and ways to accommodate the two in innovative and sustainable ways.

New recruits have the opportunity to get an early start by attending the LA Discovery Summer Camp as high school students or high school graduates. At camp or in their first semester, students get a thorough introduction to the program and the profession through field trips, visits to professional offices, guest lecturers and exploratory projects.

In the first year, students take basic freshman courses, including English, math and biology as well as art and design, graphic communication and an introductory course in design. At the end of the freshman year upon application, the top 25-30 students are selected to continue in the professional landscape architecture program.

The sophomore year is characterized by an intensive introduction to the elements and principles of design, construction materials, and planting design. Students also take courses in land surveying, communications, and plant identification and characteristics. Beginning in the sophomore year the students are expected to have immediate access to a personal computer, preferably a laptop, that can be linked to the wireless network in the studios. Students develop skills in both manual and computer graphics.

The junior year provides the students with a more intensive and more complex exploration of technology, construction, grading, and design practice. The emphasis of the junior year is preparing the students for placement in the cooperative education offices throughout the country. Some students spend a part or all of this year in a study abroad program in England, Scotland or Sweden. Other shorter term international programs are also available to the students. International students also join our program during the junior or senior year; this also proves to be an enlightening experience for our students.

The fourth year is spent in a cooperative education experience in a landscape architecture office. The co-op offices are located throughout the country and are truly cooperative with Purdue in providing the student with an extremely valuable part of their professional education. The students are matched to an office environment, either private or public, that best suits their professional interests, office environment and geographic location choices.

The students are sent out on co-op with a syllabus that helps them understand the relevance of this part of their education. It provides each student with a description of their objectives, readings and a list of questions and activities to pursue with his or her supervisor. Co-op is more than just work experience. The students will have regular communications with faculty who maintain a listserve/website to answer questions. This is the plan for the immediate future.

The students are also sent out with a challenge to identify a thesis topic or major project to pursue upon their return to campus. This project may be defined in collaboration with a faculty member, their co-op supervisors or from their own observations. Some of these projects are assigned as honors research projects.

Upon return to campus, each student is responsible for compiling a report and evaluation of their office experience. These reports become part of the program's permanent record and a resource for the next class of students preparing for their co-op experience. This is also a plan which is just about to be implemented.

The senior year is the capstone to Purdue's undergraduate education in landscape architecture. This year includes an urban design course which emphasizes teamwork in a service learning project in a major urban environment. The students also have a course in professional practice which employs a virtual office simulation to help the student assimilate the knowledge gained during their internship into a comprehensive understanding of the profession of landscape architecture. In their final semester the students take a capstone course in which they have the opportunity to participate in service learning projects in communities or pursue independent research of a topic defined during their co-op experience. The resources of a major research university are at the disposal of the students to enable them to discover new knowledge and develop new techniques and ideas for the profession.

In some instances, the teamwork between students and faculty may result in publications and presentations to professional audiences. Some student work may support the faculty's ongoing research. Some of the students may prepare entries for a variety of design competitions. Emphasis is placed on giving each student the flexibility to pursue research and projects that best prepare them for the professional work that they intend to pursue, with preparation for graduate school being one possible target.

Students are encouraged to become teaching assistants or mentors to younger students. Their interactions with underclassmen can take the format of mentoring arrangements, vertical studios, or learning communities.

The senior year is all about exploring new ideas and growing in the profession. It is also about giving back to the program, the university and the profession. This year provides a bridge from academia to professional practice or other pursuits.

The students graduate with a solid foundation in the theory and practice of LA and are prepared for entry into and provide leadership in the profession.

Beyond graduation the program maintains contact with its alumni in several ways. The program provides coordination for alumni events on campus, at ASLA annual meetings and other regional events. The faculty also fosters alumni participation in the program through guest lectures, juries and projects. Alumni and other professionals are also invited to make recruiting visits for co-op and graduating student job placement. The alumni advisory council provides input on the direction of the program, reviews annual reports and assists in accreditation procedures. Their assistance is ongoing and invaluable.

The alumni and others also contribute monetarily to the program. The Fund for Excellence was established to provide an opportunity for alumni, co-op offices and others to give back to the program from which they have benefited in various ways. The 'Fund' is a source of money to supplement the program's regular offerings, including scholarships for students, faculty development, technological upgrades, facilities and supplies.

The alumni come full circle when they get involved with recruiting new students for the landscape architecture program at Purdue. Some have sent their children to study landscape architecture. And so goes the circle of life and learning in the landscape architecture program.

The faculty is diverse and talented. They pursue a broad range of professional and academic interests and research to advance the body of knowledge of landscape architecture and enrich the learning experience for their students. The faculty engages in a rich variety of opportunities to present their work at venues ranging from communities across Indiana to national and international symposia. The faculty is recognized for these contributions.

The faculty is engaged in the affairs of the Department, School and University in a variety of committees and projects. The faculty also contributes in many ways to the local, statewide and national organizations, including ASLA, CELA and other professional organizations.

Faculty members are fully engaged with the students in providing personal, professional and academic advising. Faculty members also advise the students in their student clubs and organizations.

The faculty is well connected to a wide spectrum of professionals in the field of landscape architecture. And the cooperative education program provides the perfect avenue for the program to maintain communication with professionals across the country. Each year many professionals from a wide variety of disciplines participate in the program as guest lecturers, critics and advisors.

The LA program at Purdue is young and strong, well-rooted in the traditional precepts of landscape architecture yet pushing the envelope of the pedagogy of design education. The program is rigorous and comprehensive in its scope while fostering a friendly and supportive learning community. The program is solid but is continuously seeking solutions to the little problems and pursuing the next levels of achievement.

The self-evaluation report is intended to clearly elaborate on ways and means used by the landscape architecture program to meet or exceed the accreditation standards set out by the Landscape Architecture Accreditation Board. The following sections include self-assessments, future plans, responses to the recommendations of previous visiting teams and detailed description of the program's compliance with each accreditation standard.

## B. History of Program

- 1869 Purdue University chartered as a Land Grant University, with the School of Agriculture as a central focus.
- 1920's Planting design courses were offered and landscape extension services provided.
- 1928-55 Professor R. B. Hull taught landscape architectural courses as a part of his duties as extension landscape architect.
- 1945-64 "Landscape Appreciation" course, involving both lectures and labs, was taught by Hull and later by N. W. Marty.
- 1964 School of Agriculture adopted a curriculum initially titled Landscape Horticulture. Curriculum establishment culminated several years of effort by Henry W. Gilbert, Extension Landscape Architect, Dr. Les Hafen, Dr. Fred Lamphear, and Dr. E. C. Stevenson, Department Head. James E. Browning hired as first full-time Instructor.
- 1966 Program title officially changed to Landscape Architecture.
- 1967 Professor T. D. Walker joined the staff and full course offerings were available for the first time. (Walker resigned in 1976).
- 1968 First graduates awarded degrees in landscape architecture program.
- 1971 Program granted provisional accreditation by the Council on Education, American Society of Landscape Architects.
- 1972 Richard Boots and Lawrence Zuercher join faculty (both left in 1974).
- 1974 Bernie Dahl, Marshall Ochylski and Tom Vageline join LA faculty (Ochylski and Vageline left in 1978).
- 1976 Major space expansion and renovation program completed, resulting in studio space for all design courses for the first time.
- Community Assistance program initiated wherein upper-level students (LA 325, 416, 516) work with local communities on real design problems located within various regions of the State.
- Program administration formally instituted via position of Assistant Head of Department in charge of Landscape Architecture Program. (Position name modified to Chairperson of Landscape Architecture Program in 1986).
- Phillip E. DeTurk named first Chair.
- Program granted full accreditation by the Council of Education, American Society of Landscape Architecture.

- 1978 Greg Pierceall and Troy Bunch join LA faculty (Bunch left in 1983).
- 1979 Sigma Lambda Alpha Honor Society (Xi Chapter) chartered at Purdue.
- 1980 Ada Niedenthal joins LA faculty (Niedenthal left in 1994).
- 1981 ASLA Reaccreditation.
- 1982 The student club, Purdue Society of Landscape Architects (PSLA) hosted LABASH.  
Sue Kopka joins LA faculty (Kopka left in 1984).
- 1983 Purdue landscape architecture co-op program reactivated by Professor Molnar.
- 1984-85 Landscape architecture computer lab established.
- 1985 Greg Pierceall named Chair of the LA program.
- 1986 ASLA Reaccreditation.
- 1987 Greg Pierceall was awarded the M. Beverley Stone Award, a Purdue non-academic advising award.
- 1988 First full professorship in program (Don Molnar).  
Don Molnar named Chair of LA program.  
Virginia Russell joins LA faculty (Russell left in 1996).
- 1989 Exchange program established with Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh, Scotland.
- 1990 Second full professorship in program (Greg Pierceall).  
Prelandscape Architecture program instituted to control quality of upper level students and reduce faculty/student ratio.  
Expanded computer lab created in conjunction with other Agricultural departments (computers assigned to LA faculty).  
First two students sent to Heriot-Watt for third year classes and two exchange students received.  
Two co-op positions established abroad; one in Glasgow, Scotland and one in London.
- 1991 International co-op program expanded in England plus 3 from England/Scotland placed in the United States.  
ASLA Provisional Accreditation. Issues of particular concern: studio space, faculty/student ratios.

- 1992 Rob Sovinski joins LA faculty.
- 1993 Remodeling of studio and classroom space in Horticulture Building to create permanent studio locations for sophomores as well as juniors and seniors. Work includes conversion of former classroom (Room 222) into studio space connected to existing studio in 225.
- Center for Community and Environmental Design established with Kent Schuette as Director.
- Long Range Plan completed; initial phases implemented.
- ASLA Reaccreditation.
- 1994 Hallway gallery display panels and lighting added with support of gift money.
- Brick Bowl initiated by Rob Sovinski as an annual spring event and student learning experience. The Brick Bowl coincides with the Hort Show.
- 1995 Rob Sovinski received the Outstanding Teacher in Landscape Architecture, Purdue University Landscape Architecture Program.
- 1996 Department name changes from Horticulture to Horticulture and Landscape Architecture.
- René Heynssens joins LA faculty (Heynssens left in 1998).
- Completion of total computer network connection with campus, all offices and studios.
- 1997 Expanded intern placement of students from UK programs into US offices through cooperation with Council for International Educational Exchange.
- Center for Community and Environmental Design (CCED) continues as service unit with Directorship passing to Rob Sovinski.
- Revision to PreLA process initiated with mid-year evaluation of sophomore class as advisory action (an early warning for students in jeopardy). Selection maintained at end of second year.
- 1998 Revisions incorporated in Horticulture's "Landscape Horticulture Design" program. Changes revise what was a somewhat parallel program (to LA) during the first two years of each.
- Bernie Dahl becomes director of CCED.
- Funding secured for development of expanded departmental computer studio, increasing from 8 to 20 new state-of-the-art units with full reproduction and projection facilities. Increased space enables new opportunities for teaching and exploration.

- 1999      Kim Wilson and Paul Siciliano joins LA faculty.
- International Exchange Program established with Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Alnarp, Sweden.
- Greg Pierceall is honored with the Who's Who, Landscape Architecture Sourcebook, 2 citations.
- Rob Sovinski received the Jerzy Benjamin Flatt Medal from Warsaw Agricultural University.
- Rob Sovinski was named Outstanding Teacher in School of Agriculture, Purdue University School of Agriculture.
- Rob Sovinski awarded Outstanding Teacher Award, Department of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture.
- 2000      Kim Wilson developed a Landscape Architecture Discovery Program. This weeklong summer camp introduced high school students to the field of landscape architecture and opportunities at Purdue University.
- Greg Pierceall was awarded the Horticulture and Landscape Architecture Advisor Award.
- Rob Sovinski received the Charles Murphy Award for Outstanding Teaching; the Class of 1922 Helping Students Learn Award; and named Fellow, Purdue University Teaching Academy.
- 2001      Greg Pierceall was awarded the Horticulture and Landscape Architecture Advisor Award.
- Paul Siciliano was awarded the Outstanding Teacher Award in Landscape Architecture.
- Paul Siciliano along with Prof. Mike Dana and Prof. John Larson developed a new study abroad course entitled "In the English Landscape: Integrating History, Horticulture and Landscape Architecture." The initial course offering will be during Maymester 2002.
- Kim Wilson was honored the Teaching for Tomorrow Award, Teaching Academy, Purdue University and the Outstanding Teacher in Landscape Architecture.
- Kent Schuette was awarded the Suzanne Stafford memorial Award Winner for Outstanding community Service and the National Advisor Emeritus to the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

- 2002      Bernie Dahl was named Chair of our LA program.
- Greg Pierceall was awarded the Horticulture and Landscape Architecture Teaching Award.
- Prof. Kim Wilson's LA 416 (Urban Design) students worked on redevelopment plans for South Michigan Avenue in Chicago. Their work was featured in an article in the Chicago Tribune.
- The LA Fund for Excellence was initiated - a campaign to support our Landscape Architecture Program.
- Kent Schuette awarded the Robert Lee Blaffer Fellow - a 6-week Artist-in-Residence Fellowship, New Harmony, Indiana.
- 2003      Rob Sovinski becomes third full professor in program.
- Bernie Dahl assumes responsibility for co-op program.
- Greg Pierceall was awarded the Association of Professional Designers, International Award - Award of Distinction.
- Don Molnar retires.
- Kim Wilson becomes director of CCED.
- Matthew Kirkwood joins LA faculty.

### C. Response to Recommendations and Suggestions from Previous Visiting Team

#### Recommendations Affecting Accreditation

None

#### Suggestions for improvement:

1. Create a strategic plan outlining the program's vision for improvements in space and facilities as well as continue the study of new curriculum models (Standard 1).

Response: The University has completed its strategic plan and the School of Agriculture has just released a new strategic plan, the Department of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture has begun its strategic planning process.

The Landscape Architecture Program faculty have discussed many of the issues related to strategic planning for space and facilities. They are in the process of crafting a plan. New curriculum models have been studied, however, it was decided that making adjustments to the curriculum was more prudent than totally redesigning it.

2. The program chair needs to find a way of delegating responsibilities to others so as to devote more time to leadership efforts of visibility, curriculum planning, and the promotion of new initiatives (Standard 2).

Response: Since the previous accreditation review the program chair has changed. The above suggestions also apply to the new chair. The faculty is receptive to delegation of responsibilities and volunteers their expertise and energy when needed. The faculty has generally been fully engaged in curriculum planning. The chair will accept greater responsibility for improving the visibility of the program and promoting new initiatives.

3. Reconsider the current policies of evaluating PreLA students at the end of the Sophomore year (Standard 3).

Response: The faculty studied this suggestion and changes the Pre-LA student selection process. In 1999, the selection of pre-landscape architecture students for the professional program was moved from the end of the sophomore year to the end of the freshmen year. This change was also prompted by concerns expressed by parents and students. This also precipitated a move of the LA 216 course from the sophomore year into the freshmen year, and an increase in credits for the LA 101 course to 3 credits. The overall effect is that more rigor was introduced into the freshmen year which allows us make our selections at this stage.

4. Establish a set of priority needs and options for the improvement of the physical facilities necessary to improve the quality of education, safety, and visibility of the program (Standard 11). (Refer to new Standard 9)

Response: Several priorities regarding physical facilities have been met in the past five years. These are more completely addressed in Standard 9 section and include:

- a. Senior studio has been upgraded with desks and chairs that more closely emulate office environments.
- b. All of the studios are now equipped with wireless network connection making it possible for students to access the network from their laptop computers.
- c. A twenty-station computer instructional classroom has greatly enhanced our capacity for computer instruction.
- d. A newly assigned room has been designated as a jury room. This change has enhanced our ability to bring in guests and service learning partners.

#### **D. Program Strengths**

1. *Good Physical Facilities*

We have good facilities housed in a single building with convenient access. We have individual workspaces for all students in the sophomore, junior, and senior studios. The largest studio space is provided on the third floor for the senior class, which is engaged in larger scale urban and regional design projects. The furniture in this studio was upgraded in 2001. All faculty have private offices. All the studio spaces are air-conditioned. Lockers are available and abundant in all studios. The junior and sophomore studios are adjacent on the second floor, which allows for the active interchange between the two classes.

We have a complete and continuously updated instructional computer lab. This facility includes 20 desktop computers with scanning, printing, and plotting equipment for production of drawings in color and at all conventional production sizes. The room includes full projection facilities linked to a station for demonstrations and instruction. All studios are equipped with wireless network connections for students with laptops. We also have access to a portable unit with 20 laptops that can be moved into any classroom or studio.

2. *Position within Department of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture*

The Landscape Architecture Program's location within a larger department in the School of Agriculture has its advantages. A large department is able to leverage some staff and facilities that might not be available to a smaller, independent program. Shared computer staff and facilities are examples of this advantage. In addition, we are able to collaborate and coordinate course offerings.

3. *The Cooperative Education Program*

The Cooperative Education Program is recognized by our students, alumni and cooperating practitioners as the most unique and most valuable aspect of the students' experiences. Purdue's co-op program stands alone with a one-year (40 week) internship period. It is probably the single most important factor leading to the unmatched success of our students in attaining entry-level employment. We often have more offices seeking interns than we have interns to place.

4. *Service Learning Projects*

Service learning projects conducted in communities throughout Indiana have brought recognition to the program. A ten-year sequence of service learning projects in Chicago have also gained much visibility for the program and made significant contributions to the city. The students benefit from the real world experience and learn the importance of service to community.

5. *International Student Exchange*

The international student exchange has been an excellent addition to our program. While a few students benefit from their travels and study abroad, the international students in our classrooms bring divergent and global perspectives to all our students. Student experiences in 'The English Landscape' and in Rome are significant to the students that can participate.

**E. Program Weaknesses**

1. *Surveying / GIS*

The students have identified a weakness in the surveying course and a lack of GIS offerings. This situation may soon be remedied by a new GIS course in Forestry and Natural Resources or revision of the current surveying course in Agricultural and Biological Engineering.

2. *Minority Recruitment*

Whether this is a program weakness or a professional weakness is a tough question. It is an ongoing concern in the department. Recruitment of minority students has included visits and presentations to high schools in Chicago and northern Indiana (particularly Gary). The School of Agriculture has recently added a multicultural recruitment and retention coordinator. This person stands ready to assist us with recruiting a more diverse student body.

3. *Scholarships*

The landscape architecture program is short on scholarships. More scholarships would allow us to entice promising high school students to our program and the field of landscape architecture. More scholarship money may help us attract and retain a more ethnically diverse student body.

4. *Strategic Plan*

The current long-range plan is out of date. While some of its action items have been accomplished, a new strategic plan for the program must be developed in response to University and School of Agriculture strategic plans.

**F. Participation in Self-Evaluation Report:**

The landscape architecture faculty, over the course of this spring semester, discussed essentially all aspects of the self-evaluation report. The program chair assumed the lead role in writing the report while continuously seeking input and feedback from the department head and faculty. The program chair also met with a small group of students requesting their input. Input from the department head's exit interview with graduating seniors as well as spontaneous and frequent comments from alumni and practitioners was also incorporated into the report. All affected parties have been provided with copies of the report, either hard copies or on the program website.