

**Department of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture**  
**Learning Outcome Assessment Plan – 2006-2007**  
**Bachelor of Landscape Architecture Degree Program**

**Learning Goals**

Landscape Architecture is an incredibly broad and diverse profession. Professionals within the discipline are called upon to apply both art and science, from the technical to the theoretical, to perform planning, design, research, and problem solving. Practitioners in landscape architecture can expect to be involved in a variety of landscapes (from urban to rural to wilderness) and operate at a variety of scales (from regional to small gardens). Therefore, there are two overarching goals of the Bachelor of Landscape Architecture degree program:

1. To provide students with the opportunities to acquire basic knowledge and skills necessary to function as entry level practitioners of landscape architecture and to become, with experience, creative and professional practitioners of landscape architecture.
2. To provide an education encompassing a broad spectrum of landscape architectural experiences and problem-solving situations within which individuals may find a suitable and fulfilling place among professional design, planning, and land use management

**Learning Outcomes**

Seven specific learning outcomes have been identified as evidence that students have achieved the goals listed above. Students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Identify and characterize the complex nature of problems and questions associated with human/landscape interactions across a broad range of scales.
2. Articulate an understanding of identified problems and questions within the theoretical and historical context of the profession of landscape architecture.
3. Identify appropriate methods of design inquiry and problem solving processes to produce creative solutions to identified problems and questions.
4. Identify, collect, and analyze necessary information using appropriate technologies and analytical techniques as they relate to the identified problem or question.
5. Explore and critically analyze alternative design/planning solutions to the identified problem or question.
6. Justify and defend the proposed design/planning solution within the context of aesthetic, social, political, economic, and environmental conditions.
7. Communicate the entire problem solving process or method of inquiry in written, oral, and graphic ways using appropriate media.

**Relationship between Learning Outcomes and Learning Goals of the Baccalaureate**

The matrix below describes the relationship between the learning outcomes for the Bachelor of Landscape Architecture degree program and the Six Learning Goals of the Baccalaureate identified by the President’s Teaching Academy.

<b>BLA Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>WSU Learning Goals of the Baccalaureate</b>	Critical Thinking	Quantitative Reasoning	Information Literacy	Communications	Self in Society	Specialty
Identify and characterize problem		■		■	■		■
Understand historical and theoretical context		■				■	■
Identify appropriate design process		■	■	■	■		■
Identify, collect, and analyze information		■	■	■	■		■
Explore and critically analyze alternatives		■	■	■	■	■	■
Justify and defend design solution		■	■		■	■	■
Communicate process and solution		■		■	■	■	■

■ Primary relationship

■ Secondary relationship

### **Methods of Assessment**

The learning outcomes identified above will be assessed at two times during the five-year duration of the degree program. The first assessment will take place at the end of the fall semester of the third year of the program. This is the mid point of the program and at that time in the curriculum students will have completed 3 landscape architectural design studios, 2 landscape architecture technology/construction courses, 2 graphics communications courses, 2 plant identification courses, 1 history of landscape architecture course, and one ecological applications course. The second assessment will be conducted at the end of last semester of the fifth year.

The first assessment will consist of a review of a comprehensive project that is a joint assignment in the first semester junior design studio (LA 362) and the first semester junior construction/technology course (LA366). The products of this project include written and graphic documentation of the design solution. The final design solutions are also verbally presented to faculty and invited guests. At least four faculty will review the project products and attend the presentations and will then conduct the assessment using the rubric included here in Appendix A.

The second assessment will consist of a review of all senior projects. These projects consist of written and graphic documentation of design/problem solutions or design inquiry findings and verbal presentations. The review will be conducted by at least four faculty using the rubric included here in appendix A.

## Appendix A

### Guide for Assessing Learning Outcomes – 2005-06 Bachelor of Landscape Architecture

#### 1. Identify and characterize the complex nature of problems and questions associated with human/landscape interactions across a broad range of scales.

<i>Emerging</i>		<i>Developing</i>			<i>Mastery</i>	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Identifies problem or question in a simplistic way.			Clearly identifies and characterizes the problem or question as assigned.			
Fails to recognize the multi-dimensional nature of problems or questions.		Recognizes the complexity of problems and questions but fails to fully integrate the multiple dimensions.				Clearly identifies and characterizes the complexity of the problem or question and fully understands the inter-relationships between the many dimensions of the problem/question.

#### 2. Articulate an understanding of identified problems and questions within the theoretical and historical context of the profession of landscape architecture.

<i>Emerging</i>		<i>Developing</i>			<i>Mastery</i>	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Lacks a thorough understanding of the theoretical basis of landscape architectural design and planning.			Applies an appropriate basic theoretical framework to the design/problem solving process or method of inquiry.			Demonstrates a full understanding of the multiple theoretical dimensions of the identified problem or question.
			Has a basic understanding of the historical context of the profession as it relates to the problem or question at hand.			Clearly understands historical precedents of the profession as they relate to the problem or question at hand.

**3. Identify appropriate methods of design inquiry and problem solving processes to produce creative solutions to identified problems and questions.**

<i>Emerging</i>		<i>Developing</i>			<i>Mastery</i>	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

<p>Demonstrates limited understanding of design process.</p> <p>Identifies inappropriate process for problem or question at hand.</p>	<p>Identifies and implements appropriate design process.</p>	<p>Understands the full range of design/problem solving processes and methods of design inquiry used within the profession of landscape architecture and has identified and justified an appropriate process for the problem or question at hand.</p> <p>Clearly understands the limitations of the profession and has demonstrated the ability to work in a collaborative interdisciplinary setting.</p>
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**4. Identify, collect, and analyze necessary information using appropriate technologies and analytical techniques as they relate to the identified problem or question.**

<i>Emerging</i>		<i>Developing</i>			<i>Mastery</i>	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

<p>Demonstrates limited understanding of appropriate technologies and analytical techniques.</p> <p>Identifies and collects inappropriate or unnecessary information.</p>	<p>Demonstrates ability to identify, collect, and analyze necessary information.</p>	<p>Demonstrates a full understanding of the analytical techniques and technologies used in the profession of landscape architecture and planning and applies appropriate procedures using a complete set of information.</p>
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**5. Explore and critically analyze alternative design/planning solutions and strategies to the identified problem or question.**

<i>Emerging</i>		<i>Developing</i>		<i>Mastery</i>		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

<p>Presents only one solution or strategy.</p>	<p>Presents multiple solutions and strategies and is able to articulate the benefits and costs of each.</p>	<p>Presents a full range of problem solutions or design inquiry findings and provides a critical analysis in a clear and thorough way.</p> <p>Clearly addresses the social and environmental impacts, (both negative and positive) of the alternative solutions or strategies on the project users specifically, and on society generally.</p>
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**6. Justify and defend the proposed design/planning solution within the context of aesthetic, social, political, economic, and environmental conditions.**

<i>Emerging</i>		<i>Developing</i>		<i>Mastery</i>		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

<p>Justifies the solution or strategy based on its success in meeting programmatic requirements.</p>	<p>Justifies and defends the solution within the context of aesthetic, social, political, economic and environmental conditions.</p>	<p>Effectively utilizes the design/planning process to integrate information and knowledge in a way that clearly justifies the solution.</p> <p>Objectively defends the solution within the context of aesthetic, social, political, economic and environmental conditions.</p> <p>Demonstrates ability to draw a distinction between the art and science of design.</p>
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**7. Communicate the entire problem solving process or method of inquiry in written, oral, and graphic ways using appropriate media.**

<i>Emerging</i>		<i>Developing</i>		<i>Mastery</i>
1	2	3	4	5
				6
				7

<p>Communicates the design/planning solution or strategy but fails to effectively explain the design process that led to the solution.</p>	<p>Communicates the design/planning process and the selected solution or strategy using written, graphic, and verbal communication techniques.</p> <p>Uses communications techniques that are most comfortable rather than most effective.</p>	<p>Effectively communicates the complete design/planning process and the selected solution or strategy using written, graphic, and verbal communication techniques that are appropriate to the setting and the audience.</p> <p>Prepares and presents graphic materials that can stand on their own to communicate the process as well the solution or strategy.</p> <p>Demonstrates advanced skills with a range of multimedia communications technologies.</p>
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