

UNDERGRADUATE/ FIRST PROFESSIONAL DEGREE/GRADUATE PROGRAM ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES - INVENTORY OF SPECIALIZED AND PROGRAM ACCREDITATION

E1-B

Program and degree(s) offered: Bachelor of Landscape Architecture Program assessed in <i>this</i> report: Bachelor of Landscape Architecture College: CELS Department Chair: Interim chair: Rebecca Brown; Program Director: Jane Buxton Form completed by: Jane Buxton Academic Reporting Year: May 2024	Curriculum map attached: X Yes; please note any changes in outcomes since the last report: A few notes: We had an accreditation visit in the fall of 2023 after 2 extension – one scheduled by the accreditation board (Covid) and the other at the request of the CELS Dean. Our next accreditation visit is schedule for the fall of 2026. Based on this schedule and our recent LAAB accreditation visit, our outcomes continue to meet LAAB accreditation standards. During this summer (2024) 3 of our faculty members will work to revise and update the curriculum and student learning outcomes. This will result in different curriculum mapping and outcomes in the Academic Reporting Year of May 2025. <input type="checkbox"/> No; please explain:
URL for published learning outcomes (complete this URL for the program website where outcomes are published): https://web.uri.edu/lar/	

List professional, specialized, state, or programmatic accreditations currently held by the institution (by agency or program name)	Date of most recent accreditation action for each listed agency	List key issues for continuing accreditation identified in most recent accreditation action letter or report (If none at this time, indicate <u>N/A.</u>)	List key performance indicators (KPI's) required by agency or selected by program (licensure, board, or bar pass rates; employment rates, etc.)*	List the date and nature of next scheduled review
Landscape Architecture Accreditation Board (LAAB) granted reaccreditation to the BLA program at the University of Rhode Island after a review conducted in October 2023. The BLA received a 3-year reaccreditation that will end in the fall of 2026. The shortened period of	Accreditation visit and report: October 1-4, 2023	The visiting team report included the following RECOMMENDATIONS affecting accreditation: 1. Develop and establish an assessment process and define benchmarks for assessing and advancing the program toward meeting state program goals (Standard B2-3). 2. With the financial and administrative support of the President, Provost, and Dean, complete a long-range planning process that will position the curriculum and program in novel ways to fully	Knowledge – Technical and Design presented in assignments and indicated in portfolios. Problem Solving – Process, Service Learning, Design Concepts, Master Plans and Creativity produced through finished projects, documents and drawings. Professional Skills – Construction documentation, business planning, resumes	Interim report is due 12/25. The next LAAB visit will be in Fall 2026.

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<p>reaccreditation was due to the previously shortened interval based on the postponement of the LAAB visit first due to Covid, then at the request of the CELS Dean. After the Fall 2026 accreditation visit, we will be back on the regular visit interval timeline.</p>		<p>participate in the opportunities afforded by being in CELS of a land-grant institution which has substantial collaborative opportunities to think big and progressively about 21st century challenges facing higher education and the State of Rhode Island (Standard D1-3).</p> <p>3. The professional program's Program Disclosure information needs to be complete and accessible with a single-click from the program's main website (Standard E1-2).</p> <p>4. Develop more formal and action-oriented review and evaluation of curricular and course activities and outcomes, including and formally documenting items for improvement (Standard H1-4)</p> <p>5. Include adjunct and part-time faculty in the professional program's curriculum evaluation and development in a coordinated and organized manner as they are integral to the success of the BLA program (Standard A3).</p> <p>6. Develop and implement a systematic evaluation process for all faculty addressing their development, teaching effectiveness and cultural competency (Standard B7).</p> <p><u>Note:</u> CELS has provided summer 2024 re-contracting for the three Landscape Architecture faculty to work on items 1, 2, 3 and 6. Item 3 has been resolved. Item 5 may be outdated as the program is not anticipated to have part time or adjunct faculty in the future. The program director is responsible for submitting an interim report to the LAAB providing evidence of progress towards these goals by December 2025.</p>	<p>and writing are indicated through examples posted in final portfolios, reports and reviews.</p> <p>Communication/Graphic Skills – CAD, GIS, SketchUp, etc., hand graphics and public speaking. The latter is not included in the portfolio review but is noted in projects from sophomore to senior year including service projects conducted for public clients and NGOs. Graphic communication is displayed through individual and group projects. All students are expected to exhibit professional presentation skills.</p> <p>Ethical Principles – environmental values, service learning, public engagement, teamwork and knowledge of international practices are values students are exposed to and develop.</p> <p>Personal Growth/Development – reflection in class and diverse experiences here and abroad. Students write about experiences in studios in their reflections and in upper-level studio and practice classes. Readiness for professional practice is exhibited by graduating students. Post-graduation employment is a critical measure of the success of student learning, skill building and career preparation. Jobs are critical and our students are hired for jobs in the professional throughout New England and around the nation.</p>	
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*Recent results of key performance indicators are requested on page 2.

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S-Series

LICENSURE PASSAGE AND JOB PLACEMENT RATES						
		2 Years Prior	1 Year Prior	Most Recent Year	Goal This Year	Goal 2 Years Forward
State Licensure Passage Rates *						
1	LARE is the licensing exam. To become licensed, candidates must have 2 years professional experience, be graduates of an accredited LAR program, and pass the licensing exam. (see note of explanation "a" below).	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2						
3						
4						
5						
National Licensure Passage Rates *						
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
Job Placement Rates **						
1	BLA Degree Received (see note of explanation "b" below)	2021 16 grads	2022 15 grads	2023 12 grads	2024 17 grads	2025 20 grads
2	LA Design firms	3	3	2	3	6
3	Multidisciplinary firms	6	6	5	2	6
4	Design-Build	3	2	1	1	3
4	Horticulture/Botanical Gardens					
5	Grad School	1	2	1	3	3
6	travel				3	
7	Did not report	3	2	3	5	2
<p>* For each licensure exam, give the name of the exam above along with the number of students for whom scores are available and the total number of students eligible to take the examination (e.g. National Podiatric Examination, 12/14). In following columns, report the passage rates for students for whom scores are available, along with the institution's goals for succeeding years.</p> <p>** For each major for which the institution tracks job placement rates, list the degree and major, and the time period following graduation for which the institution is reporting placement success (e.g., Mechanical Engineer, B.S., six months). In the following columns, report the percent of graduates who have jobs in their fields within the specified time.</p>						

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Institutional Notes of Explanation	
a	BLA – Landscape Architecture: assessed via Landscape Architecture Licensing Exam – Results not available
b	LAR Dept. surveys students one year after graduation to learn how many students are employed in the profession and where
c	
d	
e	

Please provide a summary update and/or highlights about recent assessment activity which has impacted student learning in your program since the last report (2 years):

Background

The 126-credit Landscape Architecture curriculum is highly structured. In addition to satisfying the university's general education requirements the four-year curriculum includes seven design studios, two construction studios and classes in digital technology, plant sciences and community planning. While not required, summer internships are recommended for all students. The majority of students selecting the major and entering as freshmen graduate within four years, whereas those transferring into Landscape Architecture from other programs or from within the university may require an additional year to complete requirements.

The following is a summary of recent Items of note:

1.) **ENHANCE STUDENTS LEARNING THROUGH EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING.** The Landscape Architecture Department has historically worked to enhance student learning and success through studios and classes that build student skills, internships that provide experiential learning opportunities and an environment that supports creative experimentation and personal growth. We have strived to expand the experiential learning of our students. Two studios to note:

LAR 444 Sustainable Design Studio is an advanced design studio in which senior landscape architecture students engage large and complex sites working with community partners to look systemically at a site or series of sites to develop regenerative design principles and landscape plans that may help stakeholders expand their ideas about how to approach the landscape in question. This studio focuses on concepts of systems thinking, nature-based solutions, social justice, landscape infrastructure and community building. Students work through an understanding of the site at many different scales and use a variety of analysis techniques from experiential observation to analytical mapping. Students engage city planners, developers, and community stakeholders throughout the design process. The project culminates with a presentation to community stakeholders and landscape professionals. This past year the studio focused on the entirety of the Seekonk Shore in East Providence (From South Quay to Bishop Point) and worked with the East Providence Waterfront Commission and the City Planning Department.

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LAR 445 is a capstone class that for the past seven years has worked on projects with 3 other capstone classes: Marine Affairs, Environmental and Resource Economics and Ocean Engineering. The classes come together at key moments to share information and receive feedback. The students benefit as they learn about each of the other disciplines and approaches to problem solving. The projects are sponsored by RI Sea Grant and the Coastal Resources Center.

Student learning is assessed in several ways in these studios:

- Students receive on-going desk critiques by faculty and visiting critics, providing an iterative learning and assessment process.
- Students receive feedback from professionals and townspeople in midterm and final presentations. This feedback is a valuable assessment related to each student's semester work.
- As an additional evaluation, at the end of the semester, students are given written reflection assignments and reports to prepare.

2.) PROFESSIONAL ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING IN LAR – As a professional program, students are given opportunities to learn what it is like to perform and be critiqued as a professional. Through service-learning, faculty lead the studios in which public clients from around the state receive planning and design assistance focused on complex problems. Students follow a design process, evaluating existing conditions, learning about history and local culture, and developing needs statements and design programs.

This type of feedback is a credible and useful assessment of student learning in the key performance indicators: knowledge, problem solving, professional skills, communication/graphics skills, ethical principles and personal growth.

3.) PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT – We have two formal portfolio reviews in our program. The first is a portfolio assessment performed in April of sophomore year. Following a successful review of the sophomore portfolio, students are permitted to move into the upper divisions in the next semester. There is a second portfolio review in the last semester of senior year. The senior portfolio is required to be of professional quality and is evaluated first by outside professionals and afterwards reviewed by the faculty. The department uses the information from the assessors to make changes in the curriculum. Not only can the changes be related to graphics and technology, but they may also reflect new topics employers will appreciate. Current topics include, increasing urbanization and open space needs, sea level rise, sustainability, resilience, diversity, social equity and environmental justice.

4.) SHOWCASE OF STUDENT WORK - To get students ready for their career, the department hosts in-person and remote student showcases. These events are attended by alumni and employers who are interested in the program and its students (for jobs and internships). In spring 2021, due to COVID, the student chapter of ASLA planned a virtual event with the student work (and the students) organized in different virtual ro

5.) THE URI LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE LECTURE SERIES has been a mainstay of the program for 31 years and addresses important issues of the time. For example, one of the lectures in 2022-2023 had 6 speakers, with a range of topics that included Art Installations and Climate Change, The Art of Equitable

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Communications, and Designing the Dynamic Landscape. In the fall of 2023, there were 3 speakers in a lecture series with the topic of Resilience and Remediation. This lecture series continues to have a profound effect on student learning and education of our department. Students can have dinner and/or interact with the lecturers. In some cases, students who have taken the initiative to present themselves as future professionals have obtained interesting internships and jobs.

6.) **INTERNSHIPS** – Internships are optional but recommended. They are part of their experiential learning (LAR 477) and are a supporting elective. Internships provide an additional avenue of assessment. To get credit, students prepare a final report and a presentation which is given to the faculty and their classmates. Their employer also writes a short assessment of their work and skills.

7.) **MINIMUM GPA** – The program also uses student GPA as an assessment of how effective the curriculum helps students achieve the learning objectives. Landscape architecture students must maintain a 2.5 GPA. If a student drops below that standard, they work with their advisor and are given one semester to improve their standing to stay in the program. In addition, a minimum of a 2.0 “C” must be obtained in all LAR classes, or the student is required to retake the class.

8.) **JOBS** – An important measure of success in our BLA program is the rate of success in finding a job or a graduate school. Our department offers students many opportunities to interact with potential employers - at public studio presentations, with professional critics, during showcases of work, at the lecture series and during internships. Our program has a strong reputation in the industry and the numbers from the last 2 years ('22 & '23) confirm this. Of our graduating seniors, 67% were hired by interdisciplinary firms, design firms or design build companies. We have noticed a recent shift in that our graduates are being picked up by large interdisciplinary firms that address complex issues, often international in scope. Even though the job market is doing very well currently, we have had 3 students attend graduate school in the last 2 years. All these numbers indicate that the students are receiving the education that the industry demands.