

**AGENDA**  
**CELS FACULTY AND PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEETING**

Wednesday, September 2, 2020

Webex Virtual Meeting

11:00AM

- 1) **Call to Order** (Dean Kirby)
- 2) **Approval of the Minutes** of the May 5, 2020 CELS Faculty and Professional Staff Meeting (Dean Kirby)
  - Text available at: <http://web.uri.edu/celsgov/meetings-minutes/>
- 3) **Announcements** (Dean Kirby and the Associate Deans)
  - a. The complex preparations and delivery of the Fall 2020 Semester
  - b. Report from Associate Dean Sartini
  - c. Report from Associate Dean Wilga
  - d. Report from Associate Dean Sheely
  - b. Other announcements
- 4) **Reports of Standing Committees**
  - a. Curriculum Committee (Prof. Rebecca Brown) --- Announcements about changes in curriculum process
  - b. Research Committee (Prof. Niall Howlett) --- Nothing to report
  - c. Extension and Outreach Committee (Kate Venturini)
  - d. Space Committee (Prof. Dawn Cardace)
  - e. Commencement Committee (Prof. Trandafir) --- Nothing to report
  - f. Bylaws and Review Committee (Prof. Katherine Petersson) --- Nothing to report
  - g. Diversity Committee (Prof. Nelle Couret)
  - h. Scholastic Standing Committee (Asst Dean Kim Anderson) --- Nothing to report
- 5) **Old Business**
  - a. Discussion and vote on proposal by the Department of Landscape Architecture to rejoin CELS (See support Materials in the Appendix). The seconded motion recommended by an *ad hoc* study committee to readmit LAR into CELS is as follows:

*"to reinstate LAR to CELS as of July 1, 2021."*
- 6) **New Business**
  - a. Introduction of new CELS Faculty Members (Dean Kirby)
  - b. CELS Excellence Awards
- 7) **Adjournment**

## **Recommendations to CELS faculty regarding LAR's proposed return to CELS**

1. If LAR returns to CELS, it should be admitted as a department to facilitate the success of the undergraduate program in landscape architecture, which is recognized as valuable. We suggest that LAR become part of Unit 1, its previous administrative home.
  
2. If LAR returns to CELS, a strategic planning committee should be formed to identify a 5 to 10-year plan for growth of the department and its integration across CELS. The committee should be given resources to conduct strategic planning, perform market analysis, and compensate faculty for their time. Committee members should be drawn from relevant CELS departments (e.g., MAF, NRS, FAVS, PLS, LAR) and coordinated by a facilitator. Examples of specific issues to be addressed include the following:
  - a. Strategies for coordination among all departments for hiring, curriculum development, etc. related to planning and design, including creation of new faculty positions as current faculty phase out
  - b. Leveraging coastal and environmental planning/design capacity of LAR and Community Planning (CPL) across CELS
  - c. Opportunities to create graduate level planning/design programs within CELS (e.g., through Accelerated BLA to MESM (ABM), certificates, or other graduate degrees)
  - d. Approaches to balance accreditation demands on LAR faculty with any new graduate-level teaching and research responsibilities (e.g., designating courses taught in other CELS departments as meeting LAR accreditation requirements).
  - e. Management of LAR programs (Geography minor, proposed ABM) and CELS programs that draw on expertise from LAR faculty (MESM Environmental Planning and Design track; Graduate Certificate in Planning; Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems (SAFS))

**These recommendations are provided by the following CELS faculty:** Austin Becker, Art Gold, Marta Gomez-Chiarri, Brian Savage and John Taylor with participation by Will Green and facilitation by Debby Sheely

## **Landscape Architecture and the College of the Environment and Life Sciences, a discussion of the benefits of joining (8/20/2020)**

The profession of landscape architecture is situated at the intersection of environment, technology and culture. As a small department dedicated to providing individual attention to students, interdisciplinary problem solving and community outreach, the University of Rhode Island Landscape Architecture Department is uniquely positioned to prepare a diverse community of students to address complex design challenges of our time.

(See page 2 for a list of acronyms used in this document.)

### **1. What LAR brings to the College of the Environment and Life Sciences:**

- An accredited and award-winning Bachelor of Landscape Architecture program (BLA) program – This brings an accredited design program to the college that averages 60 students and graduates 16.6 students per year (10 years). Its students get jobs and win design and service awards. The degree is also required for licensure in all fifty states.
- Graduate and Undergraduate Education – LAR administers the graduate Certificate in Community Planning (22 students have completed the certificate since 2015). CPL classes are taken by graduate and undergraduate students from across campus. The EPD track of MESM includes LAR and CPL classes in its accepted class listing. The department also offers minors in CPL and LAR.
- Interdisciplinary Collaboration – For more than thirty years, studios and individual faculty have collaborated with cities, towns, faculty and departments, such as ART, ENRE, Marine Affairs, Ocean Engineering, Resource Economics, RI Sea grant; RI DEM, CRMC, and other agencies.
- Service-learning and Visualization capabilities – LAR brings a proven track record of successful service learning projects where students engage communities and stakeholders, run workshops and make public presentations around the state. For these interdisciplinary studios, students create design concepts and graphic visualizations focused on topics such as sustainable design and coastal resilience, ecological and environmental planning, urban design and green infrastructure.
- The LAR Lecture Series
- A strong alumni network
- An engaged faculty and student body

Anticipating a move to the College of the Environment and Life Sciences, LAR faculty are eager to collaborate with CELS to reenvision Landscape Architecture for graduate education, improved problem-solving capabilities, collaboration, research and international service.

### **2. What LAR can become in the College of the Environment and Life Sciences:**

- Graduate Education: LAR would like to develop a graduate degree (ABM/MESM or MLA), initiate a Certificate in Visualization Technology, and revise the EPD track in MESM.
- Increased Opportunities to Collaborate: LAR faculty and students seek to collaborate with individuals and participate in classes in departments and programs that include: ENRE, MAF, MESM, NRS, and PLS, SAFS. Potential avenues for collaboration include: interdisciplinary classes, guest lectures, research proposals, graduate certificates, and future international service projects to support the teaching, research, extension/outreach, and service missions of the college.
- Service-learning and Visualization capabilities for CELS – LAR anticipates collaborating with individuals and departments in CELS to enable service learning and visualization strategies for public agencies, local communities and international partners.

- Design in CELS – LAR could be a design unit within the College offering integrative design studios focused on sustainable design, coastal resilience and design for healthy communities. CELS student could have opportunities to learn and develop rudimentary skills in design through studio classes focused on CELS-relevant topics. Additional classes could be taught during the Summer and J Terms.

#### ACRONYMS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT

ABM - Accelerated Bachelor to Master's Program

CELS – College of the Environment and Life Sciences

CPL – Community Planning

CRMC – Coastal Resources Management Council

ENRE – Department of Environmental and Natural Resource Economics

EPD – Environmental Planning and Design LAR – Department of Landscape Architecture MAF – Department of Marine Affairs

MESM – Master of Environmental Science and Management

MLA – Master of Landscape Architecture

NRS – Department of Natural Resources Science

PLS – Department of Plant Sciences and Entomology

RI DEM – Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management

SAFS – Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems program

#### Additional Information for CELS Faculty

(The items addressed below were suggested by a member of the CELS/LAR planning committee. Answers are provided to help inform the vote by CELS faculty on LAR's proposal to rejoin CELS.)

1) Please say more about what LAR would bring to CELS today and what it envisions building with CELS in the future.

What we will bring into CELS now is based upon our current faculty and commitment to educating professional-ready graduates by delivering an accredited BLA program. As to the future, we know that LAR needs to be adaptable, collaborative and engaged in research. Currently, studios and presentations focus on the coast and climate change, on cities and green infrastructure, and on projects that may be local, regional and/or international. As for specifics, it is important to note that an accredited degree is the only type of landscape architecture degree that will attract students wanting to practice as landscape architects, whether as professional designers, public sector professionals or academics. It is assumed that most new faculty like Jane Buxton, will possess PhD's and help guide the department based upon credentials, interests and skills. One certainty is that when new individuals are considered for the department, preferences will be driven by who can best help the department to achieve its mission.

2) Please explain what a "studio" is and how it differs from a regular course.

The studio environment in design is different at different institutions; however, there is usually lecture, readings and projects, which are worked on individually (early years) and often in groups during junior and senior years. The same can be said for graduate education in landscape architecture. What makes a studio especially challenging occurs when service-learning is part of the studio and projects are conducted for clients/communities. In those studios not only is learning occurring through lecture and reading, but students research topics and learn by interacting directly with sites and situations with clients and stakeholders. Consultants are also brought into the studio to lecture, and critique. This accelerates

student learning and often leads to more meaningful outcomes. To run studios for public clients requires considerable out of class time for students and for faculty who are responsible for direction and coordination of all moving parts. This is quite challenging when non-majors are enrolled in these classes. Non-majors typically lack design skills, but do bring a range of valuable skills and maturity to studios that contribute to the quality of outcomes and interactions. Thus, students learn about design and the process, as well as the importance of collaboration between disciplines.

3) Please discuss the Sea Grant capstone course that has been offered in concert with OCE, MAF, and ENRE.

For a number of years, a senior capstone class LAR 445 has been working on climate related PROJECTS and issues for RI Sea Grant that has interacted with faculty and students from MAF, OCE and ENRE in addition to others such as the CRC and RICRMC. While the classes are not

share information and present their work.

4) Please describe the jobs that BLA graduates have gotten in recent years.

Jobs for graduates - The Bachelor of Landscape Architecture (BLA) program at URI has a long tradition of preparing students for careers in the profession. Many offices around the region and nation hire our graduating BLA's. Out of 16 BLA graduates in 2019, eight are in top design firms in New York, Philadelphia, Newport, Providence, Boston, and in Raleigh Durham, NC, four found jobs in landscape construction, one works in a planning office in MA and another went to RISD for a graduate degree in architecture. Two were not immediately working in the profession

5) Please describe the LAR lecture series.

LAR LECTURE SERIES - Begun in the spring 1993, the lecture series has run continuously since that time. Its early focus was on local and regional designers and expanded to include international and national leaders in design and planning. A.E. Bye, Ian McHarg, Laurie Olin, Martha Schwartz and Kate Orff, and Mario Schjetnan are just a few of the people who have visited, lectured and interacted with our students. Thematically the series has focused on sustainability, coastal resilience, women leaders and this year's series will bring individuals and teams to address issues of Activism, Social Equity and Environmental Justice. The series is attended by LAR students, faculty, alumni, members of the community and practitioners.

6) Provide some examples of visualization capabilities.

Landscape Architecture is a visual design profession and its students learn to problem-solve and express their ideas graphically making use of PhotoShop and Illustrator, ACAD, 3d-modeling software, GIS, and handwork. The process they follow is the same that professionals use, when developing concepts and presenting to clients, and the department encourages students to experiment with new programs. Students also design T-shirts and holiday cards (Lindsey Corse '21), had her holiday card selected for use by President Dooley in 2019. They have also worked for the Cooperative Extension, assisted campus planning and individual faculty needing graphics or model building. Student work has won numerous awards for designs and graphic presentations including APA awards for studio projects for Galilee, the Saugatucket River, and most recently for the Henderson Bridge Seekonk River Corridor (January 2020). Individual students have had work selected for RIASLA awards and one student is selected each year as a national Olmsted Scholar.

7) Please describe the expertise of LAR faculty.

FACULTY excluding per-course instructors.

- Farhad Atash, has a PhD in Urban Planning and Policy Development from Rutgers University. He teaches CPL 410/501, CPL 450, CPL 538, CPL/GEG 202 and LAR 201 urban design. He is currently working on a funded research project with Dr. Chris Hunter in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering. He coordinates the URI Minor in Community Planning and Program Director for the Graduate Certificate in Community Planning.
- Jane Buxton, PhD, who joined the department in September 2019 has a PhD in regional planning and expertise in green infrastructure planning and design; climate change communication; and cultural landscapes. Within the last year she had 2 articles published and was scheduled to present at the March 2020 Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture (CELA) conference. Her fall class, LAR 350, is part of the Sustainability minor at URI and draws students from all disciplines.
- William Gordon, PhD teaches classes in three course codes: CPL, GEG and lar. His classes attract students from across the campus. Bill has been active in campus governance.
- Will Green, Chair is active in CELA and has been responsible for planning and raising funds for the LAR Lecture Series for 27 years. Support has been widespread and included the Department of ART, URI Library, College of the Environment and Life Sciences, Arts and Sciences, RIASLA, RI Sea Grant and Bartlett Tree Experts. Service Learning studios and sustainability and resilience are the topics he presents at conferences.
- Richard Sheridan has advanced degrees in landscape architecture and planning. He teaches upper level design classes including a CAPSTONE project where students integrate knowledge with Ocean Engineering, Resource Economics and Marine Affairs undergraduate students working on the same project. LAR 445 is also a studio that welcomes non-major graduate students from MESM, MAF, and international universities looking to apply design to a capstone project. His undergraduate design studios have among other things dealt with repair ecology in coastal and riparian areas, design of complete streets in urban areas and park design.

8) Please discuss why a prospective student might come to URI as opposed to going to some other LAR program.

Student enrollments - URI Landscape Architecture is recognized for its nuts and bolts approach to design. We have many loyal alumni who have gone to graduate schools, practiced as landscape architects and are leaders in local and regional firms. They have shared with us the main reasons for hiring URI BLA's and it is usually that our students have the skills to step in immediately and knowledge of sustainability, resilience and larger scale problem solving. URI is one of four undergraduate programs in New England and it attracts students from Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont, all states without accredited LAR programs; and from MA, CT, NY, NJ and PA. Landscape Architecture is also a small program on a nice campus in a great location.