



*Advocating, advancing, and evaluating quality education in Landscape Architecture*

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August 6, 2024

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Ben Shirtcliff

Department Head and Visiting Associate Professor

Department of Landscape Architecture

School of Architecture & Environment

College of Design

University of Oregon

Eugene, OR 97403

Dear Professor Shirtcliff,

The Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board (LAAB) at its July 10, 2024, meeting granted accreditation for a period of six (6) years to the course of study leading to the professional MLA degree at University of Oregon. This status is subject to review of an interim report to be submitted by June 1, 2026, together with annual reports and maintenance of good standing.

The interim report should provide an update, with documentation demonstrating compliance, when necessary, on each Recommendation Affecting Accreditation (RAA) from this Final Action Letter in order to demonstrate compliance, or steps towards compliance, with the respective standard. In accordance with LAAB policy, programs have up to two years to resolve their RAA(s). Upon receipt of the two-year Interim Report, the LAAB will accept that the RAA(s) have been addressed or, if not, the program will be given two more years to resolve the issues. A second Interim Report will be due to the LAAB on or before four years from the receipt of this Accreditation Action Letter. If the RAA(s) are not successfully resolved or, in the case of longer-term issues, substantial and verifiable progress has not been made at that time (after four years from this Final Action Letter) then the program may be moved to provisional status, it may be suspended, or in some cases the program's accreditation may be revoked.

Accreditation is awarded on a time-certain basis. As stated in the LAAB Accreditation Procedures (page 16), the grant of accreditation will begin from the originally scheduled review date regardless of any rescheduling of the program's site visit. Therefore, the six-year period of accreditation ends June 30, 2029 due to the one year delayed visit. Accordingly, the MLA program at University of Oregon is next scheduled for a review during the spring of 2029.

In making its decision, LAAB considered the program's self-evaluation report, the visiting team's report, and the program's response to the report.

Enclosed is a list of recommendations affecting accreditation (to be responded to in the interim report via the process laid out above) and an Interim Reporting template. This list was developed by LAAB from the materials reviewed during the meeting.

On behalf of the visiting team, I would like to thank you for the hospitality extended to them by the faculty, staff, and students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Roxi J. Thoren". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'R' and 'T'.

Roxi Thoren, ASLA, FCELA  
LAAB Chair

Enclosure

cc: John Karl Scholz, Ph.D., President

**University of Oregon  
MLA Program  
LAAB Meeting  
July 10, 2024**

**SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Recommendations Affecting Accreditation**

1. Prioritize hiring a full-time, tenure-track or tenured program administrator (Standard 2).
2. Prioritize hiring full-time, tenure-track faculty with landscape architecture degrees in order to maintain compliance with LAAB minimum standards (Standard 2).
3. Integrate more landform, grading, and site engineering practices into the curriculum in order to meet expectations for professional competency (Standard 3m).
4. Implement and document regular evaluation processes for the program curriculum (Standard 3m).
5. Update and standardize all information related to student advising (Standard 4m).
6. The proportion of faculty who have time allotted to service (tenure track faculty) is currently too low to sustain the service needs of the Department. One tenure-track hire last academic year and an additional one this year is beginning to address this imbalance, but the issue needs continued attention (Standard 5).
7. Formalize annual assessments of all faculty, including part time, temporary instructors, and graduate student instructors, in order to improve individual faculty performance and growth as well the performance and growth of the overall Department (Standard 5).
8. Work with University, College, and School administration to identify and address ongoing issues related to precariously high rates of faculty turnover (Standard 5).
9. Work with the College's development team and College leadership to better track alumni and their accomplishments (Standard 6).

**Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board**

**Interim Report**

**Submitted By:**

**Submission Date:**

**Section 1.**

**Name of Institution:**

**Name of Department:**

**Name of Program:**

**Date of Decision Letter:**

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**Section 2.**

**Recommendation Affecting Accreditation:** (Copy/paste verbatim the Recommendation Affecting Accreditation identified in the Decision Letter that is the subject of this Report and attach the Decision Letter. If Decision Letter identified more than one (1) Recommendation Affecting Accreditation, complete an Interim Report for each Recommendation.)

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**Section 3.**

**Action Taken by Program:** (Describe the action taken by the Program to address the Recommendation Affecting Accreditation identified in Section 2 of this Report. Attach any appropriate documentation that supports the action taken by the Program)

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**Section 4.**

**Prior Action Taken by Program:** (If applicable, attach any prior Interim Report related to the Recommendation Affecting Accreditation described in Section 2 of this Report)