

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE, MS

The study of landscape architecture investigates how designers, planners, and restoration and preservation specialists create, conserve, and manage built and natural spaces and outdoor-indoor relationships to support thriving human cultures and communities, and ensure the survival of Earth's complex natural systems. We engage the sciences, arts, and humanities to respond to current issues in cultural, environmental, and natural systems stewardship and management; human health and well-being; and community development.

The MSLA degree offers course work providing an understanding of the scholarship and theories which underlie landscape design, preservation, restoration, and management.

Students then use this information to engage in interdisciplinary scholarships in urban, rural, or natural settings, by writing a thesis that contributes to the scholarly foundation of the field of landscape architecture and/or provides information to practitioners engaged in landscape decision-making and stewardship. Our MSLA is not an MLA, which is a professional degree that prepares students to become landscape architects. In contrast, the MSLA, by pushing the boundaries of specialty areas within landscape architecture, prepares students for a host of professions in the private and public sectors.

We currently specialize in two areas: 1) Restoration Ecology and Ecological Design, and 2) **Community-Focused Design**. We welcome applicants with or without previous training in landscape architecture or related design fields. Graduates move into positions in public agencies and private firms specializing in biological/cultural/historical landscape conservation, ecological restoration, and/or community design and planning. Many also enter PhD programs in related fields to continue working in research and education, or in planning, policy, and environmental law.

ADMISSIONS

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Please consult the table below for key information about this degree program's admissions requirements. The program may have more detailed admissions requirements, which can be found below the table or on the program's website.

Graduate admissions is a two-step process between academic programs and the Graduate School. **Applicants must meet the minimum requirements (<https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/>) of the Graduate School as well as the program(s).** Once you have researched the graduate program(s) you are interested in, apply online (<https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/>).

Requirements	Detail
Fall Deadline	October 1
Spring Deadline	The program does not admit in the spring.
Summer Deadline	The program does not admit in the summer.
GRE (Graduate Record Examinations)	Not required

English Proficiency Test Refer to the Graduate School: Minimum Requirements for Admission policy: <https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1241> (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1241/>).

Other Test(s) (e.g., GMAT, MCAT) n/a

Letters of Recommendation Required 3

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. Applications submitted by the deadlines listed above will be considered for limited Department funding.

A bachelor's degree is required of all prospective candidates. The department's Graduate Program Committee screens applicants on the basis of university transcripts for all previous work, three letters of recommendation, samples of creative work or writing, and a letter of intent describing how the student's graduate educational needs can be fulfilled by this program.

FUNDING

FUNDING GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

[The Bursar's Office provides information about tuition and fees associated with being a graduate student. Resources to help you afford graduate study might include assistantships, fellowships, traineeships, and financial aid. Further funding information is available from the Graduate School.](#) Be sure to check with your program for individual policies and restrictions related to funding.

PROGRAM RESOURCES

Financial support for graduate students is available through research and teaching assistantships, and competitive Graduate School and departmental fellowships. Most teaching assistantships are awarded to students who already have professional landscape architectural design training and experience.

REQUIREMENTS

MINIMUM GRADUATE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

Review the Graduate School minimum degree requirements (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/#requirementstext>) and policies (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/#policiestext>), in addition to the program requirements listed below.

MAJOR REQUIREMENTS MODE OF INSTRUCTION

Face to Face	Evening/Weekend	Online	Hybrid	Accelerated
Yes	No	No	No	No

Mode of Instruction Definitions

Accelerated: Accelerated programs are offered at a fast pace that condenses the time to completion. Students typically take enough credits aimed at completing the program in a year or two.

Evening/Weekend: Courses meet on the UW-Madison campus only in evenings and/or on weekends to accommodate typical business schedules. Students have the advantages of face-to-face courses with the flexibility to keep work and other life commitments.

Face-to-Face: Courses typically meet during weekdays on the UW-Madison Campus.

Hybrid: These programs combine face-to-face and online learning formats. Contact the program for more specific information.

Online: These programs are offered 100% online. Some programs may require an on-campus orientation or residency experience, but the courses will be facilitated in an online format.

CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS

Requirement Detail

Minimum 36 credits
Credit Requirement

Minimum 16 credits
Residence Credit Requirement

Minimum 18 credits must be graduate-level coursework. Refer to the Graduate School: Minimum Graduate Coursework (50%) Requirement policy: <https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1244> (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1244/>).

Overall 3.00 GPA required.
Graduate GPA Refer to the Graduate School: Grade Point Average (GPA) Requirement policy: <https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1203> (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1203/>).

Other Grade No other grade requirements.
Requirements

Assessments Students must demonstrate their competency in the theories, methods, applications, and ethics of their chosen specialty within the multidisciplinary field of landscape architecture through the writing and defense of a thesis.
Examinations

Language None.
Requirements

REQUIRED COURSES

Students pursue either a focus area in community-focused design or restoration ecology and ecological design. All students in the MS in Landscape Architecture program complete a common core, while additional courses within their focus area are chosen in consultation with their advisor and advisory committee.

Code	Title	Credits
Common Core		
All students complete the following:		
LAND ARC 710	Theories of Landscape Change	2
LAND ARC 720	Critical Inquiry into Landscape Design Expression	2

LAND ARC 740	Research in Landscape Architecture ¹	3
LAND ARC 940	Graduate Seminar ²	3
LAND ARC 990	Research	6
Focus Area		
Complete an additional two courses within a focus area that are selected by the student and their advisory committee.		6
Supporting Courses		
Complete supporting courses numbered 300 and above, including independent studies, to satisfy minimum credit requirement.		14
Total Credits		36

¹ May substitute a different course in Research Methods if approved by the student's advisor.

² Taken over three semesters for 1 credit each time.

POLICIES

GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICIES

The Graduate School's Academic Policies and Procedures (<https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/>) serve as the official document of record for Graduate School academic and administrative policies and procedures and are updated continuously. Note some policies redirect to entries in the official UW-Madison Policy Library (<https://policy.wisc.edu/>). Programs may set more stringent policies than the Graduate School. Policies set by the academic degree program can be found below.

MAJOR-SPECIFIC POLICIES PRIOR COURSEWORK

Graduate Credits Earned at Other Institutions

With program approval, students are allowed to transfer no more than 9 credits of graduate coursework from other institutions. Coursework earned ten or more years prior to admission to a master's degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

Undergraduate Credits Earned at Other Institutions or UW-Madison

No credits from other institutions or UW-Madison undergraduate degree are allowed to transfer.

Credits Earned as a Professional Student at UW-Madison (Law, Medicine, Pharmacy, and Veterinary careers)

Refer to the Graduate School: Transfer Credits for Prior Coursework (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1216/>) policy.

Credits Earned as a University Special Student at UW-Madison

Refer to the Graduate School: Transfer Credits for Prior Coursework (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1216/>) policy.

PROBATION

Refer to the Graduate School: Probation (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1217/>) policy.

ADVISOR / COMMITTEE

During the course of your graduate program, you will work closely with a Major Professor and a Faculty Advisory Committee. They will offer advice and assistance as you work your way through the program and help you to successfully achieve the two degree requirements listed above.

Details can be found in the Graduate Program Handbook (link in Contact Information).

CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED

15 credit maximum. Refer to the Graduate School: Maximum Credit Loads and Overload Requests (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1228/>) policy.

TIME LIMITS

Refer to the Graduate School: Time Limits (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1221/>) policy.

GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS

These resources may be helpful in addressing your concerns:

- Bias or Hate Reporting (<https://doso.students.wisc.edu/bias-or-hate-reporting/>)
- Graduate Assistantship Policies and Procedures (<https://hr.wisc.edu/policies/gapp/#grievance-procedure>)
- Hostile and Intimidating Behavior Policies and Procedures (<https://hr.wisc.edu/hib/>)
 - Office of the Provost for Faculty and Staff Affairs (<https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/>)
- Employee Assistance (<http://www.eao.wisc.edu/>) (for personal counseling and workplace consultation around communication and conflict involving graduate assistants and other employees, post-doctoral students, faculty and staff)
- Employee Disability Resource Office (<https://employeedisabilities.wisc.edu/>) (for qualified employees or applicants with disabilities to have equal employment opportunities)
- Graduate School (<https://grad.wisc.edu/>) (for informal advice at any level of review and for official appeals of program/departmental or school/college grievance decisions)
- Office of Compliance (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/>) (for class harassment and discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence)
- Office Student Assistance and Support (OSAS) (<https://osas.wisc.edu/>) (for all students to seek grievance assistance and support)
- Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (<https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/>) (for conflicts involving students)
- Ombuds Office for Faculty and Staff (<http://www.ombuds.wisc.edu/>) (for employed graduate students and post-docs, as well as faculty and staff)
- Title IX (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/titleix/>) (for concerns about discrimination)

L&S POLICY FOR GRADUATE STUDENT ACADEMIC APPEALS

Graduate students have the right to appeal an academic decision related to an L&S graduate program if the student believes that the decision is inconsistent with published policy.

Academic decisions that may be appealed include:

- Dismissal from the graduate program
- Failure to pass a qualifying or preliminary examination
- Failure to achieve satisfactory academic progress
- Academic disciplinary action related to failure to meet professional conduct standards

Issues such as the following cannot be appealed using this process:

- A faculty member declining to serve as a graduate student's advisor.
- Decisions regarding the student's disciplinary knowledge, evaluation of the quality of work, or similar judgements. These are the domain of the department faculty.
- Course grades. These can be appealed instead using the L&S Policy for Grade Appeal (<https://kb.wisc.edu/lis/22258/>).
- Incidents of bias or hate, hostile and intimidating behavior (<https://hr.wisc.edu/hib/>), or discrimination (Title IX (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/titleix/>), Office of Compliance (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/eo-complaint/formal-investigations/>)). Direct these to the linked campus offices appropriate for the incident(s).

Appeal Process for Graduate Students

A graduate student wishing to appeal an academic decision must follow the process in the order listed below. Note time limits within each step.

1. The student should first seek informal resolution, if possible, by discussing the concern with their academic advisor, the department's Director of Graduate Studies, and/or the department chair.
2. If the program has an appeal policy listed in their graduate program handbook, the student should follow the policy as written, including adhering to any indicated deadlines. In the absence of a specific departmental process, the chair or designee will be the reviewer and decision maker, and the student should submit a written appeal to the chair within 15 business days of the academic decision. The chair or designee will notify the student in writing of their decision.
3. If the departmental process upholds the original decision, the graduate student may next initiate an appeal to L&S. To do so, the student must submit a written appeal to the L&S Assistant Dean for Graduate Student Academic Affairs within 15 business days of notification of the department's decision.
 - a. To the fullest extent possible, the written appeal should include, in a single document: a clear and concise statement of the academic decision being appealed, any relevant background on what led to the decision, the specific policies involved, the relief sought, any relevant documentation related to the departmental appeal, and the names and titles of any individuals contributing to or involved in the decision.
 - b. The Assistant Dean will work with the Academic Associate Dean of the appropriate division to consider the appeal. They may seek additional information and/or meetings related to the case.
 - c. The Assistant Dean and Academic Associate Dean will provide a written decision within 20 business days.
4. If L&S upholds the original decision, the graduate student may appeal to the Graduate School. More information can be found on their website: Grievances and Appeals (<https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/grievances-and-appeals/>) (see: Graduate School Appeal Process).

OTHER

n/a

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

Take advantage of the Graduate School's professional development resources (<https://grad.wisc.edu/pd/>) to build skills, thrive academically, and launch your career.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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1. Engage critically with the scholarship and theory of landscape architecture.
2. Demonstrate advanced critical thinking and the ability to explore ideas in depth and synthesize information with a high degree of competence.
3. Demonstrate an advanced understanding of landscape spaces, functions, and dynamics, as well as interactions between people and the built and natural environment.
4. Demonstrate a deep understanding of and the ability to critically evaluate the principles, theories, technical skills and recent research findings specific to at least one of the program's focus areas: Restoration Ecology and Ecological Design; and Community-Focused Design.
5. Design and conduct original research, and communicate the results to scholars as well as to practitioners engaged in landscape decision-making and stewardship.
6. Describe and apply principles of ethical and professional conduct.