

The Council Ring



An update from the Department Chair

Greetings from the Department of Landscape Architecture!

I have so many updates to share, that some will need to wait for the next newsletter. The big



news is that the Department has voted unanimously to come together with the UW Department of Urban and Regional Planning to create a NEW “Department of Planning and Landscape Architecture,” to be housed

in the College of Letters and Sciences. We reached this decision after about a year of discussions with alumni, students, and other stakeholders. The Department of Urban and Regional Planning also unanimously approved joining the new department. Still, we have many levels of campus approvals to secure before the new department is official. Stay tuned!

In other news, our BSLA students have always made a good showing at ASLA annual meetings, but this year they were awarded 15 free registrations to ASLA2017 in Los Angeles for showing the most school spirit

during the Alumni Tailgate. A big thank you goes out to the energetic and numerous alumni that participated—especially in leading us in singing Varsity. Please plan on joining us in Los Angeles next fall. We have a title to defend!

If you follow the news in Wisconsin, you may know that licensure is under threat. The department is already working with the WI ASLA chapter to organize a response.

Finally, as new Department Chair, I am eager to hear your stories. Seriously; it’s the most fulfilling part of my job! Call, write, or stop by anytime. And I’ll let you know when I’m in your area.

On, Wisconsin!

Samuel Dennis Jr, PhD, ASLA
Associate Professor and Chair
Department of Landscape Architecture
University of Wisconsin-Madison

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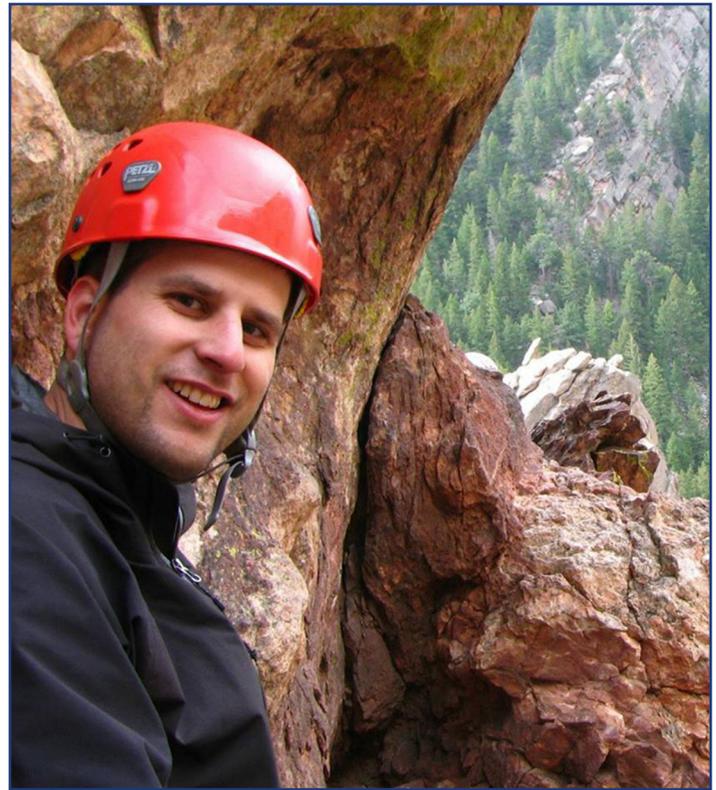


Hello, my name is Travis Flohr.

I am a recently-hired (Jan. 2014) Faculty Associate in the Department of Landscape Architecture. Currently, I teach the regional design studio, and I am developing several new graduate level geodesign courses: the first of which I am piloting this spring. I am also pursuing a PhD at the University of Colorado in Design and Planning, specifically in the sustainability and healthy environments track. After earning my bachelor degree in Landscape Architecture at The Pennsylvania State University, I worked as a registered landscape architect (RLA) in Pennsylvania for six years. My work spanned a range of scales from regional forest conservation to site and land development. Following my professional career, I earned a Masters of Science in Landscape Architecture at The Pennsylvania State University.

As a landscape architect and planner, my research focuses on qualitative and quantitative methods for spatially evaluating performance of landscape architectural designs and urban and regional planning policy. I have broad-based experience teaching and researching green infrastructure and ecosystem service solutions to create healthy, vibrant, artful, sustainable, and resilient landscapes using innovative project-based service learning. As a thought leader in developing and applying geospatial methods, I evaluate landscape design and conduct policy analysis regarding 21st century landscape resiliency, social justice and natural hazard issues. I am an award winning, creative leader with proven strengths in multi-scalar projects, multidisciplinary teams, and innovative curriculum development in the design of resilient landscapes. My work has been presented locally, nationally, and internationally.

More specifically, I am interested in understanding design and policies impacts related to ecosystem services, green infrastructure, and their relationship to social justice and natural hazards. To understand design within these complex social and natural systems, I use qualitative and quantitative research methods, including spatial statistics and modeling. Geodesign provides a framework for my research application towards projects that foster healthy balanced development and social justice across the urban-to-rural transect.



One of my current, ongoing research projects is titled: “Design and Planning in the Wildland-Urban Interface: Effectiveness of County Wildfire Protection Plans.” The issue that this study addresses is the continuing Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) development within high-risk wildfire areas. The purpose of this study is to empirically evaluate the effectiveness of County Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs) in reducing fuel loads and increasing defensible space around structures in the WUI and the socio-economic and demographic variables that predict effective CWPP implementation. The study will use remotely sensed secondary data: pre- and post-CWPPs vegetation patterns and fuel loads within defensible space zones, spatial socio-demographic and socio-economic census data, and spatial built environment variables. The results of this study will be useful in 1) determining the current state of CWPP implementation, and 2) understanding the relationships between income, poverty, unemployment rates, educational attainment, homeownership, secondary homeownership, resident tenure, population density, topography, proximity to recent wildfire events, and CWPP implementation effectiveness.



Recent projects

Emeritus Professor **Bill Tishler** has just completed the manuscript for a book on how barns were constructed. He has also appeared on the “Wisconsin Hometown Stories: Door County” film and another on “Midwestern Barns.” Bill also organized a conference at The Clearing regarding Jens Jensen and his origin in Denmark.

Associate Professor **Janet Gilmore** continues to coordinate one-credit Cultural and Historical Landscape Interpretation and Program Planning classes with the Friends of McCarthy Park, Dane County Parks (planner Chris James, a graduate of our undergraduate design program, and volunteer coordinator Rhea Stangel-Maier), the Ho-Chunk Tribal Historic Preservation Office (Bill Quackenbush), and Amanda DePagter, a graduate of our non-design degree program. In this series of classes, students learn folklore and cultural/historical landscape methods to observe and contribute to real time planning, interpretation, and installations that involve many different user groups as the park accommodates a seasonal round of Ho-Chunk activities for youth education and engagement.

Professionally, Associate Lecturer **Eric Schuchardt** has been busy at SmithGroupJJR, working on campus landscape and green infrastructure master plans for Marquette University, Indiana University (all campuses) and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. In the past year, he won both the WI ASLA Award of Honor (for integrating Iowa’s Scott County landfill into a regional park system) and the WI ASLA Award of Merit (for creating a new downtown park in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin). At the UW, Eric is teaching the Landscape Architecture Seminar (LA 610). His capstone class is working in 14 different communities and taking part in the UniverCity partnership with the City of Monona and the UW’s Department of Engineering, and Department of

Urban and Regional Planning.

After serving for five years, Professor **John Harrington** stepped down as department chair on July 1. During his tenure, the department successfully completed an accreditation review of its professional program, a 10-year program review of all its programs, a successful tenure case (David Bart), and the hiring of a new faculty member (Kristin Thorleifsdottir) and several lecturers. More recently, John has been and still is coordinating the creation of a new Department of Planning and Landscape Architecture with the Department of Urban and Regional Planning. He continues to work with federal and state agencies and several non-profits on the protection and restoration of native communities of the Upper Midwest.

Faculty Associate **Shawn Kelly** represented the American Society of Landscape Architects at the United Nations’ Habitat 3 meeting in Quito, Ecuador, where he spoke about the shortage of potable water worldwide. He is teaching Landscape Architecture Technology II (LA 354) this semester, along with Professional Practice in Landscape Architecture (LA 550) and two independent-study courses.

Assistant Professor **Kristín Thorleifsdóttir** joined the department in Fall 2014 and holds a joint position with the Department Design Studies. Besides her native home, Iceland, she draws on her experience of living and/or working in other countries including the United States, England, Germany, Bulgaria, and Turkey. She has been an active member of the Icelandic Federation of Landscape Architects (FILA). Kristín’s primary interest is in environment and behavior, including community health and wellbeing. Currently she teaches three courses: Person-Environment Interactions (DS 221), Health Promoting Environments Studio (LA 321) and Designing Healthy Communities (LA 699).

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TOP: Wisconsin ASLA Annual Meeting in Union South.



MIDDLE LEFT: Champions! Bowling team of students, alumni and studio instructor, Eric Schuchardt.



MIDDLE RIGHT: Park design with middle-school students from the Bruce Guadalupe Community School in Milwaukee.



BOTTOM: Prof. John Harrington leads the Cloud Forest Studio in Monteverde, Costa Rica.





Graduate students

Ian Santino is looking at the Wisconsin endangered, federally threatened prairie species *Lespedeza leptostachya*. This prairie legume is thought to be dependent on periodic bison grazing, which he is investigating by looking at the effects of grass competition on the growth of the *Lespedeza*.

Lily Mank joined the graduate program this year after completing a bachelor's in Landscape Architecture from the UW in 2015. The focus of her graduate research will be nature interaction.

Andrea Weissgerber is a first year graduate student pursuing a Master of Science in Landscape Architecture with a focus on Restoration Ecology and Ecological Design. She has also been honored as this year's Wisconsin Distinguished Graduate Fellow. Although still exploring possible research projects, Andrea is interested in the restoration and management of Wisconsin prairie and savanna communities. She hopes to find solutions to repair native ecosystems, embolden people's capacity for stewardship, and create ecologically literate communities.

Undergraduates

A senior in the program, **Michelle Britton** is interested in urban design, public art and creating resilient spaces that become iconic destinations for communities. Michelle hopes to become a Landscape Architect at a large, multi-disciplinary firm that strives to be sustainable and socially just, and she wants to work on projects in places all over the world. Her capstone project takes place in her hometown of Rochester, Minnesota, and involves researching Landscape Urbanism theory and how it applies to urban neighborhood revitalization.

For his capstone project, **Eric Koberle** is working on a parks re-programming plan for the Boulder Junction

and Minocqua, Wisconsin, areas, as well as looking at how the non-vehicular regional connectivity between the two can be improved. His professional interests include ecological restoration, park design, and working with natural systems – all stemming from his love of the outdoors and the National Parks system.

Robert Hussey chose a capstone project dealing with a revitalization of a small town's downtown, a regional bike/snowmobile trail system, and ecological restoration/adding recreational opportunities in a marsh. Robert's interests remain pretty wide open, but he would love to end up in a firm where he can get a feel for different types of work and then find his niche. Ideally, his professional endeavours would take him somewhere in or near the mountains out west.

For her capstone project, **Yinuo Yin** (Nora) is working on a trail and park system development project in Lodi, Wisconsin, with Spring Creek Parkway and Wildenberg Wildlife Park as the main focus sites. Nora's interests include urban green spaces and corridors, waterfront parks, and commercial/residential development.

A senior on the BSLA track, **Daniel Beavers** chose a capstone project that focuses on the redevelopment of the downtown core in his hometown of De Pere, Wisconsin, along the Fox River. Daniel's professional interests include public urban design, the unification of indoor and outdoor environments, and sports facility design/master planning.

Mara Redding is a fifth-year senior currently working at FP&M for the Department of Campus Planning and Landscape Architecture. Her interests are in ecological restoration and urban design. After she graduates, Mara would like to work with a bigger firm or the National Parks, on large-scale projects. Her capstone project is a streetscape revitalization project in downtown Milwaukee; she plans to focus on enhancing the industrial culture and history of the site while also increasing storm water management.

Landscape Architects in Action

Danielle Bilot's (BSLA '11) latest project is about distilling a complex problem into something that is easier for the public to understand.

Well, that and food.

"Food is definitely one of my passions," Bilot said. "My number one pet peeve – I won't lie – is when people mess with my food."

Out of that idea came **BumbleFumble.com**, a website aimed at educating the public about the plight of native bees and to provide a guide for the public to design landscapes beneficial for pollinators.

"We see the face of the honey bee on almost everything. But in the U.S. alone, there are over 4,000 native bee species [and] they are very, very different," Bilot said.

Much of the public does not make the distinction between honeybees—which were brought to North America in the 17th century—and native species, such as the bumblebee. Because natives do not make collectable amounts of honey, their contributions as pollinators are often overlooked.

"We should be angry about our food being messed with. We should be angry about very little being done for pollinators ... especially for urban areas."

Bilot has big plans for the future of BumbleFumble but right now, it's about educating people and inspiring change.

"I hope that this works," she said. "I hope that people access [the website] and feel compelled to do something about this as well."



In addition to founding BumbleFumble.com, Danielle Bilot recently delivered a TEDxTalk in Denver and returned to the UW campus to give a guest lecture for Prof. Travis Flohr.



A Student Perspective...

Working with Prof. John Harrington, graduate student Michael Dziennik (left) has implemented a project that explores the feasibility of using Wisconsin native sand barren and dry prairie herbaceous species on the third-floor green roof of Madison's University Square building. The project, serving as Dziennik's master's thesis, incorporates eight different native plant species, including Spiderwort, Prairie Smoke, Gray Goldenrod and Western Sunflower.



Recent graduates

Tara Davenport (PhD, 2014) works for Eco-Resource Consulting, Inc., an ecological consulting firm based in Stoughton, Wisconsin. She focuses primarily on wetlands, doing delineations, vegetation monitoring, permitting, restoration planning, and mitigation. Tara is also involved with prairie and rain garden installations, leading class field trips to restoration sites, and writing land management plans.

Kate Baumann Ferwerda (MS, 2013) works for the Salmon Challis National Forest in Salmon, Idaho, as an invasive species technician. She helps control invasive plants on a landscape scale, using herbicides, biological control agents and other restoration techniques covering 1.8 million acres of public land with the aid of ATVs, river rafts, a pack string, and her own two feet. When Kate is not out and about, she is working on GIS mapping, project NEPA, database management, and public education projects.

Since leaving the UW Landscape Architecture department, **Jason Kokkinos** (MS, 2014) has worked in the ecological restoration department for a contractor of the Chicago Parks. He has also begun a supplementary master's degree at the University of Vermont Plant and Soil Science Department, where he works in the Ecological Design Laboratory, specializing in green stormwater infrastructure in the agricultural landscape. Jason is also a teaching assistant for Ecological Landscape Design and Landscape Design Fundamentals.

Julia Ela (MS, 2012) is currently an account manager for the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation in Washington, DC, for accounts that arise from legal and regulatory actions involving natural resources.

These accounts and projects are all around the country, but lately a large portion of her work has been to help manage projects in the Gulf of Mexico with funds that resulted from the 2010 oil spill.

Robbie Greene (MS, 2012) currently lives in the Northern Mariana Islands, on the small island of Saipan, working as an environmental consultant and contract researcher. He is leading a project funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to map the near-shore coral reef fisheries of the Marianas Archipelago. Robby spends much of his free time spear fishing and surfing those same reefs.

Wade Johnson (MS, 2011), his wife Janelle, their three children, one dog, two parakeets and 12 chickens live on a hobby farm north of Stillwater Minnesota. Wade works for Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and coordinates the evaluation of restoration projects throughout the state. He also serves on the Board of the Carnelian-Marine St. Croix Watershed District and operates a design/build practice, W.A. Johnson Ecological Design LLC.

We would love to hear from you!

Have a new job, or an interesting project you're working on? Let us know! We would be happy to feature it in an upcoming departmental newsletter, or on the Department of Landscape Architecture website, la.wisc.edu.

Email Prof. Sam Dennis at samuel.dennis@wisc.edu for details.

Department of Landscape Architecture
1 Agricultural Hall
1450 Linden Drive
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Madison, WI 53706

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