



BACHELOR OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE LONG-RANGE STRATEGIC PLAN (2022-2027)

BACHELOR OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE PROGRAM



PROCESS

The Bachelor of Landscape Architecture (BLA) Long-range Strategic Plan outlines our vision, purpose, and mission supported by goals, actions, and measures of success to guide and direct program operation, administration, and policy for the next five years. The plan engaged faculty, staff, students, alumni, and professional landscape architects to provide input on overarching goals for the program and to suggest implementation mechanisms and performance measures.

The plan is consistent with the strategic plan for the Department of Planning and Landscape Architecture (PLA) [\[link here\]](#) and reflects the mission and values of the University of Wisconsin–Madison [\[link here\]](#), the College of Letters & Science [\[link here\]](#), and The Wisconsin Idea [\[link here\]](#).

VISION, PURPOSE, AND VALUES

Our **vision** is to educate and inspire landscape architecture students to serve as design leaders and catalysts for significant positive impact on society through the protection and restoration of natural systems and the creation of environmentally responsible, equitable, and inclusive community spaces.

Our **purpose** is to provide an accredited Bachelor of Landscape Architecture degree that emphasizes design and place-making based on an understanding of ecological principles, artistic expression, societal needs, and cultural foundations. We provide students with the technical skills and opportunities to explore their interests in design and planning for healthy living environments and ecosystems, community development, and cultural and natural resource preservation.

As a professional landscape architecture degree program, we are guided by the following core **values**:

1. We empower a teaching, learning, and workplace climate that embraces diversity, equity, and inclusion. We eliminate bias and open access and opportunity for all.
2. We cultivate a supportive culture of collegiality through our interactions and policies.
3. We prepare our students to challenge and advance professional ethics, sustainable design initiatives, and responses to changing ecological and cultural climates.
4. We promote community outreach and service as an integral part of developing future leaders empathetic to societal needs.

MISSION

Our **mission** is to create immersive learning and design experiences that reinforce relationships with communities through scholarship that integrates academic, professional, and community interests. Our learning experiences are grounded in the profession of landscape architecture and designed to include the following core components:

1. Cultivate innovative interdisciplinary approaches to design and problem solving.
2. Provide tailor-made professional development opportunities for each student.
3. Engage everyone with a vibrant learning and design community, where ideas, experiences, and perspectives are supported, nurtured, and developed to their highest levels.
4. Leverage leading-edge design technologies and facilities to advance learning and to secure professional alignment.

STRATEGIC GOAL 01 – ENROLLMENT AND DIVERSITY

INCREASE ENROLLMENT AND DIVERSITY OF STUDENTS IN THE BLA PROGRAM.

BACKGROUND/ASPIRATIONS: The BLA program has had a long-standing enrollment cap of 22 students. Enrollment dropped after the Great Recession (2008-2009) and has recently stabilized at around 15 students in each class. The quality of our students has remained high, and our goal is to maintain our high expectations.

STRATEGIC ACTIONS:

- A. Expand on-campus recruitment.
 - Prepare outreach materials for the BLA program in both print and digital form.
 - Increase participation in annual University and College organized recruitment events.
 - Increase outreach to underrepresented communities and affiliated organizations, POSSE, SOAR, SuccessWorks, Cross-college Advising, student organizations, and other programs on campus.
 - Increase guest faculty, alumni, and student ASLA chapter visits in introductory courses.
 - Provide open houses, studio course visits, webinars, and career events tailored to undecided students.
 - Build relationships with other allied department advisors to increase referrals to BLA advisors.
 - Develop a mentorship program that connects 1st year students with 3rd and 4th year BLA students.
- B. Expand off-campus recruitment.
 - Increase recruiting efforts at regional high schools with large traditionally underrepresented populations.
 - Partner with local schools and youth organizations on community design projects led by BLA students.
 - Work with on-campus outreach programs such as PEOPLE and HOPE for assistance with off-campus recruiting within underrepresented communities.
 - Assess the feasibility of adding staff who specialize in outreach and diversity.
- C. Expand financial aid for BLA Students.
 - Increase the number of scholarships and awards to underrepresented students.
 - Increase the number of scholarships and awards for student travel experiences.

PROGRESS INDICATORS: Each measure of success will be reviewed annually.

1. Number and type of recruitment materials produced, updated, and disseminated (print and digital)
2. Number and type of annual recruitment events attended
3. Number, type, and name of schools visited (secondary and technical)
4. Number and type of on- and off-campus outreach efforts focused on diversity
5. Number, type, and name of on- and off-campus organizations visited
6. Number of students attending program sponsored events
7. Number of students applying to program
8. Number of scholarship and award recipients
9. Number of students admitted to the program
10. Demographics of admitted students

STRATEGIC GOAL 02 – CULTURE AND DEI

CULTIVATE AND EMPOWER A TEACHING, LEARNING, AND WORKPLACE CULTURE COMMITTED TO INCREASING DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION.

BACKGROUND/ASPIRATIONS: To date, the BLA program has only marginally increased DEI initiatives throughout the program. Moving forward, future faculty and staff hires, guest lecturers, community partners, student cohorts, and curriculum initiatives should emphasize DEI.

STRATEGIC ACTIONS:

- A. Increase learning and professional development opportunities for faculty, instructors, and staff.
 - Work with on-campus and off-campus groups that provide training and activities focused on DEI.
- B. Increase and improve engagement with underrepresented communities and affiliated organizations.
 - Increase outreach to on-campus organizations and programs.
 - Increase engagement with a more diverse set of off-campus organizations.
 - Increase diversity of our community partnerships.
 - Create Landscape Architecture First Year Interest Group (FIG).
- C. Integrate DEI into BLA curriculum in accordance with the LAAB DEI Standard.
 - Increase diversity of community design projects and community partners.
 - Increase diversity of lecturers, invited professionals, studio critics and reviewers, and other in-class visitors.
 - Increase the diversity of BLA program faculty and staff.
 - Increase diversity of lecture content, precedent studies, and other course materials.
 - Highlight the work of a more diverse set of landscape architects, both historical and contemporary.
 - Integrate a commitment to DEI into course projects.
 - Develop a more diverse set of public lectures with other PLA programs.
- D. Work with ASLA Student Chapter leadership to develop and implement program-wide efforts for DEI.
 - Develop student-led discussions, panels, workshops, projects, and guest lectures focused on DEI.

PROGRESS INDICATORS: Each measure of success will be reviewed annually.

1. Number of interactions with on-campus and off-campus groups committed to DEI
2. Number of BLA program visitors supporting our DEI mission
3. Number and type of community partners and studio clients
4. Review diversity of BLA course content
5. Number of DEI learning opportunities
6. Number of initiatives developed by students and faculty
7. Number of students that inquire/enroll in program from FIG
8. Demographics of faculty and staff

STRATEGIC GOAL 03 - LEADERSHIP

EXPAND LEARNING, RESEARCH, AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCES THAT PREPARE STUDENTS FOR INTER-DISCIPLINARY DESIGN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS IN PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTORS.

BACKGROUND/ASPIRATIONS: The BLA program is successful at developing leaders in the profession of landscape architecture. Moving forward, we should further develop opportunities that will prepare our students to lead increasingly diverse, complex, and inter-disciplinary design teams.

STRATEGIC ACTIONS:

- A. Increase the number of guest lecturers from local, regional, and national leaders in private and public sectors.
 - Invite lecturers from industry, design faculty, alumni, and critical areas relevant to the advancement of the BLA Program.
 - Co-sponsor lectures with professional organizations and other allied disciplines.
- B. Attend national and regional conferences, such as ASLA, WIASLA, LABASH, CELA, APA, AIA, ULI, SACNAS, AISES, and MANRRS as appropriate.
- C. Connect students with more internship and entry level employment opportunities.
 - Host a PLA career fair that is accessible to regional and national employers through in-person and virtual options.
 - Partner with WI-ASLA, ASLA National, and on-campus career development services (e.g., Successworks) to increase access to broader internship and job opportunities.
- D. Develop and support immersive learning opportunities with local, national, and international partners.
 - Work with on-campus groups to determine appropriate regional travel and study abroad opportunities.
- E. Support and leverage undergraduate certificates and courses that will help diversify and complement student learning experiences in the BLA Program.

PROGRESS INDICATORS: Each measure of success will be reviewed annually.

1. Number of guest lecturers, reviewers, and presentations sponsored by courses and the department
2. Number of courses specifically integrating new forms of technology (e.g., AI, VR, AR, drones, CNCs, 3D printers, tablets, software, etc.)
3. Number of public/private firms participating in the Career Fair
4. Number of students participating in Career Fair interviews/one-on-one sessions
5. Number of students attending conferences
6. Number of students participating in internships
7. Number of students participating in regional travel and study abroad opportunities
8. Number and type of certificates completed by BLA students

STRATEGIC GOAL 04 - SERVICE

INTEGRATE THE WISCONSIN IDEA THROUGHOUT THE PROGRAM TO FOSTER MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS AND SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES THAT BENEFIT STUDENTS, FACULTY, AND COMMUNITIES BEYOND OUR CAMPUS BOUNDARY.

BACKGROUND/ASPIRATIONS: We often receive more design and planning requests than we can accommodate in our design studios from communities throughout the region. Moving forward, we will increase collaboration with other University programs and create more opportunities for studio and non-studio-based student led service projects.

STRATEGIC ACTIONS:

- A.** Increase regional and international community design partnerships and projects.
 - Partner with campus organizations that regularly work with communities. (e.g., UniverCity Year Program, Earth Partnership, Morgridge Center for Public Service, Environmental Design Lab)
 - Create an online portal to collect public design and planning project submissions.
 - Consider a new staff position that focuses on developing relationships with regional and international organizations in need of design and planning assistance.
 - Consider new faculty positions that build relationships with the Division of Extension.
 - Consider new faculty positions that are focused on partnering with regional or international organizations.
- B.** Increase out-of-class student-led service projects that raise awareness about the BLA program and the landscape architecture profession.
 - Work with the Student ASLA Chapter to lead at least one out-of-class community service project per year.
 - Volunteer with on- and off-campus organizations focused on improving the built and natural environment.
 - Create undergraduate design fellow positions for students to partner with local practitioners and communities in need of design assistance.
 - Provide student design challenges partnered with outside departments, universities, and organizations.

PROGRESS INDICATORS: Each measure of success will be reviewed annually.

1. Number and type of organizations and communities partnering with BLA courses
2. Number of undergraduate design fellow projects completed
3. Number and type of out-of-class service projects completed
4. Number of students volunteering in service projects
5. Number of staff and faculty positions partnering with Extension and other regional and international organizations

STRATEGIC GOAL 05 – FACILITIES AND COLLABORATION INFRASTRUCTURE

CENTRALIZE TEACHING AND LEARNING INFRASTRUCTURE IN ONE DEPARTMENT FACILITY TO SUPPORT INNOVATIVE INTER-DISCIPLINARY DESIGN COLLABORATION.

BACKGROUND/ASPIRATIONS: The current Department, and its associated programs, are spread across campus in four different locations—Music Hall, Ag Hall, Ag Bulletin, and 445 Henry Mall. This has led to inefficiencies in space and resources and made it more challenging for cross-program collaboration. The BLA facilities in Ag Hall and Ag Bulletin are currently able to accommodate 22 students per BLA class with little to no room for future growth. There are also ADA accessibility challenges within the studio. The future inter-disciplinary facility should be a world class facility that fosters an inclusive environment dedicated to collaboration.

STRATEGIC ACTIONS:

- A. Increase informal student and faculty interactions and learning opportunities.
 - Relocate the BLA Year 01 cohort to the same studio facility as Year 02, 03, and 04 cohorts.
 - Relocate the BLA Program to the same facility as other Department programs.
 - Create common areas accessible by all programs.
 - Increase the number of public exhibit areas to showcase work by students, faculty, and alumni.
- B. Create studio lecture spaces, labs, and classrooms that improve teamwork and design collaboration.
 - Increase digital technology access for remote and in-person collaboration.
 - Increase the functionality of spaces so they can be easily rearranged and adapted to different types of learning and class sizes.
 - Obtain facility modernization grants for annual improvements.
- C. Provide studio cohort spaces that reflect the highest standards of DEI and promote individual health and wellbeing.
 - Increase access to outdoor learning spaces near studio facilities.
 - Increase views from studio spaces to exterior restorative environments.
 - Provide universally accessible spaces that accommodate appropriate student:instructor ratios, allow for growth, and exceed accreditation expectations.
- D. Integrate teaching, learning, and design technology that advances the practice of landscape architecture.
 - Develop, implement, and update technology tutorials for studio courses.
 - Partner with campus design and technology labs. (e.g., Makerspace)
 - Provide technology survey to WI-ASLA, Alumni, and other professionals.
 - Obtain instructional lab and technology grants.

PROGRESS INDICATORS: Each measure of success will be reviewed annually.

1. Number and type of formal and informal interactions in collaborative spaces
2. Number and type of cross-program and cross-department collaboration initiatives
3. Number and type of space planning activities moving towards one Program/ Department facility
4. Number of innovative technologies and tutorials implemented
5. Number and type of outdoor learning spaces used for teaching
6. Number and amount of studio technology grants awarded
7. Number of public exhibits and lectures
8. Student surveys that reflect accessibility to faculty and peers and satisfaction with facilities

IMPLEMENTATION AND ASSESSMENT

The implementation of the BLA Long-range Strategic Plan will begin in the 2022-2023 academic year and guide our program over the next 5-years. Annually, the BLA program chair and committee will lead the implementation of key priorities and timelines tied to strategic actions, and assess and document progress towards the strategic goals based on the progress indicators listed after each goal. Along with the progress indicators, we will also document student, staff, and faculty feedback that emerges through informal discussions, special meetings, committee discussions, online surveys, and other forums. We will coordinate and adapt the plan with changes to the Department Strategic Plan and budget to ensure alignment in their goals and implementation timeline. We will maintain priorities and strategic goals that serve our mission and reflect the need of our program and greater departmental community.