

History of Landscape Architecture at the University of Wisconsin - Madison

As with many land-grant universities in the United States, the study of landscape architecture at the University of Wisconsin–Madison began within the College of Agriculture. Instruction in landscape design and planning dates back to 1888, when a course covering the “principles of ornamental planting and the art of laying out gardens and pleasure grounds...” was offered within the Horticulture and Economic Entomology Program.

By 1908, representatives from the Madison Park and Pleasure Drive Association had begun discussions with university officials about establishing a professorship in landscape design for John Nolen, the renowned Massachusetts-based landscape architect then working on significant projects in Wisconsin. Although financial constraints prevented Nolen from joining the faculty, landscape design and planning instruction was formally established in 1915 with the appointment of Professor Franz Aust in the Department of Horticulture.

Professor Aust developed several new courses, including *School and Home Grounds Decoration* (1917), *Farm Forestry* (1919), and *Rural Development* (1921). He also launched a series of Extension publications on landscape architecture, was active in *The Friends of Our Native Landscape*—one of Wisconsin’s earliest environmental advocacy groups—and helped initiate the nation’s first known interdisciplinary courses combining human ecology and landscape planning.

By 1926, Landscape Architecture had become a distinct degree option within the Department of Horticulture. Shortly thereafter, G. William Longenecker, who earned a master’s degree from the program in 1929, joined Aust in teaching. Under their leadership, the program flourished for the next three decades. Guest lectures by noted figures such as Jens Jensen and Frank Lloyd Wright were common. The use of native plant materials was emphasized, and teaching and public service activities focused on traditional landscape architecture domains such as parks, residential properties, and institutional grounds.

In 1933, Professor Longenecker became the first Executive Director of the University of Wisconsin Arboretum, contributing significantly to its design, development, and management.

As the program grew through the 1960s, enrollments increased and course offerings expanded. In 1964, the Department of Landscape Architecture was established as a separate academic unit, with Professor Longenecker serving as its first chair. Faculty appointments were made to support the expanding curriculum, and in 1966, the undergraduate design and planning degree received its initial accreditation from the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA). That same year, the Department hosted the annual meeting of the National Council of Instructors in Landscape Architecture, a precursor to CELA. The Department also became part of the newly formed School of Natural Resources within the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences. In 1967, a new undergraduate “Natural Resources” degree option was introduced to provide students with greater exposure to the natural sciences (this option is not accredited by ASLA).

Significant innovations occurred in the 1970s. The Department moved into newly renovated facilities on the ground floor of Agriculture Hall, and under Professor Philip H. Lewis Jr., launched the Environmental Awareness Center. The decade saw rapid enrollment growth—particularly in the accredited undergraduate program—as well as expansion and diversification of the faculty. In response to evolving professional needs, new faculty brought expertise in art, architecture, urban and regional planning, geography, plant ecology, social psychology, and computer science. Faculty members gained national recognition for their work in regional design, recreation

planning, historic preservation, landscape history, native plant design and restoration, aesthetic assessment, and land information systems.

In the 1980s, the Department shifted from a period of rapid growth to one of intellectual consolidation. While innovation continued, the focus moved toward maturing and deepening the Department's scholarship and pedagogy. The number of tenure-track faculty decreased from 15 to 13, and teaching assistants were reduced from 6–8 to 4. Enrollment in the accredited undergraduate program was also reduced from 45 to 30 students per year.

A milestone occurred in 1980 when the Department hosted the Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture (CELA) conference, the first to emphasize research and formal paper presentations. In 1981, faculty launched *Landscape Journal*, the first refereed publication in North America dedicated to landscape architectural research. In 1982, faculty also played a key role in establishing the College's Land Information and Computer Graphics Facility.

A 1989 review by a national team of experts described the Department as having “a highly visible undergraduate program and a sound interdisciplinary graduate-level program,” noting that several faculty members had recently received national professional awards.

In 1997, significant organizational changes occurred when the Deans of the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALS) and the College of Letters and Science (L&S) restructured the Department of Urban and Regional Planning (URPL) into a cross-college unit. Four Landscape Architecture faculty members transferred to URPL, though two continued to teach in the accredited BLA program. Following this shift, the Department reduced its BLA admissions from 30 to 22 students per year. The resulting increase in competitiveness contributed to stronger student cohorts. Nearly all graduates consistently found employment in landscape-related positions across the country.

Throughout the 1990s, the Department conducted numerous research projects for the National Park Service and other governmental agencies. It also maintained a strong presence in local and regional design and planning issues, with a growing focus on the Upper Great Lakes region.

In 2016, discussions began to merge the Landscape Architecture and Urban and Regional Planning departments into a single unit within the College of Letters and Science. Previously, Landscape Architecture was housed in CALS, while URPL was jointly administered by CALS and L&S. The merger was approved by both colleges in December 2016, following public hearings and extensive planning. The new Department of Planning and Landscape Architecture (DPLA) officially launched on July 1, 2017. Landscape Architecture and Urban and Regional Planning were restructured as academic programs within this new department. The transition of the CALS-based BLA degree to L&S began in Fall 2018.

The DPLA brings together previously dispersed resources to generate new knowledge and offer interdisciplinary programs focused on urban and regional sustainability—aimed at enhancing the livability, economic vitality, and environmental health of communities.

Since 2019, the Department has focused on strengthening its academic identity, curriculum, and facilities while managing rapid enrollment growth. To enrich and diversify the curriculum, 17 new interdisciplinary courses have been introduced. In 2022, the BLA program completed its first Long-Range Strategic Plan (LRSP), aligning with departmental, college, and university missions. Studio facilities were consolidated into a larger, more accessible interdisciplinary space, unifying previous locations in Agricultural Hall and Ag Bulletin.

With enrollment doubling over the past three years, the program has both expanded its faculty and filled six full-time faculty positions due to retirements. The Department continues to adapt and evolve, maintaining its leadership in landscape architectural education, research, and service.

Significant Events

1888

The College of Agriculture offers its first course in landscape design through the Horticulture and Economic Entomology Program.

1926

Landscape Architecture is offered as a degree option in the Department of Horticulture.

1929

G. William Longenecker, a landscape architect and graduate of the Department of Horticulture (BS and MS), receives the first graduate degree in the Landscape Architecture option, serves as campus landscape architect and joins the faculty as an Assistant Professor.

1933

G. William Longenecker becomes Executive Director of the new University of Wisconsin Arboretum, and serves until 1958.

1938

The first known interdisciplinary course in the US that combines human ecology and landscape planning is offered by Franz Aust (Landscape Architect in Horticulture), J.H. Kolb (Rural Sociology), and George Wehrwein (Agriculture Economics).

1964

Landscape Architecture becomes an independent Department in the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences.

1966

The undergraduate program in design and planning in Landscape Architecture is accredited by the American Society of Landscape Architects.

1970

Environmental Awareness Center is established with Landscape Architecture Professor Philip H. Lewis, Jr. as its director.

1979

The Department of Landscape Architecture hosts the Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture (CELA) conference. The theme, "Research in Landscape Architecture," and the professional meeting format are firsts for CELA.

1980

Professor Arnold Alanen is named a three-year National Fellow by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

1981

Landscape Journal is founded by Profs. Arnold Alanen and Darrel Morrison of the Department of Landscape Architecture.

1982

The College's Land Information and Computer Graphics Facility is established, led by Landscape Architecture.

1983

Landscape Journal receives a national Merit Award for Communications from ASLA.

1988

Special issue of *Landscape Journal*—"Nature, Form and Meaning"—is published with funding assistance provided by the National Endowment for the Arts; the issue receives a special award from *Magazine Design and Production* for graphic excellence.

1989

Five faculty members receive ASLA awards, and one receives a special award of recognition from CELA.

1990

The first Clearing Landscape Institute is conducted. Held at "The Clearing," the former Door County, Wisconsin, home and school of Jens Jensen, the biennial institute provides opportunities for participants to discuss the landscape legacy of the Midwest.

1992

Faculty members in the Department organize the 15th annual meeting of the Alliance for Historic Landscape Preservation, which is held at The Clearing.

1993

Faculty members in the Department begin to conduct landscape research and studies for the National Park Service as part of the Cooperative Park Service Unit (CPSU) agreement signed with the University of Wisconsin.

1994

The 30th anniversary of the Department is marked; during the three decades, close to 1,100 undergraduate and 200 graduate Master's degrees have been awarded.

1995-96

Professor Evelyn Howell serves as chair of the University Committee, the most powerful committee on campus.

1997

National research award from ASLA honors the efforts of Profs. Alanen, Tishler, and graduate students in preparing three CPSU-funded reports for Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore.

1998

Professor William Tishler receives an Award of Distinction from the Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture.

1999

The 35th anniversary of the Department occurs. Over 1,200 students have received undergraduate degrees and another 265 have earned Master's degrees.

Professor William Tishler receives a communications award from ASLA for his video production of landscape architect Jens Jensen, and Professor Arnold Alanen receives a research award that recognizes his work in documenting the cultural landscape at Sitka National Historical Park in Alaska. Both awards are given at the 100th anniversary conference of the ASLA in Boston.

2000

Undergraduate students in the Department organize and sponsor LABASH.

The Department serves as one of the sponsors for the annual national conference of the Vernacular

Architecture Forum; held in Duluth, Minnesota, the meeting is organized by Professor Arnold Alanen and a former departmental graduate student.

Emeritus Professor Wayne Tlusty receives a Life Achievement Award from the Wisconsin Chapter of ASLA.

The Wisconsin Chapter of ASLA recognizes Professor Alanen with its Visibility Award.

Three faculty members serve as editor or co-editor of three books published by major North American presses: Arnold Alanen, *Preserving Cultural Landscapes in America* (Johns Hopkins University Press); Evelyn Howell, *The Historical Ecology Handbook* (Island Press); and William Tishler, *Midwestern Landscape Architecture* (University of Illinois Press).

2001

Emeritus Professor William Tishler receives a Life Achievement Award from the Wisconsin Chapter of ASLA.

Preserving Cultural Landscapes in America receives the Antoinette Forrester Downing award from the Society of Architectural Historians (SAH); a national Merit Award for Communications from ASLA; and the Allen G. Nobel Book Award from the Pioneer America Society. The SAH terms the volume "the most outstanding publication devoted to historical topics in the preservation field that enhances the understanding and protection of the built environment in the US." Professor Arnold Alanen receives CELA's Outstanding Educator Award.

Professor John Harrington is appointed chair of the newly created Campus Natural Areas Committee; this committee is responsible for overseeing the use and protection of the University's large natural areas acreage.

The Department's CPSU contract with the NPS concludes; during the eight-year tenure of this grant, twelve reports for six national parks in the United States are prepared by faculty members and graduate students.

2002

Professor Arnold Alanen and a graduate student receive the President's Award of Excellence from the Wisconsin Chapter of ASLA for their project: "A Landscape History of Wisconsin's Capitol Park."

Faculty Associate Shawn Kelly is appointed chair of the License Upgrade Committee by the Wisconsin Chapter of ASLA.

2003

Professor Arnold Alanen is recognized by CELA with a Communication and Service Award.

Professor Janet Gilmore brings to the Department her National Endowment for the Arts-funded "Access to Prior Folk Arts Projects in the Upper Midwest" project, coordinated with an Expressive Culture and Diversity in the Upper Midwest Cluster Enhancement grant through UW-Madison's Center for the Study of Upper Midwestern Cultures (CSUMC) (through 2005).

2004

Professor John Harrington organizes and chairs the Nineteenth North American Prairie Conference, held in Madison.

Professor Susan Thering's state-wide contributions are recognized with a Visibility Award from the Wisconsin Chapter of ASLA.

Faculty Associate Shawn Kelly is elected Trustee of the Wisconsin Chapter of the ASLA; serving on the national ASLA Ethics Committee, and the Council of Educators Committee.

2005

The University's Faculty Mentoring Program recognizes Professor Evelyn Howell with its Excellence in Mentoring Award.

Professor Howell receives the Chancellor's Award for Teaching Excellence from the University of Wisconsin- Madison.

Professor Arnold Alanen and the Facilities Management and Planning Unit at the UW-Madison receive a grant from the Los Angeles-based Getty Foundation to undertake a comprehensive study of campus cultural landscapes.

Professor Samuel Dennis, Jr. initiates the American Indian Housing Initiative's Landscape Architecture Option working with the Northern Cheyenne Nation in Montana, a summer design-build service learning experience (through 2005).

Professor Susan Thering facilitates a dialogue between the College of Agricultural & Life Sciences and the Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College that culminates in a Memorandum of Understanding for a cross-campus exchange.

Professor Janet Gilmore's CSUMC archiving team receives National Historical Publications and Records Commission grant for a "Survey of Folk Heritage Collections in the Upper Midwest" (through 2006).

2006

Professor Samuel Dennis, Jr. initiates the "Open Space Honduras" service-learning studio; with design-build projects in rural Orica and urban Siguatepeque, Honduras (through 2010).

Emeritus Professor William Tishler's book, *Door County's Emerald Treasure: A History of Peninsula State Park*, is published by the University of Wisconsin Press as part of its Wisconsin Land & Life Series. The book receives the Wisconsin Chapter of ASLA Presidential Award of Excellence.

Professor Dennis begins participating as a co-investigator on a multi-year National Institutes of Health grant that focuses on American Indian communities in Wisconsin; his contributions feature environmental supports and barriers to healthy lifestyles.

2007

Professor Evelyn Howell is designated as a National Academy of Sciences Education Fellow.

Professor Susan Thering is awarded a three-year grant from the Baldwin Wisconsin Idea Foundation to support an action research service learning initiative: "Green Community Development in Indian Country."

Professor Arnold Alanen and Emeritus Professor William Tishler are inducted into CELA's Academy of Fellows.

Following an invitation from the city's mayor, Professor John Harrington begins serving on Madison's Urban Design Review Committee.

Faculty Associate Shawn Kelly is re-elected Trustee of the Wisconsin Chapter of ASLA; at this time he also begins serving on the national ASLA Audit Committee.

Profs. Alanen and John Harrington, in conjunction with the School of Architecture at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, assist in offering a three week long Summer Interim course in Italy's Umbrian region.

Professor Harrington begins participating with the National Park Service, Wisconsin DNR, and US Fish & Wildlife Service in visioning workshops for several Ice Age National Science Reserve properties in Dane County.

Professor Janet Silbernagel teaches advanced ecology courses at Fudan University, Shanghai. She also sets up a regional design studio (LA 462) on landscape recovery after the Sichuan earthquake.

Professor Alanen's book, *Morgan Park: Duluth, U.S. Steel, and the Forging of a Company Town*, which features the work of Morrell & Nichols, the largest landscape architecture firm in the upper Midwest for several decades, is published by the University of Minnesota Press.

2008

Beginning in 2008, Professor David Bart develops a collaborative teaching-research initiative with Wings over Wisconsin (WoW), a state-wide conservation group. To date, seven LA courses have been integrated into restoration research, design, and implementation activities at WoW restoration sites.

Professor Janet Gilmore acts as chief project coordinator for an "Ethnography, Archival Collections, and Electronic Access" Cluster Enhancement grant for the Communications Technology Research and Expressive Culture and Diversity in the Upper Midwest clusters.

2009

Professor Janet Gilmore and her Center for the Study of Upper Midwestern Cultures archiving team received the Brenda McCallum Prize from the American Folklore Society Archives and Libraries Section for "exceptional work dealing with folklife archives or the collection, organization, and management of ethnographic materials."

Professor Samuel Dennis, Jr. receives the Public Service Award from the Wisconsin Chapter of ASLA in recognition of his commitment to bringing landscape architectural expertise to underserved communities.

Professor Dennis receives the Partnership Award from Public Health of Madison and Dane County in recognition for his collaborative service using design to create healthy communities.

Professor Dennis is inducted into the University of Wisconsin Teaching Academy.

Professor Gilmore co-leads oral history and cultural landscape component of summer vernacular architecture field school in Wiota, SW Wisconsin, with Professor Anna Andrzejewski, UW-Madison Art History, and visiting vernacular architecture specialist Professor Thomas Carter, University of Utah. Coordinated with UW-Milwaukee School of Architecture (Buildings Landscapes Cultures Companion Program), with funding from CALS, L&S, and Milwaukee's Chipstone Foundation.

Profs. Dennis and Gilmore are appointed affiliate faculty in the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee School of Architecture for the Buildings Landscapes Cultures Companion Program with UW-Madison.

Professor Dennis publishes a journal article in *Health and Place* describing the theory and application of Participatory Photo Mapping, a novel method for understanding people's experience of place through photography, narratives and mapping.

Professor Dennis and Jonathan Patz, MD, MPH receive two year grant from the Institute for Clinical and Translational Research to evaluate the efficacy of the Participatory Photo Mapping method in the 42 research projects in which it had been used in the United States and Canada.

Senior Lecturer James Steiner integrates a proposed study for the new Art Academic building on the UW-Madison campus into his second year design studio (LA261). This project involves undergraduate students and UWM School of Architecture and Urban Planning graduate students in the design of various architectural and site schemes. Faculty from the Art Department and the School of Education are involved in the programming and design process, with the resulting designs published in a written report. *The Art Academic Primer*, through UWM.

Dr. David Bart organizes symposium titled "Bridging the Divide: Integrating Human Ecology and Ecology to Improve Research and Management" at the Ecological Society of America 93rd Annual Conference, Albuquerque, NM. August 8, 2009. This was the inaugural symposium for the Human Ecology Section which he helped organize in 2008.

Faculty Associate Shawn Kelly is author of the Practice Act for Landscape Architects in Wisconsin after eleven years of specific effort.

Faculty Associate Kelly is invested as Fellow, ASLA, in the category of Knowledge.

2010

Professor Janet Silbernagel develops a 'spatial narrative geotool' as a web and mobile app to foster citizen engagement with socio-environmental complexities of Great Lakes coastal estuaries funded by UW Sea Grant and in partnership with ESRI, a global leader in GIS technology. The project team is now piloting the geotool with the Green Bay community.

Professor Silbernagel becomes chair of the Conservation Biology and Sustainable Development Program, Nelson Institute.

Senior Lecturer James Steiner teams third and fourth year students with graduate students from UWM's School of Architecture and Urban Planning for a four week studio project studying the historic Horse Barn on the UW-Madison Campus, as an Independent Study project. Methods of preserving the integrity of the historic structure are combined with ideas to update the structural and mechanical systems currently in place, as well as provide new exterior areas for showcasing agriculture products, sustainable food systems, and educational programs. The schemes are presented to UW-Madison's Office of Campus Planning and subsequently published in a report, through UWM.

Professor John Harrington's planting design class working with civil engineering students also contributes to the landscape of the grounds.

Professors Samuel Dennis, Jr. and James LaGro are part of an interdisciplinary research team funded for two years, called "The effects of environmental opportunities and barriers on physical activity, fitness, and health in Hispanic children in Wisconsin."

2011

Professor John Harrington, along with Paul Zedler (PI) of the Nelson Institute, the US FWS and The Nature Conservancy receive a competitive Joint Fire Science grant to develop and oversee the Midwest's tallgrass prairie and oak savanna Joint Fire Science Consortium (all regions of the country are to have a consortium in the future). The consortiums purpose is to disseminate research on application and effects of fire on the Upper Midwest grasslands through traditional as well as new technologies.

Professor Samuel Dennis, Jr. begins service on the Madison Arts Commission's Public Art Jury.

Professor Harrington and Senior Lecturer James Steiner combine third-year undergraduate students with University of Milwaukee School of Architecture and Urban Planning graduate students for a semester long study of the Inner Harbor site in Milwaukee. This industrial site along the Milwaukee River is the future home of UWM's School of Freshwater Sciences. The completed schemes are published in a report through UWM as part of a freshwater sciences grant. Dr. Herbert Dreiseitl, a landscape architect and freshwater expert from Switzerland lectures on alternative stormwater methods and helped mentor the students during the design process.

Professor Janet Gilmore begins co-coordinating a National Endowment for the Arts-funded "Wisconsin Public Folk Arts & Folklife Showcase: Online Exhibits, Tours & Games" project through the Center for the Study of Upper Midwestern Cultures (through 2014).

2012

Professor Janet Gilmore wins a Dr. Brenda Pfaehler Award of Excellence from the Center for Educational Opportunity and CeO student Bao Thao for providing equal opportunity and equity in education to first-generation college students, students from low-income families, and students with disabilities.

Emeritus Professor William Tishler receives the Henry Glassie Award from Vernacular Architecture Forum for lifetime achievement in vernacular architecture studies.

Professor Gilmore leads the CSUMC archiving team's contributions to the National Folklore Archives Initiative National Endowment for the Humanities funded online searchable folklore collections database through the American Folklore Society and Preserving America's Cultural Traditions group.

Professors Evelyn Howell and John Harrington (with former graduate student and UW-Madison Arboretum Grounds Manager Steve Glass) author Introduction to Restoration Ecology, Island Press' first textbook, which discusses the restoration process as taught in the department's restoration ecology curriculum. Island Press also distributes the Instructor's Manual, for faculty who use the textbook, written by Professor Howell, with assistance from Professor Harrington.

Professors Gilmore, Arnold Alanen and Samuel Dennis, Jr., aided by current and past Landscape Architecture graduates, play critical roles in planning the annual meeting in Madison, June 2012, of Vernacular Architecture Forum, the premier national professional organization devoted to the history of vernacular architecture and landscapes. Representing over a decade of planning and development across campus, UW campuses, and off-campus communities, the meeting and publications reach national and international audiences.

Professor Dennis receives two 3-year, \$400,000 grants for community-based research from the School of Medicine and Public Health's Wisconsin Partnership Program. One involves Milwaukee's Centro de Comunidad Unita in Milwaukee, and the other, in partnership with Nutrition Science Professor Schoeller (PI) and Madison's Community GroundWorks, strengthens statewide "Farm to School" programs through garden-based education.

Professor Dennis and Harrington lead the first Cloud Forest Studio to Monteverde, Costa Rica to work with the Cloud Forest School <http://cloudforestschoool.org/>. The private non-profit school's mission is to "nurture a generation of ecologically aware, academically well-rounded bilingual individuals ... " that are able to make "environmentally and socially conscious decisions on a local, national and global scale." The studio seeks to help the school develop better mechanisms for accomplishing its mission by mapping onsite resources, providing guidance for reforestation of disturbed areas on its grounds, and exploring ways to help students as well as area citizens navigate the school grounds.

Senior Lecturer James Steiner collaborates with Department of Civil Engineering specialist Charlie Quagliana on a joint student project to review and provide solutions for a 10-block streetscape in one of Madison's older neighborhoods.

2013

The department completes a strategic plan that acknowledges CALS new strategic plan to respond to new opportunities and challenges.

The third edition of Professor Jim LaGro's book, *Site Analysis: Informing Context-Sensitive and Sustainable Site Planning and Design*, is published by Wiley and Sons.

Faculty Associate Shawn Kelly is recognized for second year as National ASLA Top Advocate at the midyear leadership meeting.

Professor Dennis, Jr. develops the Environmental Design Laboratory (EDL) to bring together his community-based research, community health outreach and community design assistance. The lab is funded by 4 multi-year research grants. In addition to Dr. Dennis, EDL personnel include 1 paid employee, 2 honorary research fellows, 2 funded graduate students, and 2 undergraduate research interns.

2014

The department hires Kristin Thorleifsdottir as a tenure-track Assistant Professor. Her position is split 75% in the department and 25% in the Department of Design Studies. For both programs, Dr. Thorleifsdottir's expertise and contributions are in Behavioral Studies.

A new sophomore-level studio focused on healthy communities (LA 321) is added to the curriculum.

Students organize and host LABASH.

Emeritus Professor William Tishler receives the Jot D. Carpenter Teaching Medal.

2015

The department embarks on a strategic planning process to address chronic underfunding and continuing College and University budget cuts.

A new course in Advanced Visual Communication (LA 460) is added to the curriculum.

2016

Students win first place in the School Pride Award during the Inaugural Alumni Tailgate at the ASLA Annual Meeting in New Orleans.

2017

After a 2-year planning and approval process, the Department of Landscape Architecture merges with the Department of Urban and Regional Planning to create a new Department of Planning and Landscape Architecture housed in the College of Letters and Science.

Shawn Kelly is recognized as a Distinguished Faculty Associate

The Earth Partnership Program transfers from being a unit with the UW Arboretum to the new Department of Planning and Landscape Architecture aligning itself with the department's ecological restoration program. Earth Partnership promotes native habitat restoration as a process for community learning and land stewardship. <https://earthpartnership.wisc.edu>

2018

The BSLA program curriculum is revised to meet the College of Letters and Science degree requirements and renamed BLA.

Shawn Kelly begins serving as President of the ASLA

Eric Schuchardt, formerly a part-time lecturer in the professional program and a landscape architect at SmithGroupJJR, joins the department as a full-time Faculty Associate.

Students win second place in the School Pride Award during the Alumni Tailgate at the ASLA Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, PA.

2019

18 BLA students attend the National ASLA Conference on Landscape Architecture in San Diego, CA. The students also participate in an office visit with alumni working at Ground Level Landscape Architecture.

The department receives a \$30,000 grant to assist with modernizing equipment, technology, and instructional facilities.

Teaching faculty Eric Schuchardt and his students collaborate with the UW-Madison's Division of Campus Planning to reimagine outdoor learning spaces, natural areas, and cultural landscapes (e.g., effigy mounds) near Willow Creek and Observatory Hill.

Professor Evelyn Howell receives the Distinguished Alumni Award for career achievement from Carleton College.

Teaching Faculty Eric Schuchardt receives a National Society for College and University Planning Award of Honor in Open Space Design for his work at UW-Madison's Alumni Park.

The department hires Dr. Edna Ely-Ledesma, PhD, as a tenure-track Assistant Professor with expertise in urban design, social justice in planning, Latino urbanism, and food market systems.

The department hires Mary Myers, ASLA, as a short-term, part-time Senior Lecturer focused on community design and planning studios.

The department hires Bradley Vowels, ASLA, as a short-term, part-time Lecturer focused on community design and planning studios.

2020

The department creates the new Planning and Landscape Architecture Alumni Council (PLAAC), which includes alumni from the PhD, MS URPL, MS LA, LUS, and BLA programs.

The department approves its strategic plan, and the BLA program starts its planning process for its first formal long-range strategic plan.

The department and College of Letters and Science start planning for a combined facilities move that merges all five department programs from Music Hall, Ag Hall, Ag Bulletin, and 445 Henry Mall into one interdisciplinary facility.

The department receives a \$30,000 grant to assist with modernizing equipment, technology, and instructional facilities.

Three new cross-program elective courses are developed and added to the department's interdisciplinary curriculum:

- Land Arc 360 Indigenous Arts and Sciences Summer Field Course
- Land Arc 363 Land Equity and Resilience
- Land Arc 366 Introduction to Architectural and Environmental Design

Students participate in a paver system design competition co-sponsored by KOBRA and the department. The winning BLA student received a fully funded trip to the KOBRA headquarters in Langenfeld, Germany, which included additional visits to Munich, Leipzig, and Dresden.

Assistant Professor Edna Ely-Ledesma redesigns the BLA Year IV regional design studio into a cross-program, interdisciplinary studio that collaborates with graduate students studying urban and regional planning.

Assistant Professor Edna Ely-Ledesma and her students collaborate with the Fondy Food Center in Milwaukee, WI, and develop an updated neighborhood framework plan that serves as a catalyst for social and economic change.

Teaching Faculty Eric Schuchardt and his students collaborate with the Jewish Federation of Madison, and develop an open space plan that updates the outdoor teaching and recreation facilities at Camp Shalom in Verona, WI.

Professor Janet Gilmore retires after 17 years of service in the department.

2021

The BLA program starts to plan for a temporary move from their studio facilities in Agricultural Hall and Agricultural Bulletin due to a utility construction project. The move was initially scheduled for Summer 2022 but then changed to Summer 2023 due to campus space planning challenges.

22 BLA students attend and volunteer at the National ASLA Conference on Landscape Architecture in Nashville, TN. The students also participate in site tours along the Cumberland River and an office visit with alumni working at Kimley Horn.

The department receives a \$50,000 grant to assist with modernizing equipment, technology, and instructional facilities.

Four new cross-program elective courses are developed and added to the department's interdisciplinary curriculum:

- Land Arc 475 Latino Urbanism: Design and Engagement in the American City
- Land Arc 621 Designing Healthy Communities
- URB R PL 411 Marketplaces and Entrepreneurship
- URB R PL 215 Welcome to Your Urban Future

Teaching Faculty Eric Schuchardt and his students collaborate with the Rice Lake Main Street Association and develop an open space plan to reconnect the downtown to its waterfront in Rice Lake, WI.

Professor Jim LaGro becomes the editor-in-chief of Landscape Journal and joins the CELA Board of Directors.

Professor Emeritus William Tishler published the book, *Building Wisconsin's Barns*, as part of a continued emphasis on exploring and documenting Wisconsin's rural environment.

Assistant Professor Edna Ely-Ledesma receives the Nellie McKay Fellowship for advancing the Excellence in Mentoring Initiative at UW-Madison.

Assistant Professor Edna Ely-Ledesma-E publishes "Why Latino Vendor Markets: Latino Vendor Market Case Studies of California and Texas" in the *Journal of the American Planning Association*.

The department hires Dr. Edward Boswell as a full-time, non-tenure-track Teaching Faculty with a focus on the Geodesign curriculum.

Professor Janet Silbernagel retires after 23 years of service in the department.

Professor John Harrington retires after 37 years of service in the department.

2022

Teaching Faculty Eric Schuchardt is appointed as the BLA Program Chair after three years of serving as the Department Curriculum Committee Chair.

The BLA program completes a Long-range Strategic Plan to help guide the program over the next five years.

The department creates a new Undergraduate Design Fellow program to support local communities and organizations in need of design and planning assistance. One to two BLA students are selected each year to participate.

For the first time, the department's career fair offers both virtual and in-person participation and grows the event from 7 to 26 participants from across the United States.

23 students attend and volunteer at the National ASLA Conference on Landscape Architecture in San Francisco, CA. The students also participate in office visits with alumni working at SWA and Peter Walker and Partners (PWP).

The joint BLA Year IV and MS URPL Year II planning studio, led by Assistant Professor Edna Ely-Ledesma, receives a WI-ASLA Award of Merit in analysis and planning.

The department receives a \$64,500 grant to assist with modernizing equipment, technology, and instructional facilities.

Professor Evelyn Howell and Professor Emeritus John Harrington create two new BLA course requirements in plants and ecological design that are also added to the department's interdisciplinary curriculum:

- Land Arc 380 Plants for Ecological Design I
- Land Arc 381 Plants for Ecological Design II

Teaching Faculty Ed Boswell develops two new BLA course requirements in Geodesign that are also added to the department's interdisciplinary curriculum:

- Land Arc 311 Intro to Design Frameworks and Spatial Technologies (BLA Year II Requirement)
- Land Arc 511 Geodesign Methods and Applications (BLA Year III Requirement)

Four new cross-program elective courses are developed and added to the department's interdisciplinary curriculum:

- Land Arc 211 Shaping the Built Environment
- Land Arc 525 Social Justice and the Urban Landscape
- Land Arc 581 Prescribed Fire
- URB R PL 551 Climate Action Planning

Lecturer Jennifer Current and her students collaborate with UW-Madison's Allen Centennial Garden, The Wisconsin Green Muslims, and the Islamic Center of Madison to design a new Islamic Garden.

Teaching Faculty Eric Schuchardt and his students collaborate with the Parks and Recreation Department in Monona, WI, and develop an open space plan for the historic San Damiano property on Lake Monona.

Assistant Professor Edna Ely-Ledesma and her students collaborate with the Pilsen Neighborhood Association and The Little Village Environmental Justice Organization in Chicago, IL, and develop a more sustainable approach to regional trail planning for the future Paseo Trail.

Assistant Professor Edna Ely-Ledesma joins the City of Madison Landmarks Commission.

Professor Jim LaGro receives a Landscape Architectural Foundation (LAF) Fellowship for Innovation and Leadership.

Assistant Professor Edna Ely-Ledesma co-publishes "Leveraging Markets to Develop Central Capabilities: Case Studies of Cotati, CA and Brownsville, TX," in the *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*.

Teaching Faculty Shawn Kelly, FASLA, receives The ASLA Medal, which is the highest honor the ASLA can bestow upon a landscape architect whose lifetime achievements and contributions to the profession have had a unique and lasting impact on the welfare of the public and the environment.

Teaching Faculty Eric Schuchardt receives a WI-ASLA Merit Award in analysis and planning for his Lady of Guadalupe work in Endeavor, WI.

Teaching Faculty Eric Schuchardt is appointed to the WI-ASLA Chapter's Board of Directors.

Teaching Faculty Ed Boswell is appointed to the UW-Madison's UniverCity Alliance Advisory Board.

The department hires Alissa Santurri, PLA, ASLA, as a short-term, part-time Lecturer focused on introductory community design studios.

The department hires Jennifer Current, PLA, ASLA, as a short-term, part-time Lecturer focused on introductory planting design and ecology studios.

Assistant Professor Kristin Thorleifsdottir resigns after seven years of service in the department.

Part-time Lecturer Jacob Blue, PLA, ASLA, resigns after six years of teaching in the department.

2023

The College of Letters and Science identifies a location on the 5th Floor of Helen C. White for the department's future interdisciplinary facility.

During the summer, the BLA studio facilities relocate from Agricultural Hall and Agricultural Bulletin into a larger design facility located in the Environmental Health and Safety building at 30 East Campus Mall.

The BLA program welcomes its largest cohort in more than 25 years, with 33 students accepted into the program.

Through the generous support of department alumni and friends, the BLA program establishes a new annual BLA Travel Fellowship program. The competitive fellowship provides students with a \$4000 stipend to travel in the United States or abroad as a way to enhance their design education, cultural literacy, and professional development.

The department receives a \$52,988 grant to assist with modernizing equipment, technology, and instructional facilities.

The BLA program co-creates a Certificate in Architecture with UW-Milwaukee's School of Architecture and UW-Madison's undergraduate programs in civil engineering, art history, and interior architecture. The new Certificate is added to the department's interdisciplinary curriculum.

30 students attend and volunteer at the National ASLA Conference on Landscape Architecture in Minneapolis, MN. Students win third place in the School Pride Award during the Alumni Tailgate. The students also participate in site tours along the Mississippi River and office visits with alumni at Coen and Partners and Damon Farber.

The department's annual career fair attracts 32 employers from across the US.

One new cross-program elective course is developed and added to the department's interdisciplinary curriculum:

- Land Arc 373 Mindfulness in Restorative Environments

Assistant Professor Edna Ely-Ledesma, Assistant Professor Wenwen Cheng, and their students collaborate with the Lake Street Council in the East Lake Cultural District of Minneapolis, MN, and develop community plans for protecting and preserving the district through future development.

Assistant Professor Anna Bierbrauer and her students engage in collaboration with the City of Madison Planning Department and develop waterfront planting and ecological design concepts, drawing upon Sasaki's recently finalized Lake Monona framework plan.

Professor Jim LaGro, Teaching Faculty Eric Schuchardt, and their students collaborate with the Marquette Neighborhood Association in Madison, WI, and develop a mixed-use urban redevelopment plan for areas along the Yahara River and Williamson Street.

Teaching Faculty Ed Boswell creates the Certificate in Integrative Design and Built and Natural Environments. The new certificate is added to the department's interdisciplinary curriculum.

Teaching Faculty Shawn Kelly is appointed as a member of the Wisconsin Board of Technical Registration - Landscape Architect section.

Assistant Professor Wenwen Cheng is named as a Co-Principal Investigator for research titled, "Preparing Wisconsin's rural communities for amplified weather extremes in a changing climate."

Assistant Professor Wenwen Cheng is named as a Co-Principal Investigator for research titled, "Children's Environmental Health Center in U.S. Southern Great Plains".

Assistant Professor Edna Ely-Ledesma co-publishes "Low-Income Consumers Turn Towards Farmers Markets During the COVID-19 Pandemic" in *California Agriculture*.

The department hires Dr. Anna Bierbraur, PhD, MLA, as a tenure-track Assistant Professor with expertise in community-based design, environmental history, physical geography, and geospatial data.

The department hires Dr. Gaylan Williams, PhD, BLA, as a tenure-track Assistant Professor with expertise in urban forestry and urban design.

The department hires Dr. Wenwen Cheng, PhD, MLA, as a tenure-track Assistant Professor with expertise in microclimatic design.

The department hires Chris Sina, PLA, ASLA, as a short-term, part-time Lecturer focused on introductory community design studios.

The department hires Shu Sun, MLA, as a short-term, part-time Lecturer focused on advanced visualization and community design studios.

Professor Sam Dennis, Jr., retires after 20 years of service in the department.

2024

The department's planning process for a new interdisciplinary facility in Helen C. White is put on hold. L&S discovers there are financial challenges in updating the fire life and safety requirements in the building.

The department adds four endowed undergraduate scholarships to support its students in the BLA program.

The department receives a \$119,800 grant to assist with modernizing equipment, technology, and instructional facilities.

BLA students participate in a Campus Site Design Competition created by the department in collaboration with UW-Madison's FP&M Campus Planning and Landscape Architecture (CPLA), UW-Madison's Office of Sustainability, and the Wisconsin ASLA Chapter. The winning team received a \$3,000 award from the WI-ASLA Chapter.

27 students attend and volunteer at the National ASLA Conference on Landscape Architecture in Washington DC. The students also participate in sketch crawls around the Washington Monument and office visits at LandDesign and Moody Graham.

The department's annual career fair attracts 34 employers from across the US.

Assistant Professor Anna Bierbrauer reestablishes the annual BLA Year III studio immersion and service trip to The Clearing in Door County, WI. The Clearing Folk School was founded in 1935 by Jens Jensen.

Teaching Faculty Eric Schuchardt establishes the new BLA Student Mentorship Program in collaboration with the WI-ASLA Chapter. The mentorship program's mission is to inspire and empower students through personalized mentoring to support their growth within the landscape architecture profession. Twenty-nine students and 11 mentors participated in the inaugural program.

Teaching Faculty Eric Schuchardt and two student assistants establish the new DPLA Design and Visualization Lab, which integrates new and emerging technology into the department curriculum.

Teaching Faculty Eric Schuchardt partners with the Wisconsin Alumni Association and creates a new Alumni Park Internship program for landscape architecture students.

Assistant Professor Edna Ely-Ledesma, Professor Jim LaGro, and their students collaborate with the City of Green Bay Department of Community and Economic Development to create framework plans and implementation strategies that explore the future development of Green Bay's industrial waterfront.

Assistant Professor Anna Bierbrauer, Assistant Professor Gaylan Williams, and their students continue to collaborate with the City of Madison and Sasaki, and provide waterfront framework plans grounded in ecological design principles.

Teaching Faculty Eric Schuchardt and his students collaborate with Downtown Madison Inc. and the City of Madison to reimagine the future of State Street as a 24/7 'car-less' and 'curb-less' destination corridor.

Teaching Faculty Eric Schuchardt receives a WI-ASLA Merit Award in design for his Soul of the River work in Wisconsin Dells, WI.

Teaching Faculty Shawn Kelly is appointed as the landscape architect to the Wisconsin State Capitol and Executive Residence.

Assistant Professor Wenwen Cheng receives a Nellie McKay Fellowship related to advancing the Excellence in Mentoring Initiative at UW-Madison.

Assistant Professor Wenwen Cheng is appointed as a Faculty Affiliate in the Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies.

Assistant Professor Wenwen Cheng co-publishes "Unveiling disparities: a social media analysis of urban park usage and sentiments in Oklahoma City" in *GeoJournal*.

Assistant Professor Anna Bierbrauer is appointed as a Faculty Affiliate in the Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies.

The department hires Carl Reed, MLA, ASLA, as a full-time non-tenure-track Assistant Teaching Professor with a focus on community design, plants, and ecology curriculum.

The department hires Hanbing Liang, BLA, ASLA, as a short-term, part-time Lecturer focused on introductory community design studios.

Senior Lecturer James Steiner retires after 22 years of service in the department.

2025

The BLA program partners with DIS Copenhagen and UW-Madison Study Abroad to create a semester study abroad opportunity in Copenhagen, Denmark.

The BLA program creates 12 professional concentrations for students to pursue as they progress through their studies. Professional concentrations are a series of curated interdisciplinary course electives that are focused within common professional specialization areas in landscape architecture.

The department receives a \$100,000 grant to assist with modernizing equipment, technology, and instructional facilities.

The department's annual career fair attracts 33 employers from across the US.

Teaching Faculty Maria Moreno partners with the UW-Madison's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and the Global Health Certificate to create a winter inter-session study abroad opportunity in Kyoto, Japan. The session is titled UW Wellbeing and the Art of Forest Bathing.

Teaching Faculty Eric Schuchardt, along with a student assistant, create a materials and construction library, which contains sustainable construction products and physical material samples from industry leaders.

Teaching Faculty Eric Schuchardt, Lecturer Shu Sun, and their students continue their collaboration with Downtown Madison Inc., and create mixed-use redevelopment plans along State Street that promote inclusivity and restorative design principles.

Assistant Professor Edna Ely-Ledesma earns tenure in the College of Letters and Science.

Assistant Professor Wenwen Cheng co-publishes "Micro- and Macro- Environment and Habitat Influences on Tick Abundance in Oklahoma City Urban Parks" in *American Journal of Tropical Medicine & Hygiene*.

Assistant Professor Wenwen Cheng virtually presents "Urban Healthscapes in Climate Change Emergencies" as part of a webinar at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences in Uppsala, Sweden.

Assistant Professor Anna Bierbrauer receives a Nellie McKay Fellowship related to advancing the Excellence in Mentoring Initiative at UW-Madison.

Assistant Professor Anna Bierbrauer publishes "Lands use and socioeconomic time-series reveal legacy of redlining on present day gentrification within a growing United States city" in *PLOS One*.

The department hires Shane Bernau as a short-term, part-time Lecturer focused on introductory community design studios.

Professor Jim LaGro retires after 35 years of service in the department.

Assistant Professor Gaylan Williams resigns after 1.5 years of service in the department and becomes the new Deputy Commissioner of Park Planning in the city of Atlanta.

Department of Landscape Architecture Chairpersons

G. William Longenecker 1964-1965

Philip H. Lewis, Jr. 1965-1972

Bernard Niemann, Jr. 1972-1975

Bruce Murray 1975-1978

Darrel Morrison 1978-1981

Hanque Macari 1981-1985

Arnold R. Alanen 1985-1988

Evelyn Howell 1988-1993

Fahriye Sancar 1993-1994

Owen Fennema (Interim) 1994-1996

John Harrington 1996-2001

Arnold R. Alanen 2001-2003

Evelyn Howell 2003-2011

John Harrington 2011-2017

Sam Dennis, Jr. 2017-2018

Department of Planning and Landscape Architecture: Bachelor of Landscape Architecture Chairpersons

Sam Dennis, Jr. 2018-2022

Eric Schuchardt 2022-present