Program Mission

New Program Mission Item

Program Mission Statement:

The University of Idaho Landscape Architecture program prepares students for dynamic futures as practitioners and scholars in Landscape Architecture, with a commitment to engaging critical contemporary social and ecological issues of the Intermountain West as a means to advance disciplinary knowledge. Through exploration, critical inquiry, community engagement, evaluation and reflection, we disseminate the products of design discovery and innovation to our community partners, research collaborators and peers.

Program Goal (add a minimum of 3 program goal "plan items")

1 - Critical thinking, creative problem solving, technical proficiency

Goal Statement:

To educate students to use critical thinking, creative problem solving, and technical proficiency to contribute to sociocultural and ecological resilience through their landscape architectural design and planning work.

Alignment to UI Strategic Plan Goals:

 Innovate (Goal 1): Scholarly and creative products of the highest quality and scope, resulting in significant positive impact for the region and the world.
Engage (Goal 2): Suggest and influence change that addresses societal needs and global issues, and advances economic development and culture.

Indicators/Metrics to Evaluate Progress:

>80% of students should be achieving passing rates of 80% or higher in courses that indicate increasing levels of competency or mastery of core areas of the curriculum.

Review of student work by faculty as a group and/or guest reviewers for studio courses indicates successful application of critical thinking, creative problem solving and technical proficiency. Work evaluated specifically from upper division and graduate courses/studios (LARC 363-365, LARC 463-465, LARC 556, LARC 558, LARC 562), technical courses (LARC 395, LARC 440/441, LARC 310, LARC 510)

List of Actions the Program Will Take to Achieve Goals :

The program's curriculum is highly integrated, particularly in studio work in which students are expected to resolve complex design problems through application of these skills. Different levels of mastery are expected at different levels in the program, and review of student work is done at the end of each semester and/or at the end of the year by faculty as a group to discuss how students are progressing, and to determine if courses are achieving the intended development of skill and knowledge.

The faculty also use a general competency rubric when we meet to evaluate the student work at the end of a semester (sometimes end of year, as in 2020-21). Additionally, there is a template rubric for Visiting / Guest Studio Critics to fill out that can be adjusted to fit the specific studio assignment or projects. Instructors can provide the template to their guest reviewers at the beginning of the studio review to gather external feedback on student work. This is a common method of evaluating student work in the design disciplines.

Goal Achievement Level: In Progress

2 - Professional competency meeting accreditation standards

Goal Statement:

To ensure that graduates of the Landscape Architecture program develop competency in the professional skills and knowledge domains that meet or exceed those required for LAAB accreditation.

Alignment to UI Strategic Plan Goals: None

Indicators/Metrics to Evaluate Progress:

At least 80% of graduating students should achieve a passing grade of B in courses covering core required curriculum, including LARC 253, LARC 340, LARC 341, LARC 358, LARC 389, LARC 395, LARC 363-365, LARC 463-465, and LARC 480. Graduate students must demonstrate passing grade of B or higher in LARC 440, LARC 441, LARC 512, LARC 554, LARC 555, LARC 556, LARC 558, LARC 562 and must successfully submit/defend product of original research in the form of a thesis or master's project.

List of Actions the Program Will Take to Achieve Goals :

The program's curriculum is highly integrated, particularly in studio work in which students are expected to resolve complex design problems through application of all of the skills and knowledge they have acquired. Different levels of mastery are expected at different levels in the program, and review of student work is done at the end of each semester and/or at the end of the year by faculty as a group to discuss how students are progressing, and to determine if courses are achieving the intended development of skill and knowledge.

A matrix has been developed by the faculty outlining required curriculum for each year in the program and alignment with required knowledge realms described in LAAB accreditation standards. This matrix describes expected level of competency that should be achieved for relevant areas of the curriculum in each class. The faculty also use a general competency rubric when we meet to evaluate the student work at the end of a semester (sometimes end of year, as in 2020-21). Additionally, there is a template rubric for Visiting / Guest Studio Critics to fill out that can be adjusted to fit the specific studio assignment or projects. Instructors can provide the template to their guest reviewers at the beginning of the studio review to gather external feedback on student work. This is a common method of evaluating student work in the design disciplines.

Goal Achievement Level: In Progress

3 - Engagement through outreach, research, travel and practicum

Goal Statement:

To provide a rich, integrated educational experience for students in the Landscape Architecture program through engagement in outreach, research, travel and intern/externship opportunities that encourages development of broad perspectives and a commitment to community service through professional work.

Alignment to UI Strategic Plan Goals:

Transform (Goal 3): Increase our educational impact.

Cultivate (Goal 4): Foster an inclusive, diverse community of students, faculty, and staff and improve cohesion and morale.

Indicators/Metrics to Evaluate Progress:

All students must engage in at least one outreach project and one enrichment experience (research with a faculty mentor/advisor; travel; intern or externship; opportunity for conference presentation, publication or exhibition of creative work).

Student experience of these activities is recorded primarily through their work. However, the program is developing a formal exit interview process which will seek feedback on this aspect of their education and others, along with post-graduation plans.

List of Actions the Program Will Take to Achieve Goals :

At least one studio project in the program each year engages students in community-based service learning projects. Faculty typically discuss the opportunities as a group, but individual faculty members can seek out there own projects as well. It is common for students to work on more than one service-learning project each year, ensuring multiple opportunities for students work with a broad range of community groups. For example, in the past year, students participated in design for a museum grounds at the Fort Hall Shoshone-Bannock reservation, installed a firewise demonstration garden at Bernardine Quinn Park in Boise, worked on a pre-school experiential education area for the Boise Urban Garden School, created interpretive exhibits at the Palouse-Clearwater Environmental Institute Nature Center and several other community-based projects. The program maintains records of these projects and reports them in accreditation reports.

Students are also required to participate in at least one group field trip organized by the program before they graduate. These are typically 5-7 days long and involve travel to regional urban centers to visit professional offices and tour examples of great built work.

As opportunities arise, students are also encouraged to pursue internships/externships, do job shadowing, and to pursue research with a faculty advisor. These are not required because the opportunities are not guaranteed to be available for every student. However, the program faculty have developed relationships with local professionals, municipal, state and federal agencies, and various scholarship opportunities to engage students in.

Goal Achievement Level: In Progress

4 - Innovative Landscape Design, Planning and Evaluation

Goal Statement:

Promote exploration of methods of inquiry, modes of expression, or processes of design and evaluation of landscape performance to contribute to discipline's body of knowledge while exploring sustainable design and management of places for human habitation in the Intermountain West and elsewhere.

Alignment to UI Strategic Plan Goals:

Innovate (Goal 1): Scholarly and creative products of the highest quality and scope, resulting in significant positive impact for the region and the world.

Transform (Goal 3): Increase our educational impact.

Indicators/Metrics to Evaluate Progress:

Indicators will be student produced scholarly works including conference presentations, articles/papers, and exhibitions. No predetermined benchmark is set, but the expectation is to have at least some students engaging in this kind of activity every year. Between 2018 and 2021, 2-5 students have been actively engaged in scholarly work each year. This number is something of a baseline, but it is not clear whether we should expect to grow this number or encourage wider participation as the majority of our students go into some form of non-academic professional practice after graduation.

To assess this, we will:

1 - Maintain record of disseminated student scholarship products.

2 - Assess development of new methods, modes of expression, design process and/or innovation of landscape performance evaluation in Senior and Graduate studio work (LARC 463-465, LARC 558, LARC 562), graduate theses and master's projects, and in other courses as appropriate (e.g., LARC 495 Geodesign).

List of Actions the Program Will Take to Achieve Goals :

Encourage dissemination of graduate (thesis, master's project) work at conferences, in articles/journals, exhibitions, etc.

Provide opportunity to explore innovative techniques, methods, etc. in advanced studio courses, by establishing projects that require independent development of research, design and evaluation processes.

Goal Achievement Level: In Progress

Student Learning Assessment Report (add one "plan item" for each major, degree, and/or certificate offered by dept)

Landscape Architecture BSLA

Assessment Report Contact: Elizabeth Scott

Program Changes in Past Year:

Added courses to distinguish curriculum for the MLA from BSLA to meet new accreditation standards. Courses added: LARC 510, LARC 512, and LARC 589 (BSLA courses LARC 210, LARC 251, and LARC 389 previously were required for MLA students deficient in these areas).

Learning Outcomes are Communicated to All Students in Program (check box if true): true

Learning Outcomes are Communicated to All Faculty (check box if true): true

Optional: Framework Alignment: Landscape Architecture Accreditation Board

Import Outcomes Data (from Anthology Outcomes):

None available

Summary of Student Learning:

Direct measures of success include:

1. >80% of 3rd and 4th year comprehensive studio project products (verbal presentation and design products) achieve intermediate to advanced competency in design process and communication including critical thinking and integration of technical skills; identification, analysis and evaluation of landscape systems (sociocultural and ecological); application and interpretation of disciplinary theory; and expression of appropriate disciplinary values and ethics. 83% of student work from 3rd year studios and over 90% of work from 4th year studios demonstrated appropriate level of competency in these areas achieving a grade of B or better.
2. >80% of students achieve intermediate to advanced technical skill and knowledge development in LARC 310 (represenation and visual communication), LARC 341 (site engineering, construction, health-safety-welfare) and LARC 395 (sociocultural and ecological systems analysis, representation and geospatial analysis). 100% of students in LARC 310, 75% of students in LARC 341, and over 90% of students in LARC 395 demonstrated appropriate competencies with a grade of B or better.
3. >80% of students achieve intermediate level of competency in disciplinary history, theory, criticism and philosophy in LARC 389, and demonstrate intermediate or better written, verbal and visual communication skills. Over 90% of students demonstrated the appropriate level of competency in these knowledge and skill areas.

Indirect measures of success include >80% of students receive guest critique / review of final studio work in LARC 463-465 (senior studio) evaluating creative problem solving and critical thinking skills at a grade level of B or better. All students in this studio group received reviews of at least B grade equivalent or better.

Summary of Faculty Discussion:

Faculty review of 2020-21 student work took place in June. Courses evaluated by faculty jointly included LARC 210, LARC 251, LARC 253, LARC 363-365, LARC 341, LARC 310, LARC 389, LARC 463-465, and LARC 480. Most courses are meeting expectations for developing appropriate levels of competency with target passing rates of 80% or more of students passing the reviewed courses at a B-grade or better. However, it was apparent that participation was in classes was strongly affected by COVID. Some students commented that they found it difficult to work in the online environment in the fall semester, and approximately 20-30% of students demonstrated or disclosed stress-related health issues, which affected their work and their ability to attend classes. In some cases, this was only discussed after the semester or year was over. Faculty also reported giving numerous extensions, additional help sessions and other measures to enable students to submit work late, or make sure they were able to complete assignments.

Summary of Changes/Improvements Being Considered:

The BSLA will be renamed (BS. Environmental Design is proposed) to meet 2021 LAAB accreditation standards that prevent the use of the title Landscape Architecture for any degree that is not accredited. The new standards also describe specific degree requirements that prevent a "seamless" undergraduate to graduate accredited degree, which is what the UI's Landscape Architecture degrees were designed to be. The MLA is UI's accredited degree, not the BSLA, so the BSLA needs to be renamed, and curriculum must be distinct from the MLA. So new learning outcomes have been proposed for the BSED. Assessment will be less focused on meeting expectations for professional preparation, and will focus more on integrated and engaged learning, with associated development of a broad knowledge base and critical thinking skills.

Inter-rater Reliability:

The program faculty developed a cross-reference matrix of LAAB required competencies and required courses that contribute to achieving those competencies. We also developed a rubric of competency evaluation for our coursework review, along with a general template for studio work review by visiting or guest critics. The latter is important because the outside review by professionals or community partners is a measure of how well students are achieving the expectations for creating professional-level work (to the degree it would be expected at any given level in the program).

Closing the Loop:

Since meeting as a group to review student work at least annually (begun in 2018), faculty have become more aware of 1) what each course is achieving and how it contributes to the overall educational goals, 2)what the appropriate expectation for levels of competency in each class should be, and 3) how each course contributes to achieving professional accreditation standards. This has also allowed faculty to speculate on the scaffolding of building competencies can be improved, e.g., by introducing particularly skills or knowledge areas in a course in the sophomore year, then advancing either the skills base or advancing theoretical understanding and application. However, this has been achieved largely through exploration, with the development of our current rubrics being something of an intermediate step. We believe we have a good process for qualitatively evaluating the students' work and learning outcomes, but we are still trying to define a better, more systematic way of quantitatively assessing the student outcomes. Better / more formalized recording of individual achievement is also needed (job placement, external awards or scholarships or other recognition, etc.)

Landscape Architecture MLA

Assessment Report Contact: Elizabeth Scott

Program Changes in Past Year:

Added new courses to distinguish graduate level required curriculum from similar undergraduate curriculum in response to 2021 LAAB Accrediation Standards. (LARC 510 Advanced Design Representation and Communication; LARC 512 Landscape Analysis and Site Planning; LARC 589 History and Theory of Landscape Architecture). COGS also approved using course number 599 for Masters Project, so students have option to take 12 credits of Thesis (LARC 500) or 12 credits of Master's Project (LARC 599). This both simplifies and clarifies the graduate studio sequence, which develops progressive understanding and mastery of critical thinking, creative design problem solving, and verbal, visual and written communication knowledge and skills.

Learning Outcomes are Communicated to All Students in Program (check box if true): true

Learning Outcomes are Communicated to All Faculty (check box if true): true

Optional: Framework Alignment: Landscape Architecture Accreditation Board

Import Outcomes Data (from Anthology Outcomes):

Note: these are the seamless BSLA-MLA outcomes, but after AY2022, will apply to the professional MLA only.

SLO1: The graduate will be able to identify and apply applicable research methods common to the discipline of Landscape Architecture to explore and propose solutions for complex contemporary questions in the discipline.

SLO2: The graduate will acquire and possess verbal, written, and graphic communication skills that demonstrate the ability to think critically, organize information creatively, and use an array of traditional as well as emerging digital tools to communicate products of studio and applied research projects.

SLO3: The graduate will demonstrate the ability to create solutions for place that synthesize process, theory, spatial literacy, technology, and knowledgeregarding resilient, regenerative natural and cultural systems

SLO4: The graduate will use design processes to innovatively and systematically generate place-based solutions at various scales, addressing the complex needs of the built and natural environment, applying digital technologies and traditional design tools to successfully explore a range of design and land planning alternatives.

SLO5: Through a range of opportunities including community-based engagement, international travel, independent research, internships, or field trips, the graduate will demonstrate integration of personal abilities and interests with acquired knowledge and professional skills within a global perspective.

Summary of Student Learning:

Direct measures of success include:

1. >90% of Graduate Studios products (verbal presentation and design products for LARC 556, LARC 558 and LARC 562) demonstrate advanced competency in design process and communication including critical thinking and integration of technical skills; identification, analysis and evaluation of landscape systems (sociocultural and ecological); application and interpretation of disciplinary theory; and expression of appropriate disciplinary values and ethics. In the current assessment cycle, all student work from LARC 556, LARC 558 and LARC 562 demonstrated appropriate level of competency in these areas. Design products and presentations demonstrate creative design solutions and methods of representation, and engaged critical inquiry and landscape performance evaluation (the latter demonstrated particularly in LARC 556 and LARC 562). Professional values and ethics are demonstrated in part by the student work's sensitivity to creating designs for sustainable and/or resilient urban systems, ecological restoration or protection, and sensitivity to diverse populations and cultural perspectives (for example, projects at the Fort Hall Museum, Boise Urban Garden School, Barber Pools Conservation area and others).

2. All students graduating from the MLA program demonstrate competency in appropriate choice and application of research methods to a thesis or master's project that develops new disciplinary knowledge. This requirement is recorded and communicated to COGS as the Major Professor's acknowledgement that students have satisfied requirements for graduation. In the MLA program, this includes public presentation of the Master's work, private review with the student's committee, and delivery of one hard copy and one digital copy of the thesis or final Master's project document. In the current assessment cycle, all graduating MLA students successfully achieved this requirement, which aligns with the LAAB standards for the MLA. Additional measures include: the publication of two peer-reviewed papers with the student's major professor; and installation of a public demonstration garden with the City of Boise (applied research outcome).

3. >90% of graduates of the MLA program demonstrate advanced competency in technical skill and knowledge development in Graduate Studios 3 and 4 (design development/detailing; geospatial analysis; advanced representation techniques; and/or evaluation of design solutions for social and ecological performance), LARC 440 and 441 (site engineering, stormwater management, construction, health-safety-welfare) and LARC 495 (sociocultural and ecological systems analysis, representation and geospatial analysis). During the current assessment cycle, all MLA students demonstrated appropriate competencies with a grade of B or better.

4. >90% of students achieve advanced level of competency in disciplinary history, theory, criticism and philosophy in LARC 589, and demonstrate mastery of written, verbal and visual communication skills. In the current assessment cycle, all students demonstrated such mastery expressed through products of coursework, but additionally expressed through 1 graduate cultural landscape exhibition, and 2 peer-reviewed papers co-authored with faculty advisors.

Indirect measures of success include:

1. >90% of students receive external critique of final studio work for LARC 556, LARC 558, and LARC 562 (Graduate studios 2, 3, and 4) evaluating creative problem solving and critical thinking skills at a grade level of B or better. In the current assessment cycle, all MLA students that were reviewed by external reviewers for their studio final projects achieved this measure.

2. Adoption or implementation of student's research or creative work by community or other partners in studio or Master's thesis/project work. This measure is not expected to be met every year, but indicates that students are achieving a professional level of preparation sufficient to meet the needs of real-world clients or partners. There are 4 examples of this level of success in the current assessment cycle:
   1. Mandi Roberts, analysis of the potential to introduce transit in the Geyser Basin corridor at Yellowstone National Park, working with National Park Service.
   2. Aaron Vincent and Alyssa Vincent, developing alternative landscape change models based on potential habitat distribution change under various development scenarios for stakeholder working groups in Owyhee and Teton counties as part of the Idaho EPSCoR GEM 3 program.
   3. Alyssa Vincent, developing schematic designs for the Fort Hall Museum grounds with partners from the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes (designs developed from preliminary concepts created by 3rd and 4th year BSLA students).
   4. Olivia Harman, design and installation of a Firewise Landscapes demonstration garden at Bernardine Quinn Park with the City of Boise Parks & Rec and Idaho Firewise.

Summary of Faculty Discussion:

Faculty review of 2020-21 student work took place in June. Courses are evaluated at the same time that BSLA coursework is evaluated. This review includes review of Graduate studios 1 - 4 (LARC 554, LARC 556, LARC 558, LARC 562); LARC 504 Advanced GIS for Landscape Planning, LARC 555 Master's Project Preparation, LARC 440-LARC 441 site engineering, and LARC 389/589 History and Theory of Landscape Architecture (new graduate section approved in 2021).   Courses dedicated to the graduate curriculum are meeting expectations for developing appropriate levels of competency with target passing rates of 90% or more of students passing the reviewed courses at a B-grade or better. Participation in classes was affected by COVID-19 protocols, but to a lesser extent than seen in undergraduate courses, as might be expected. Faculty agree that students are achieving the level of preparation expected for the MLA degree. However, there is a clear need for greater variety of choices for major professors for MLA students. Currently, 3 tenure/track faculty act as major professor for 17 full and part-time MLA students, including 2 students who are not currently enrolled. Students would benefit from having at least one additional appropriately qualified tenure/track faculty member whose areas of scholarship complement those of the existing faculty.

Summary of Changes/Improvements Being Considered:

The 2021 LAAB accreditation standards for MLA programs require a clearly distinct curriculum equivalent to 3 years of study at the institution with up to one year of advanced standing allowed for students entering the program with previous professional degrees in landscape architecture or a closely related field. Curriculum changes submitted in AY22 address this, and will change some aspects of the assessment process. Program faculty are in the process of reviewing SLOs for the MLA as well as alignment between our courses and 2021 LAAB standards. Revisions to current assessment measures and criteria will be reflecting in the coming year.

Inter-rater Reliability:

The program faculty developed a cross-reference matrix of LAAB required competencies and required courses that contribute to achieving those competencies. We also developed a rubric of competency evaluation for our coursework review, along with a general template for studio work review by visiting or guest critics. The latter is important because the outside review by professionals or community partners is a measure of how well students are achieving the expectations for creating professional-level work (to the degree it would be expected at any given level in the program).

Closing the Loop:

Since meeting as a group to review student work at least annually (begun in 2018), faculty have become more aware of 1) what each course is achieving and how it contributes to the overall educational goals, 2)what the appropriate expectation for levels of competency in each class should be, and 3) how each course contributes to achieving professional accreditation standards. This has also allowed faculty to speculate on the

scaffolding of building competencies can be improved. However, this has been achieved largely through exploration, with the development of our current rubrics being something of an intermediate step. We believe we have a good process for qualitatively evaluating the students' work and learning outcomes, but we are still trying to define a better, more systematic way of quantitatively assessing the student outcomes. Better / more formalized recording of individual achievement is also needed (job placement, external awards or scholarships or other recognition, etc.)

Student Achievement

Landscape Architecture BSLA

Student Retention:

Regular advising and communication with students by faculty advisors provides awareness and insight to intervene when students face issues continuing with their degrees at both the Bachelors and Masters levels. All non-graduating BSLA students enrolled in the program in spring 2021 continued in fall 2021. The biggest threat to student retention is typically lack of ability to pay tuition/fees. However, in the past year, some retention issues arose with students (specifically, 5 students: 3 female, 2 male; 2 international, 1 hispanic) who struggled with issues that arose due to COVID19. Most of these were stress or mental health issues, and at least 3 students reported struggling with depression and a sense of isolation. Prior to that, we experienced a few students in 2018-2020 who struggled with either personal issues (eg, a student with bi-polar disorder), or decided to go directly to work in landscape contractor/construction firms (2 wh males, 1 wh female, 1 hispanic female). With the growth our region has experienced recently, we anticipate that some students may choose this route, potentially leading to a loss of 1 - 4 students per year. However, we (all program faculty) discourage students who are doing well in their courses from leaving prior to graduation. We actively discuss job opportunities, the benefits of bachelor's and master's degrees for overall career success, and bring in professionals for workshops, portfolio reviews (the "Portfolio Slam"), studio reviews, guest lectures, "Lunch and Learn" lectures, and one lecture/Q&A session each year discussing the requirements and process for professional licensure in the state of Idaho. Direct interaction with professionals in our region (and the greater Pacific coast metro areas) is one of the best tools we have to promote student interest and excitement about entering the profession. In the spring 2021 semester, we hosted a weekly lunchtime lecture with past presidents of the American Society of Landscape Architects. The lecture series was well attended and has been archived as a future resource and "living history" record for ASLA. Students make comments showing that they appreciate these efforts, and in more general terms, appreciate the support they get from the program faculty. For example, one of Spring 2021 graduating seniors sent the following email message:

> "Dear Beth Scott, I am sending you this email because through my years as a Landscape Architecture student I have failed to respond to most teacher evaluations at the end of quite a few semesters. I feel that it is my due diligence to express to you, as the program head, my appreciation for having the opportunity to learn from Dan Cronan, Roberto Cappecci, Raffaella Sini, Don Brigham, and yourself. You have all been truly wonderful teachers and guides through my time in college. I have absolutely no complaints, the culture of learning in our department is nothing short of excellent. It is both rigorous and relaxed, educational but enjoyable. You all should be very proud of the academic environment that you all worked so hard to create and maintain. In short, I am grateful for the time I have spent in the Landscape Architecture program, the professors that you have cultivated over the years are some of the highest quality teachers I have had the pleasure to learn from throughout my time as a student, in both higher and lower level education. Sincerely, James Leeson"

So while the above is simply an example and not a metric, it speaks to the success of the program faculty's engagement with students, in terms of both retention and student success. This particular graduate is happily working for a professional firm in Texas, and recently sent an email to recruit other UI students to work as interns at the firm.

Student Persistence:

This is tracked by interaction between faculty advisors or program head with students, as well as at the college level. The only changes in the current assessment cycle are students switching to the BSLA program; none have left the program.

Student Completion:

Student completion is tracked by faculty advisors and program head. In the current assessment cycle the biggest threat to completion was ensuring students could complete classes during the upheaval and switch to distance learning during COVID 19 pandemic. This has particularly affected international students who may feel even more isolated than other students. We have developed plans with each of the students that struggled to complete their courses in the past year so that they now meet at least bi-weekly with their advisors, and have at least quarterly meetings with the program head to check in on their progress. Two of these students are on track to graduate this year after failing most of their courses over one semester in the past year (both female, one international, one hispanic). A third has successfully re-engaged in his sophomore-level courses and is averaging a B at this time after having to petition to be allowed to continue in the program (a male international student). We continue to struggle with 2 male students, one international and one hispanic, that do not seem to be able to keep up with their coursework. The hispanic student is also receiving guidance from CAMP advisors. We continue to offer advising and tutoring/help sessions (instructors, TA and program head), but have had little success engaging with these 2 students.

Student Postgraduate Success:

This is currently monitored informally, but the program is developing a graduating student survey to gather this information more systematically.

Identify Equity Gaps:

Reported equity gap data does not indicate any issues despite the fact that white students are the dominant demographic cohort. There is a slight gap between males and females in the program, with males having a slightly lower GPA. This may be due to issues some of our internationals students (dominantly male) experienced due to COVID19-related problems.

Effective Learning Environment and Closing Equity Gaps:

As discussed in previous sections, the program is small and very hands-on with full-time instructional faculty averaging 12-15 contact hours per week with students. As a result, there is a great deal of one-on-one interaction with individual students. There is also a culture of student mentoring and support which tends to even out equity gaps in terms of access to support for student success.

Demand and Productivity

Landscape Architecture BSLA and MLA

External Demand:

The current assessment cycle shows course completion rates lower than usual for fall 2020 (77%) rebounding to 88% in Spring 2021, likely reflecting issues surrounding the COVID 19 pandemic. Overall, enrollments have been low relative to enrollments during the recession (2008-2014). This is contradictory to demand in the profession, which has been increasing, particularly in Idaho. It may reflect the ability of students interested in this type of work to obtain employment and gain professional opportunities through extended apprenticeship. However, graduating students tend to get professional employment immediately upon graduation if they are seeking it (>90% of spring 2021 BSLA grads and all MLA grads seeking professional employment had jobs within 1 month of graduation). See attached for more information about industry trends and broader discussion of the professional degrees. We had one graduate student from Spring 2021 not return in the fall; this person is taking a semester off to work professionally. This is not unusual, and in fact is encouraged as part of the MLA program.

Attached Files
📄 Issue Paper_2021 LAAB standards_eas_19sep2020.pdf

Internal Demand:

The curriculum is highly specialized because it is for a professional program and therefore does not tend to generate much demand for courses from students outside of the program. Overall, 61.5% of the credit hours generated are attributed to undergraduate curriculum, 22.3% to graduate curriculum, and 16.2% to GenEd. The program is also relatively small, so total credit hour production reflects this (for Spring 2021: BSLA = 298 , MLA = 144 , total = 442).

Credit Productivity:

Credit hour production is relatively low at both the graduate and undergraduate levels, as described above. Greatest potential for growth is in growing the professional 3-year MLA because this degree tends to attract non-traditional students / people changing careers. Demand for this degree is likely to increase with overall population growth, particularly in the Boise area.

Financial Health and Resources

Landscape Architecture BSLA and MLA

Financial Health:

Low enrollments have meant low budgets and insufficient funds to support types of student activities and faculty development that the program has traditionally supported or aims to support. This issue is exacerbated by lack of administrative support at the program level and insufficient instructional faculty, which creates heavy teaching demands on the 3 full time instructional faculty. The program also has 2 full time research faculty assigned to it whose salaries partially or fully come out of the program budget, although F&A from their research activities is not returned to the program to support the needed instructional faculty. The program suggests that at least some research F&A be returned to the program to hire temporary instructional faculty. Alternatively, new grant proposals could incorporate equivalent teaching buyout to support the needed faculty.

Although the program continues to function fully, it is not well positioned to recruit students by offering support (scholarship, TA/RA, temporary hires) or provide some of the student experiences that would attract students and enable us to better compete with our peer institutions, such as regular invited guest studio critics from outside our region, or additional travel-service learning opportunities to engage with a broad range of communities and critical social-ecological issues. Some of our peers do this regularly (Univ. Washington, Univ. Arizona, Cal Berkley, Univ. Illinois, LSU, Mississippi State, FIU and many others). We aim to develop sufficient resources to increase our ability to seek out and engage in these opportunities, which we believe would attract more and better students, as well as better prepare our students for professional practice.

Efficient Use of Resources:

The program works within its budgetary restrictions by limiting faculty and student travel, student financial support, and other expenses. This means, however, that faculty perform many tasks without financial support (no TA's or no travel funds, no support for publication expenses not covered by grants, etc.), and have heavy teaching and service loads.

© 2022 Anthology Inc.