Landscape Architecture, B.S.L.A.

Degree Offered

- Bachelor of Science in Landscape Architecture

Nature of the Program

Landscape architecture is the art of design, planning, and arranging natural and human-constructed elements on the land. It is a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) designated discipline. It applies cultural and scientific knowledge with concern for the conservation and stewardship of natural and aesthetic amenities to create an environment that serves a useful and enjoyable purpose. This involves consideration of the quality of life in urban, rural and natural settings, as well as the interaction of humans with nature. The landscape architecture program at West Virginia University strives to equip students with techniques and skills through problem-solving in design theory, site design and construction, land use planning, and planting design. It emphasizes a philosophy of responsibility and commitment to ethical standards regarding the natural environment, social contexts, and professional practice.

The faculty represents a multi-disciplinary team with practical experience in creative and scientific research, design, consultation, and public service. This diversity is the nucleus of the program, allowing for a strong undergraduate curriculum supplemented by related courses in the arts, sciences, engineering, and planning, reflecting the needs of the Appalachian region and current trends within the profession. Two of the faculty are

Graduates of the program can assume traditional landscape architectural roles, e.g., positions with landscape architecture, architecture and engineering firms, design consulting firms, governmental and private planning departments, construction firms, transportation planning agencies, etc. In addition, WVU graduates are prepared for design and planning positions meeting the needs common to West Virginia and other rural areas.

The Landscape Architecture Program is accredited by the Landscape Architecture Accreditation Board of the American Society of Landscape Architects. To graduate, students must complete a full four-year course of study following a studio sequence and earn a minimum of 120 total credits. The Landscape Architecture Program is within the School of Community and Economic Development of the Davis College of Agriculture and Natural Resources at West Virginia University. Demand for professional landscape architects is increasing due to emerging environmental markets and projected shortages of graduates from accredited landscape architecture programs. The BSLA focuses on environmental and community design and planning, in addition to providing the primary skills and methods of landscape architecture.

Program Mission

Landscape architects utilize both art and science in planning and design, creating environments of natural, social, cultural, and aesthetic value.

The Landscape Architecture Program at West Virginia University equips students with critical thinking, design skills, and technical knowledge to engage in successful careers. Our program contributes to quality of life in both urban and rural areas and improves how humans interact with their environments. We promote stewardship and address the rapidly growing environmental, social, and economic challenges of tomorrow.

Program Goals

- We prepare students for challenging and satisfying careers through a rigorous curriculum, building broad professional skills and technical strengths across the full spectrum of the discipline.
- We ensure students develop practical experience through experiential learning, internships and study abroad. We foster critical thinkers and future leaders for ever-changing environmental, economic, and societal challenges.
- We collaborate across disciplines on campus to enhance course offerings, creative scholarship, and research opportunities. We develop and build teams to address critical regional and global problems.
- We involve students in research, design, and creative inquiry. We innovate and integrate engaged scholarship with research, teaching, and service.
- We instill responsibility and stewardship: we uplift communities to support our land grant mission by engaging with communities in West Virginia and the Appalachian Region. Through service-learning, we share the skills of the faculty and students of the Landscape Architecture Program.
- We provide supportive learning environments and safe spaces. We welcome diverse students and are respectful of a broad range of cultural and societal perspectives. We are committed to the success of first-generation and underrepresented students.

Student Retention and Graduation Rates, and Degrees Granted

The graduation rate, defined as the percentage of freshmen that ultimately graduate from the program, has been 55.55% for the cohort starting in Fall 2017 and graduating in Spring 2021, and 50% for the cohort starting in Fall 2018 and graduating in Spring 2022.

The retention rate, defined as the percentage of freshmen that return for their sophomore year, has been 81.48% for the cohort starting in 2017, 91.66% for the cohort starting in 2018, 72.4% for the cohort starting in 2019, 45.45% for the cohort starting in 2020, and 51.61% for cohort starting in 2021.

From academic year 2017-2018 to academic year 2021-2022, 93 degrees were awarded for an average of 18.6 degrees per year.

Post-graduation Employment

The BSLA program regularly surveys graduates in order to get a picture of their employment status. From academic year 2016-2017 to academic year 2021-2022, 47 alumni are working in private practice and 16 are employed in landscape horticulture and design-build practice. They correspond to 65.2% and 22.2% of the respondents respectively.

Estimated Cost of Attendance

Information about fees, tuition and other expenses, as well as scholarships and financial aid can be found at https://admissions.wvu.edu/academics/majors/landscape-architecture#sticky-page-nav__cost (https://admissions.wvu.edu/academics/majors/landscape-architecture/#sticky-page-nav__cost)

and at https://admissions.wvu.edu/cost-and-aid (https://admissions.wvu.edu/cost-and-aid/)

The following are dedicated scholarships for Landscape Architecture students.

Jack Paules Endowed Scholarship

This scholarship is designated for regularly enrolled third and/or fourth year students majoring in Landscape Architecture in the WVU Davis College of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

The McHale Family Landscape Architecture Scholarship

This annual scholarship is provided to students in landscape architecture based on financial need and academic performance.

John R. Tschiderer Landscape Architecture Education Experience Fund

Annual awards to students and faculty for special activities such as travel and continuing education.

Program Costs

Upon enrollment students are required to buy a kit of drafting supplies for a cost of around $300. At the end of the second year studio sequence, students are required to purchase a computer that is capable of efficiently running programs with graphic intensive applications extensively used during the third and fourth years studio sequences. The approximate cost of a computer of this capability is around $2,500.

Study Abroad

Opportunities for study abroad include the LARC 444 Summer Field Experience: Western European Gardens, Landscapes and Architecture (6 credits). The course qualifies for student financial aid.

In accordance with the Higher Education Act the program meets the educational requirements for licensure eligibility in each U.S. state.

Contact:

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For examples of student designs, view projects from LARC 450 and 652 (https://sites.google.com/mix.wvu.edu/larc450652studios/home/).

Admissions for 2025-2026

- First-Time Freshman are admitted directly into major.
- Students transferring from another major within WVU must have a 2.0 cumulative GPA or departmental approval.
- Students transferring from another institution must have a 2.0 cumulative GPA or departmental approval.

Major Code: 1713

General Education Foundations

Please use this link to view a list of courses that meet each GEF requirement. **(**http://registrar.wvu.edu/gef/**)**

NOTE: Some major requirements will fulfill specific GEF requirements. Please see the curriculum requirements listed below for details on which GEFs you will need to select.

Code	Title	Hours
General Education Foundations		
F1 - Composition & Rhetoric		3-6
ENGL 101 & ENGL 102	Introduction to Composition and Rhetoric and Composition, Rhetoric, and Research	
or ENGL 103	Accelerated Academic Writing	
F2A/F2B - Science & Technology		4-6
F3 - Math & Quantitative Reasoning		3-4
F4 - Society & Connections		3
F5 - Human Inquiry & the Past		3
F6 - The Arts & Creativity		3
F7 - Global Studies & Diversity		3
F8 - Focus (may be satisfied by completion of a minor, double major, or dual degree)		9
Total Hours		31-37

Please note that not all of the GEF courses are offered at all campuses. Students should consult with their advisor or academic department regarding the GEF course offerings available at their campus.

Degree Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
University Requirements		40
Landscape Architecture Major Requirements		80
Total Hours		120

University Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
General Education Foundations (GEF) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 (31-37 Credits)		
Outstanding GEF Requirements 1, 4, 5, 7, and 8		24
ANRD 191	First-Year Seminar	1
General Electives		15
Total Hours		40

Landscape Architecture Major Requirements

In addition to the following curriculum requirements, students will be required to work at least one summer in an approved landscape architecture office or equivalent. Student will be required to earn a grade of C- or better in all of their Landscape Architecture/Horticulture Courses.

Timely completion of required MATH courses are critical for advancement in this program of study.

Code	Title	Hours
Select one of the following (GEF 2):		4
PLSC 206 & 206L	Principles of Plant Science and Principles of Plant Science Laboratory	
BIOL 101 & 101L	General Biology 1 and General Biology 1 Laboratory	
BIOL 105 & 105L	Environmental Biology and Environmental Biology Laboratory	
Select one of the following or higher (GEF 3):		3-8
MATH 124	Algebra with Applications	
MATH 126	College Algebra	
MATH 129	Pre-Calculus Mathematics	
MATH 150	Applied Calculus	
LARC 105	Introduction to Landscape Architecture, Environmental Design and Planning	3
LARC 120S	Landscape Architectural Drawing Studio	3
LARC 121S	Landscape Architectural Graphics Studio	3

LARC 212	History of Landscape Architecture (GEF 6)	3
LARC 223	Computer Graphics in Landscape Architecture	3
LARC 224	Digital Design Graphics for Landscape Architecture	2
LARC 231	Landscape Construction Materials and Methods	3
LARC 250S	Theory of Landscape Architectural Design Studio	3
LARC 251	Landscape Architectural Design	1
LARC 251S	Landscape Architectural Design Studio	2
LARC 261	Planting Design	1
LARC 261S	Planting Design Studio	2
LARC 330S	Landscape Architectural Construction 1 Studio	4
LARC 331	Advanced Grading & Stormwater	1
LARC 331S	Advanced Grading & Stormwater Studio	3
LARC 350	Landscape Architectural Design 2	1
LARC 350S	Landscape Architectural Design 2 Studio	3
LARC 351	Landscape Architectural Design 3	1
LARC 351S	Landscape Architectural Design 3 Studio	3
LARC 360	Natural Systems Design	1
LARC 360S	Natural Systems Design Studio	3
LARC 450	Advanced Landscape Architectural Design 1	1
LARC 450S	Advanced Landscape Architectural Design 1 Studio	4
LARC 451	Advanced Landscape Architectural Design 2 (Capstone)	1
LARC 451S	Advanced Landscape Architectural Design 2 Studio	4
Contemporary Issues in Landscape Architecture		2
LARC 452	Contemporary Issues in Landscape Architecture	
LARC 484	Professional Practice	3
HORT 260L	Woody Plant Materials Laboratory	3
RESM 440 & 440L	Foundations of Applied Geographic Information Systems and Foundations of Applied Geographic Information Systems Laboratory	3
Select one of the following:		3
LARC 465	Regional Design	
LARC 466	Introduction to Urban Design Issues	
Total Hours		80

+SUGGESTED PLAN OF STUDY

First Year

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours
LARC 105	3	ENGL 101 (GEF 1)	3
LARC 120S	3	LARC 121S	3
LARC 223	3	LARC 224	2
ANRD 191	1	GEF 4, 5, 7, or 8	6
Select one of the following (GEF 2):	4		
BIOL 101 & 101L			
BIOL 105 & 105L			
PLSC 206 & 206L			
Select one of the following or higher (GEF 3):	3		
MATH 124			
MATH 126			

	Hours		Hours
MATH 129			
MATH 150			
	17		14

Second Year

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours
ENGL 102 (GEF 1)	3	LARC 212 (GEF 6)	3
HORT 260L	3	LARC 231	3
LARC 250S	3	LARC 251	1
GEF 4, 5, 7, or 8	6	LARC 251S	2
		LARC 261	1
		LARC 261S	2
		RESM 440 & 440L	3
	15		15

Third Year

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours	Summer	Hours
LARC 330S	4	LARC 331	1	Summer Professional Experience	3
LARC 350	1	LARC 331S	3		
LARC 350S	3	LARC 351	1		
LARC 360	1	LARC 351S	3		
LARC 360S	3	LARC 484	3		
GEF 4, 5, 7, or 8	3	GEF 4, 5, 7, or 8	3		
		Elective	3		
	15		17		0

Fourth Year

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours
LARC 450	1	LARC 451	1
LARC 450S	4	LARC 451S	4
LARC 452	2	Elective	7
LARC 465 or 466	3		
Elective	5		
	15		12

Total credit hours: 120

Major Learning Outcomes

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Landscape Architecture is a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) discipline. Students who complete the Bachelor of Science in Landscape Architecture (BSLA) will:

1. Develop a solid professional educational foundation, building knowledge and skills of: graphics, written and oral communication, site analysis, multi-scaled site design, detailing and construction, plant materials, site grading, and professional practice.

2. Apply critical thinking and theory to address societal, economic, and environmental challenges; understand the breadth of landscape architecture, cultural history, and contemporary issues and the tool of design as an agent of change.

3. Create designs that respond to the needs of the environment and society's health, safety, and welfare, reflecting the standards of the landscape architecture profession and demonstrating innovation.

4. Demonstrate best practices promoting environmental sustainability, justice, and inclusivity for all, addressing the needs of universal access and underrepresented and marginalized communities.

5. Contribute to community development and quality of life through local and regional service-learning projects. Analyze and apply design skills to solving real-life problems in diverse environments. Build skills in leadership, client relations, and stakeholder engagement.

6.Apply professional ethical standards and social responsibility to benefit outdoor places, the public, and clients.