

Landscape Architecture

Undergraduate Programs of Study

- Environmental Design (major)

Graduate Programs of Study

- Landscape Architecture

Degrees Offered

- Bachelor of Science (B.S.)
- Master of Landscape Architecture (M.L.A.)

Landscape architecture is a dynamic, broad-spectrum profession devoted to the design of outdoor environments. Geology, ecology and horticulture, architecture and engineering, geography, the social sciences and the fine arts are a few of the contributors to these “architects of the land.” The function and aesthetics of parks, housing developments, transportation corridors, urban plazas, zoos and campuses all reflect the acquired skill of landscape architects using both “hard” (built) and “soft” (planted) materials to both sustain and manipulate the natural environment. Landscape architects design exterior spaces with sketches, detail models, and working drawings for their clients as well as the companies and contractors that will use these specifications to bring life to the practitioner’s vision. The unique challenges for landscape architects span everything from small residential landscapes and large-scale urban developments to regional watersheds. Collaborating with architects, planners, artists, and engineers, landscape architects create compelling and memorable exterior spaces that affect the lives of people who inhabit them.

Career Opportunities

The majority of landscape architects work for landscape architecture services and firms, engineering, architecture and planning companies. Roughly one in five become their own entrepreneur after licensure. The federal agencies that hire many landscape architects include the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service, Soil Conservation Service, the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Department of Transportation and the Veteran’s Administration. Many of these departments also exist at a state and municipal level, providing additional work opportunities. Within all these job possibilities exists the opportunity to apply the ethical imperatives of conservation, remediation and sustainability to increasing challenges of energy requirements.

Accreditation

The five-year Master of Landscape Architecture degree is currently being reviewed for initial accreditation by the Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board (LAAB). The Bachelor of Landscape Architecture program is fully accredited by the Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board (LAAB) and will be phased out on or before May 15th 2022. For more information, see www.asla.org. To become a licensed landscape architect requires an accredited professional degree, internship and a state exam leading to licensure.

The Program

The landscape architecture program is a five-year professional course of study leading to a Master of Landscape Architecture (M.L.A.) degree. North Dakota State University landscape architecture is the only landscape architecture program in North Dakota. During the first year of study, the curriculum addresses the understanding of the environment and our impact on nature. In addition to meeting General Education and departmental requirements, students take five environmental design courses (ENVD 101, 102, 104, 130 and 172) comprised of lecture courses, a drawing course and a design fundamentals course. Beginning at the sophomore level, through a selective admissions process, students begin their landscape architecture course of study. Studio courses are limited in enrollment to maintain a high level of student faculty contact. The landscape architecture program is based on a studio model of education providing high contact hours between students and their professors as they learn problem-solving techniques and design methodologies. The primary focus is on design thinking, students engaging in individual and group projects that represent a wide array of design challenges. In this studio format, students have opportunities for public service projects requiring real-world solutions benefiting both the students and the ethical requirements of outreach within the profession. Other courses in the curriculum include the history of landscape architecture, grading and drainage, materials and methods, construction documentation, and professional ethics and practices. The program emphasizes the importance of critical thinking, the communication of ideas through writing, public presentation of models, drawings, renderings and computer animation. Field trips, lecture series, invited outside professionals and a laptop computer requirement in the second year help students develop their own interests and craft their own unique career path.