

**DEPARTMENT OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE / REGIONAL &
COMMUNITY PLANNING
ANNUAL PROGRAM REVIEW
within the
COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE, PLANNING & DESIGN
at
KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY**

Mission, Centrality, Uniqueness

The faculty is committed to providing opportunities for students to learn and practice critical skills that will aid them in shaping tomorrow's quality of life. We strive to educate students who can bring diverse perspectives, creative insights, analytical, technical and collaborative skills, and an appreciation of the designed, natural, and political environments to local neighborhoods, communities, and regions. The issues that concern the department faculty are numerous, as can be expected in any comprehensive planning and design department, but focus on the sustainable use of land, fiscal and natural resources, and the retention and building of community. Students will be educated to become professional leaders and participants in public life, helping to bring balance to the often conflicting objectives of resource stewardship and community development.

As a diverse and nationally recognized faculty, we are involved with education, service, scholarly and creative activities in regional, community and landscape planning, design and management. The department focuses on visual, physical, ecological, economic opportunities and limitations encountered in rural and urban landscapes at both regional and local scales. Our primary objective is to educate students to become professionals that are prepared to engage in design and planning problems and advance the state of the disciplines. Our professionally accredited programs in Landscape Architecture and Regional and Community Planning advocate the importance of the natural and built place within the larger context of public policy.

Quality of Faculty

The Department's faculty is a diverse group of individuals having contributed 500 years of teaching experience at Kansas State University. Of the Department's 22 faculty, 12 are at the Full Professor level, 6 Associate Professors and 3 are non-tenured Assistant Professors. One faculty member at Assistant Professor level is on a temporary appointment. Four of the faculty are on phased retirement.

Each faculty member has Teaching, Scholarship, Service and Professional Advising responsibilities. These responsibilities vary primarily based upon teaching vs. scholarship commitments. Teaching percentages vary from 40% to 75%. Scholarship commitments vary from 10% to 40%. All faculty serve on Thesis committees and professionally advise their students. Of the Department's 22 faculty, 20 are on K-State's graduate faculty and 6 have been approved as Core faculty for the College's Ph.D. Program.

Quality of Students

The Design Futures Council is comprised of industry leaders and innovators. Each year they survey design professionals from around the country as to how they feel design schools are preparing students to enter their chosen profession. They publish their results in a publication titled, *Design Intelligence*. The following are their findings for 2006: Kansas State University's Master of Landscape Architecture Program is ranked 2nd in the nation (was 6th in 2006, and 8th in 2005); the Bachelor of Landscape Architecture Program is ranked 3rd in the nation (was 5th in 2006).

There is no ranking system in place at the current time for evaluating the quality of the various accredited planning schools in the country, although the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning is attempting to develop guidelines which may lead to a systematic ranking system in the near future.

Employer Demand

During the spring semester the College of Architecture, Planning and Design conducts an event called *DesignExpo*. The intent of these professional firms is to provide employment and internship opportunities for our students. This spring there were more than 130 firms that participated. All of our landscape architecture students are either employed before graduation or shortly thereafter. Salaries for graduates are averaging approximately \$40,000+. Many have more than two job offers.

For students with degrees in Regional and Community Planning employment of planners is expected to grow on-average for all occupations through 2014. Since 2001 approximately 79% of graduates have been employed upon graduation in the field of planning.

Cost Effectiveness

For the Department of Landscape Architecture/Regional and Community Planning, the landscape architecture faculty (12.9 FTE) averages 17.56 contact hours per week. The Planning Program (5.25 FTE) averages 6.38 contact hours per week. The landscape architecture/regional and community planning programs each average 133 student credit hours. The remainder of a faculty member's time is designated for research, student mentoring and community service activities. This is appropriate in comparison to other nationally accredited landscape architecture and planning programs.

The Department of Landscape Architecture and Department of Regional and Community Planning merged in 1993 to form the Department of Landscape Architecture/Regional and Community Planning. This resulted in consolidating administrative office space and personnel as well as enhanced faculty and student exchanges between the two programs. All departments within the College of Architecture, Planning, and Design share responsibilities and resources to teach first-year students in the Environmental Design Studies Program. The Department offers two courses, to the university population, LAR 322, Environmental Issues and Ethics and PLAN 315, Introduction to Planning. Both courses have enrollments of over 100 students. At the graduate level, Landscape Architecture and Architecture students participate in the same classes, LAR 898, Proposal Writing and ARCH 725, Research Methods. Landscape Architecture program's combine the teaching of post-baccalaureate MLA proficiency courses with non-baccalaureate undergraduate courses that require the same instructional material, which also demonstrates teaching efficiencies.

Beginning in 2007 students will be able to participate in a 5 year non-baccalaureate program in regional and community planning. This new program of study is built upon the use of existing faculty and courses that are already in place at K-State while increasing our student credit hours.

Summarized Assessment of Student Learning

The assessment plan for the Master of Regional and Community Planning has five student learning outcomes; written skills; oral skills; history and theory of planning processes and practice; quantitative analysis and computer skills; legal considerations of planning implementation. Over the past two years written skills and the understanding of history and theory declined slightly; quantitative analysis and computer skills increased; legal considerations maintained the same level of understanding; oral skills did not have enough data to report outcomes. With more international students in the program the Planning faculty see the need to spend more time with these students to improve their written and oral skills.

The assessment plan for the Master of Landscape Architecture includes two student learning outcomes. The first is the student's ability to

The Bachelor of Landscape Architecture's most important external assessment is responding to the national accreditation process, which ensures the essential educational components leading to entry level professional competence. In addition, the program has five student learning outcomes all of which are fall under the goal of student's being able to demonstrate understanding and skill in the application of landscape design theory and processes. The five learning outcomes include: students will better

understand and apply design history, theory and problem solving methods in their design processes; be able to effectively communicate their work in graphic, written, and oral formats – design process as well as products; apply effective use of research methods to further their understanding of issues pertinent to the profession of landscape architecture; demonstrate professional work skills through leadership and teamwork; and be exposed to multi-cultural issues related to landscape architecture design processes. These outcomes are assessed through the student's programming and capstone courses. The evaluation of the student work will be based on these outcomes as to their degree of successfulness in which they understand and develop their program for the capstone course. Work will be reviewed by the faculty, practicing professionals, and members of the Landscape Architecture Advisory Council.