

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

<https://landscape.calpoly.edu>

Landscape architecture is a profession focused on the design, planning, and protection of the natural and developed environments. The five-year program in landscape architecture is accredited by the Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board and recognized by the Landscape Architects Technical Committee under the purview of the California Architects Board.

The program emphasizes a process-oriented approach to design and planning while developing an awareness and sensitivity to community and human values as they relate to environmental conditions. Students majoring in landscape architecture acquire technical competencies and creative design skills through a range of projects which represent the breadth of the profession.

Graduates of the program are prepared for positions in private practice, consulting, governmental agencies at the national, state or local levels, industry and construction firms. Graduate study is encouraged for those students interested in pursuing advanced studies or academic positions.

Students in their last two years of study and have at least a 3.2 grade point average may have the opportunity to join Theta Chapter of Sigma Lambda Alpha, the national scholastic honor society for landscape architecture.

Laptop Requirement

All incoming freshmen and transfer students are required to have a laptop computer when they enter the program. In the profession of landscape architecture, computing is an integral component, and developing the ability to critically integrate hand and digital tools is a fundamental aspect of landscape architecture education. A laptop computer ensures that students have access to these tools anytime, anywhere. Financial aid may be available to cover the cost of the notebook computer (see the Financial Aid website (<https://www.calpoly.edu/financial-aid/>) for more information). The department laptop and software requirements can be found on the Landscape Architecture department website here (<https://landscape.calpoly.edu/laptop-computers-software-recommendations/>): <https://landscape.calpoly.edu/laptop-computers-software-recommendations/>.

Undergraduate Programs

- Landscape Architecture (BLA) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/architecture-environmental-design/landscape-architecture/landscape-architecture-bla/>)

Undergraduate Minors

- Landscape Architecture Minor (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/architecture-environmental-design/landscape-architecture/landscape-architecture-minor/>)
- Sustainable Environments Minor (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/architecture-environmental-design/landscape-architecture/sustainable-environments-minor/>)

LA Courses

LA 1104 History of Landscape Architecture (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP, SU

2026-28 or later catalog: GE Area 3A

2020-26 catalogs: GE Area C1

Philosophies, ethics, personalities, and events of landscape architecture explored from recorded time through current centuries. Design theories supporting important landscape architecture projects. Individuals and influential events in industry, the arts and sciences, politics, and society. Course may be offered in classroom-based or online format. 3 lectures. Fulfills GE Area 3A (GE Area C1 for students on the 2020-26 catalogs). Formerly LA 212.

LA 1110 Landscape Representation I (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

Introduction to traditional (analog) communication media for landscape architecture, including methods, techniques, skills, and tools used in design expression, exploration, and generation. 1 lecture, 2 laboratories. Formerly LA 170.

LA 1112 Landscape Representation II (4 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

Prerequisite: LA 170 or LA 1110.

Introduction of digital media applications, computer-aided drawing and fabrication techniques for landscape architects. Development of design representation methods and conventions to communicate qualitative and quantitative landscape information. Course may be offered in classroom-based or hybrid format. 4 activities. Replaced LA 431.

LA 1120 Studio I - Beginning Design (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

Corequisite: LA 1112.

Introduction to principles, methods and elements of two- and three-dimensional design. Exploration of basic design elements including composition, design process and spatial settings. Introduction to site inventory/ site analysis in landscape architecture design process. 3 laboratories. Formerly LA 202.

LA 2203 Landscape Ecology: Concepts, Issues, and Interrelationships (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F

2026-28 or later catalog: GE Area 5B

2020-26 catalogs: GE Area B2

Sustainability Focused

Core life science concepts, theories and techniques explored through the lens of landscape ecology, emphasizing connections to sustainability, environmental conservation and natural resource management. Field trip may be required. Course may be offered in classroom-based or online format. 3 lectures. Fulfills GE Area 5B (GE Area B2 for students on the 2020-26 catalogs). Formerly LA 220.

LA 2210 Materials and Techniques of Landscape Construction (4 units)

Term Typically Offered: SP

Prerequisite: LA 431 or LA 1112.

Introduction to the fundamental materials, assemblies, and methods of landscape construction with an emphasis on sustainable concepts and practices. Introduction to detail development, construction drawing, and fabrication techniques. Field trip required. Course may be offered in classroom-based or hybrid format. 3 lectures, 1 activity. Formerly LA 243.

LA 2212 Introduction to Planting Design (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: SP

Prerequisite: PLSC 233 or PLSC 2234.

Introduction to theories and applied principles of planting design with connections between art and science in landscape design. Focus on California plant communities and introduction to horticultural characteristics and landscape design, the course includes field identification, installation techniques, and maintenance requirements. 1 lecture, 2 activities. Replaced LA 349.

LA 2214 Site Engineering Techniques and Applications (4 units)

Term Typically Offered: F

Prerequisite: LA 431 or LA 1112. Concurrent: LA 3320. Corequisite: One of the following: MATH 118, MATH 1006, MATH 119, or MATH 1007.

Introduction and application of the techniques, methods, principles and criteria for site engineering and landform design. Includes an introduction to soil science, survey methods, and experiences in the principles, procedures and application of site grading and drainage for landscape architecture. Course may be offered in classroom-based or hybrid format. 2 lectures, 2 activities. Formerly LA 241.

LA 2218 Introduction to Geographic Information Systems (GIS) (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

Fundamental concepts and functions of Geographic Information Systems (GIS). Create, manage, analyze, and display geographically referenced data. Explore how GIS is applied to analyze environmental, social, and natural resource issues. 2 lecture, 1 laboratory. Crosslisted as LA/NR 2218. Formerly LA/NR 218.

LA 2220 Studio II - Site Based Design (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

Prerequisite: LA 202 or LA 1120 with grade of a C- or better or consent of instructor.

Introduction to landscape design at the site scale. Exploration of inventory and analysis methods to generate program outcome statements, design concepts, spatial development and landscape forms for a landscape project. 3 laboratories. Formerly LA 204.

LA 2222 Studio III - Design for Implementation (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

Prerequisite: LA 204 or LA 2220 with a grade of C- or better. Corequisite: LA 243 or LA 2210.

Introduction to concepts and practices of design development and construction documentation. Includes site analysis, design development, site preparation strategies, topographic manipulation, material selection, detail design and construction document preparation. 3 laboratories. Replaced LA 405.

LA 2270 Special Topics (1-3 units)

Term Typically Offered: TBD

Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.

Directed group study of special topics. The Class Schedule will list topic selected. Repeatable up to 6 units. Course may be offered in classroom-based or hybrid format. 1 to 3 lectures. Formerly LA 270.

LA 3303 Theory for Landscape Architects (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: SP

Prerequisite: LA 212 or LA 1104.

Examination of methods, process, and meaning in the theory of landscape architecture design. Discussion of major themes of design theory and related fields. Diverse writers, designers and theoretical viewpoints. Analysis of built work and development of theoretical stances. 3 lectures. Formerly LA 320.

LA 3304 Contemporary Issues in Cultural Landscapes (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F

Investigation of complexities of interrelated cultural theories, practices, and ethical decisions. Examination of shifting changes in social and environmental justice today. Exploration of historical preservation and cultural narrative meaning. Interpretation of personal and cultural values and ethics expressed in the landscape. Course may be offered in classroom-based or online format. 3 lectures. Formerly LA 330.

LA 3306 Professional Practice of Landscape Architecture (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F

Prerequisite: LA 431 or LA 1112; and LA 405 or LA 2222.

Issues related to the practice of landscape architecture, incorporating processes, procedures, and outcomes of professional practice. Professional ethics, business practice and communication, contractual relationships, legal aspects of the profession, cover letter, resume, and portfolio preparation. Course may be offered in classroom-based, online, or hybrid format. 3 lectures. Formerly LA 370.

LA 3310 Landscape Representation III (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F

Prerequisite: LA 431 or LA 1112.

Develop skills in advanced representation techniques with a focus on digital tools and software to create complex visualizations, presentations and animations. Course may be offered in classroom-based or hybrid format. 3 activities. Formerly LA 437.

LA 3312 Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Applications for Design Projects (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

Prerequisite: LA 431 or LA 1112. Concurrent: LA 3322. Recommended: LA 220 or LA 2203.

Integration and application of GIS skills in landscape architectural planning and design projects. Exploration of the analytical thinking process, visualization of various types of data, and development of site analyses for projects. Course may be offered in classroom-based, online, or hybrid format. 1 lecture, 2 activities. Formerly LA 438.

LA 3317 The World of Spatial Data and Geographic Information Technology (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: TBD

2026-28 or later: Upper-Div GE Area 2/5

2020-26 catalogs: Upper-Div GE Area B

Prerequisite: Junior standing; completion of GE Area 1 with grades of C- or better (GE Area A for the 2020-26 catalogs); completion of GE Area 2 with a grade of C- or better (GE Area B4 for the 2020-26 catalogs); and completion of GE Area 5 (GE Areas B1 to B3 for the 2020-26 catalogs).

Foundation for understanding the world through geographic information as well as the tools available to utilize spatial data. Experience with Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and related technology. Not open to students with credit in GEOG 218, GEOG 2218, LA/NR 218, or LA/NR 2218. 2 lectures, 1 activity. Crosslisted as LA/NR 3317. Fulfills GE Areas Upper-Division 2 or Upper-Division 5 (GE Area Upper-Division B for students on the 2020-26 catalogs). Formerly LA/NR 317.

LA 3320 Studio IV - Landscape Performance and Design (4 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

Prerequisite: LA 405 or LA 2222 with a grade of C- or better or consent of instructor. Concurrent: LA 2214.

Design studio with an emphasis on ecology, climate, and resilient and sustainable constructed landscapes. Application of green infrastructure, urban ecological systems and landscape performance principles and methods to the design of a mid-size project (3-10 acres) site. Field trip required. 4 laboratories. Formerly LA 402.

LA 3322 Studio V - Environmental Planning and Design (4 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

Prerequisite: LA 405 or LA 2222 with a grade of C- or better or consent of instructor. Concurrent: LA 3312. Recommended: LA 220 or LA 2203.

Exploration and integration of environmental systems and landscape ecology into planning and design projects. Emphasis is on the interpretation and application of environmental and ecological issues and strategies across a range of scales. Field trip required. 4 laboratories. Formerly LA 403.

LA 4371 Landscape Architecture Internship (4 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

CR/NC

Prerequisite: Second year standing in Landscape Architecture.

Involvement in a work setting related to landscape architecture. Credit/No Credit grading only. Formerly LA 371.

LA 4400 Special Problems for Advanced Undergraduates (1-3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.

Individual investigation, research, studies, or surveys of special problems. Repeatable up to 6 units. Formerly LA 400.

LA 4410 Sustainability, Resilience, and Climate Ecology in Design (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

Prerequisite: Junior standing.

Exploration of interconnections between sustainability, resilience, and climate ecology. Theoretical and practical approaches, with an emphasis on current challenges and solutions related to landscape architecture and the built environment. Field trip may be required. 1 lecture, 2 discussions. Formerly LA 432.

LA 4413 Social Equity and Design (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

Prerequisite: Junior standing.

Relationships between social equity, landscape architecture, and built environment. Design strategies for inclusive, just, and equitable public spaces and environments. Investigation of historical and contemporary social, cultural, economic, and political dynamics that shape landscapes and their impacts on communities. Field trip may be required. 1 lecture, 2 discussions. Formerly LA 433.

LA 4414 Advanced Landscape Construction (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

Prerequisite: LA 243 or LA 2210.

Examination and application of advanced landscape construction techniques. Emphasis on design, development, construction and testing of materials assemblies, construction techniques and implementation practices. Field trip may be required. 1 lecture, 2 laboratories. Formerly LA 350.

LA 4415 Advanced Landscape Representation (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

Prerequisite: LA 437 or LA 3310.

Exploration of contemporary design-enabling approaches to communicate design ideas, processes and outcomes. Presentation of a range of processes and techniques in both analog and digital domains, with particular attention to the most recent development in computational design and fabrication. 1 lecture, 2 activities. Formerly LA 436.

LA 4416 Advanced Planting Design (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

Prerequisite: PLSC 233 or PLSC 2234; and LA 349 or LA 2212.

Examination and application of advanced principles of planting design. Integration of landscape ecology and knowledge of plants into the design environment. Field trip required. 1 lecture, 2 activities. Formerly LA 439.

LA 4417 Social and Behavioral Factors for Landscape Architecture (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

Prerequisite: Junior standing.

Introduction to interview and survey techniques, behavioral trace mapping and systematic observation. Post-occupancy evaluation techniques, human behavioral implications of designed environments, and user-oriented design approaches in landscape architecture. Field trip may be required. 2 lectures, 1 activity. Formerly LA 482.

LA 4418 Contemporary Issues in Landscape Architecture (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

Prerequisite: Junior standing.

Focus on pressing issues and challenges in contemporary practice of Landscape Architecture. Critical discussion of human and environmental health, safety and welfare in the built environment. Transdisciplinary approach to envisioning improved future scenarios in the built environment. Field trip may be required. 1 lecture, 2 discussions.

LA 4420 Studio VI - Community and Social Design (4 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

Prerequisite: LA 405 or LA 2222 with a grade of C- or better or consent of instructor. Corequisite: LA 330 or LA 3304.

Design studio with a focus on socio-cultural issues at both the individual and community levels. Emphasis on designing for diverse populations within a larger understanding of cultural and social contexts. Field trip required. 4 laboratories. Formerly LA 404.

LA 4422 Interdisciplinary Design Studio (4 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

Prerequisite: LA 405 or LA 2222 with a grade of C- or better or consent of instructor.

Design studio with focus on interdisciplinary modes of practice and collaborative approaches to design. Interdisciplinary design process may be explored through project program and collaboration with students in allied majors. Field trip required. 4 laboratories. Formerly LA 406.

LA 4424 Contemporary Issues in Landscape Architecture Design Studio (4 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

Prerequisite: LA 405 or LA 2222 with a grade of C- or better or consent of instructor.

Design studio with focus on contemporary issues in landscape architecture. Field trip may be required. Course may be offered in classroom-based or hybrid format. 4 laboratories.

LA 4461 Senior Project Design Studio I (4 units)

Term Typically Offered: F

Prerequisite: Senior standing; LA 402 or LA 3320 with a grade of C- or better; LA 403 or LA 3322 with a grade of C- or better; LA 404 or LA 4420 with a grade of C- or better, and LA 406, LA 4422, or LA 4424 with a grade of C- or better; or consent of instructor.

First of a two-studio sequence in which students develop an independent design project framed by contemporary agendas in landscape architecture. Comprehensive design, research and integration of design theories, principles and project resolution to develop a speculative design proposal. 4 laboratories. Formerly LA 401.

LA 4462 Senior Project Design Studio II (4 units)

Term Typically Offered: SP

Prerequisite: LA 401 or LA 4461.

Second of a two-studio sequence in which students develop an independent design project framed by contemporary agendas in landscape architecture. Comprehensive design, research and integration of design theories, principles and project resolution to develop a speculative design proposal. 4 laboratories.

LA 4470 Special Advanced Topics (1-3 units)

Term Typically Offered: TBD

Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.

Directed group study of special topics for advanced students. The Class Schedule will list topic selected. Repeatable up to 6 units. Course may be offered in classroom-based, online, or hybrid format. 1 to 3 lectures. Formerly LA 470.

LA 4471 Special Advanced Laboratory (1-4 units)

Term Typically Offered: TBD

Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.

Directed group laboratory study of special topics for advanced students. The Class Schedule will list topic selected. Repeatable up to 8 units. Course may be offered in classroom-based, online, or hybrid format. 1 to 4 laboratories. Formerly LA 471.

LA 4483 Special Studies in Landscape Architecture (1-12 units)

Term Typically Offered: TBD

Prerequisite: Junior standing.

Special issues and problems through research, field trips, seminars and other forms of investigation and involvement. Course requirements are determined prior to each individual project through a contractual agreement between students and department. Departmental Off Campus Study Program guidelines apply. Field trip may be required. Repeatable up to 36 units. 1 to 12 activities. Formerly LA 483.

LA 4485 Cooperative Education Experience (1-6 units)

Term Typically Offered: TBD

CR/NC

Prerequisite: Fourth-year standing or graduate standing; and consent of instructor.

Work experience in business, industry, government, and other areas of student career interest. Positions are paid and usually require relocation and registration in course prior to work experience. Formal report and evaluation by work supervisor required. Repeatable up to 12 units. Credit/No Credit grading only. Formerly LA 485.

LA 4495 Cooperative Education Experience (12 units)

Term Typically Offered: TBD

CR/NC

Prerequisite: Fourth-year standing or graduate standing; and consent of instructor.

Work experience in business, industry, government, and other areas of student career interest. Positions are paid and usually require relocation and registration in course prior to work experience. Formal report and evaluation by work supervisor required. Repeatable up to 24 units. Credit/No Credit grading only. Formerly LA 495.

LA 5520 Urban Design with Cultural Landscapes (2 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

Prerequisite: LA 330 or LA 3304, and LA 404 or LA 4420; or graduate standing.

Examination of the designed landscape as a representation of culture. Analysis of historic and contemporary sites. Investigation of the value and interpretation of both rural and urban landscapes, broadening an understanding of cultural landscapes. Field trip required. 2 laboratories. Formerly LA 520.

LA 5521 Ecological Urban Design (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

Prerequisite: One of the following: LA 403, LA 3322, LA 432, LA 4410, or graduate standing.

Examination of cities as ecosystems, urban ecology theories, concepts, and techniques at the site scale. History and theory of ecological urban design, ecosystem services, and how they are implemented for resilience. Field trip required. 2 lectures, 1 laboratory. Formerly LA 521.

LA 5531 Information Graphics for Landscape and Urban Studies (2 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

Prerequisite: Senior standing and LA 437, LA 3310, LA 436, or LA 4415; or graduate standing and CRP 516 or CRP 5512.

Conversion of raw sets of data into compelling narrative presentations that are communicated visually and effectively to specific design and planning audiences. Development of strategies for interpreting, packaging and shaping data for data storytelling, data visualization, and effective communication. 2 laboratories. Formerly LA 531.

LA 5538 Advanced GIS Application to Projects (3 units)

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

Prerequisite: Senior standing or graduate standing; and one of the following: LA 438, LA 3312, CRP 516, or CRP 5512.

Integration and application of GIS skills to planning and design projects. Emphasis on analytical thinking, visualization of various GIS data, and project site analysis development. Course may be offered in classroom-based, online, or hybrid format. 1 lecture, 2 laboratories. Crosslisted as CRP/LA 5538. Formerly LA 538.