

FULL-TIME PROGRAMME FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE COURSE INFORMATION

1.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This is a 2-year full-time professional degree programme providing education and training in landscape architecture. The programme consists of 16 essential modules spread over two years: Masters Preparatory Year and Masters Final Year. This programme has the support of the Singapore Institute of Landscape Architects.

Students with a previous Bachelor degree in Landscape Architecture recognized by the Department of Architecture and Singapore Institute of Landscape Architects will be admitted to the preparatory year which is similar to the 4th year of the Bachelor of Arts (Architecture) [B.A. (Arch)] programme (specialization in Landscape Architecture). However, a bridging programme will be provided for students who have completed the 3rd year of the NUS 4-year B.A (Arch) programme and overseas candidates who have completed an equivalent programme. The bridging programme will be held over 2 Special Terms and will be prerequisites for entry into the MLA programme for un-accredited graduates

The programme is designed to impart skills essential to become a landscape professional – as an educator, researcher and/or practitioner. The syllabus prepares the student to be potentially able to enter any of these tracks. There is an emphasis on tropical and urban conditions, as well as an underlying emphasis on sustainability and ecology that pervades the various modules in the programme.

The aim of this programme is to offer a broad-based education in the theory and practice of landscape architecture in order to provide professional expertise in urban and tropical aspects of landscape design and urban development. More specifically, the programme contains the following objectives:

1. Produce environmentally and socially responsible professionals who are committed to the provision of environmentally sound landscape design.
2. Develop analytical and methodological skills that are critical foundations to landscape studies and design.
3. Provide exposure, at an advanced level, to the full range of issues that bear upon the design and realization of sustainable development through landscape.
4. Prepare students for advanced careers in landscape architecture, consulting, research or public service, or in preparation for further academic training.

2.0 ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- Completed 4 years Bachelor of Landscape Architecture full-time education in a recognized programme.
- Applicants with a Bachelor's degree in Architecture (equivalent to the first 3 years of the 4-year B.A. (Arch) programme offered by NUS). Students with this background will have to undertake a Bridging Course.
- Applicants with an NUS Bachelor of Architecture (specialization in Landscape Architecture) Hons degree will enter directly into the Masters Final Year and may therefore complete the Masters programme within 1 year.
- Interview and portfolio review where necessary.

Candidates are required to pass all the modules in the preparatory programme with a minimum B- average for LA4701 and LA4702 and minimum CAP of 2.5 before they are allowed to proceed to the 1-year MLA programme.

3.0 PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

Bridging Programme	Modular Credits (MCs)
Special Term 3	
LA3701 Introduction to Landscape Design	4
LA3201 Introduction to the History of Landscape	4
LA3711 Sketchbook 1	2
Special Term 4	
LA3211 Plant Identification 1	4
LA3301 Plant Science & Horticulture	4
LA3712 Sketchbook 2	2
M.LA Preparatory Programme	
Semester 1	
LA4701 Landscape Studio IVa	8
LA4201 Theory of Modern Landscape Architecture	4

LA4301 Materials and Techniques	4
BL5102 Environmental Science	4
Semester 2	
LA4702 Landscape Studio IVb	8
LA4202 Planting Design	4
LA4212 Plant Identification 2	4
DE5107 Environmental Planning	4
Master of Landscape Architecture	
Semester 1	
LA5701 Sustainable Regional Design	8
LA5201 Politics of Landscape (4 MCs)	4
LA5301 Site Systems (4 MCs)	4
UD5622 Methods of Urban Design and Urban Analysis (4 MCs)	4
Semester 2	
LA5702 Final Design Project (8 MCs)	8
LA5302 Landscape Construction & Detailing (4MCs)	4
LA5402 Professional Practice (4MCs)	4
LA5742 Research Dissertation (8 MCs)	8

4.0 DESCRIPTION OF MODULES

LA3701 Introduction to Landscape Design – 4 MCs

This studio based module introduces basic concepts in landscape design through a series of short design exercises. The exercises will begin with site inventory and analysis, followed by studies on external spaces, scale, planning and layout, covering issues of handicap and safety requirements and discussing the use of both hardscape and softscape materials. Tropical climatic considerations are emphasized. The final project draws together all the elements in a small scale design task.

LA3201 Introduction to the History of Landscape – 4 MCs

Human inhabitation and intervention on the landscape is traced from prehistoric times to the present. In particular, the relationship between humans and landscape as presented in particular traditions and cultures is highlighted. The coverage is broad, including both Eastern and Western traditions and ancient and modern practices. Emphasis is on comparative studies between different cultures and traditions rather than on detail and depth of any particular practice of landscape intervention. The utility of landscape is addressed as much as aesthetic and design conventions.

LA3711 Sketchbook 1 & LA3712 Sketchbook 2 – 2 MCs each

For the bridging programme, the student is required to maintain a sketchbook of observations about plants and landscape. The sketchbook is intended as a documentary chart of the student's thoughts and understanding about plants, their formal, environmental and aesthetic qualities and about the seeing landscapes and their embedded meanings. The sketchbook will include drawings and notes reflecting the student's development in terms of innate and internalised perceptions of the environment.

LA3211 Tropical Plant Identification 1 – 4 MCs

This module comprises field walks to inculcate identification of various tropical plants. Through in-situ observations, instruction will be given on plant growth characteristics and modifications in form as a result of site conditions. Students are taught to differentiate the different leaf, flower, fruit and bark characteristics of various species and will analyse habitat constraints on growth rate. Conditions for low and high maintenance in terms of plant selection and habitat are highlighted.

LA3301 Plant Science and Horticulture – 4 MCs

This is the second plant module for students. Besides learning plant identification skills, students will be taught the basics of how plants live and die in their natural habitats: plant biology, and begin to explore the science of horticulture, where plants are planted in unnatural planned environments. Soil science, arboriculture, pest and disease control, maintenance regimes, management procedures and the relationship between plant selection and habitat creation will be emphasised.

LA4701 and LA4702 Landscape Design Studio 4a & 4b – 8 MCs each

These studio based modules develop skills in landscape design. Projects of various scales and time durations are undertaken to explore issues of context, programme and socio-economic considerations. For these Level 4 projects, both urban and suburban sites will be tackled. Projects will cover sites with different functions, e.g. residential, commercial, industrial, educational, health and recreation. Civic spaces like roadsides, highways, plazas and city squares will also be tackled. Projects will increase in complexity over the semester and from LA4701 to LA4702. There is an emphasis on sustainability and tropical design.

LA4201 Theory of Modern Landscape Architecture – 4 MCs

This module covers the foundations for the practice of contemporary landscape architecture. It covers the current influences and historic development of landscape architecture in the Western world from garden design into a professional discipline. Key influences of contemporary landscape architecture and the development of design styles and theories are discussed. References to landscape practices in other countries – China, Japan, Middle East – where relevant are highlighted. The module finishes with a discourse on current Asian landscape architectural practice.

LA4301 Materials and Techniques – 4 MCs

This module provides an understanding of materials as they pertain to landscape design. There is an emphasis on building materials– stones, timber, metals, glass, composite material, concrete, etc. The discourse on materials is integrated with their application on site

The module provides also basic understanding of landscape technique and design considerations relating to landscape lighting, water feature design, drainage design and landscape irrigation.

LA4202 Planting Design – 4 MCs

This module reviews design principles in terms of plant design characteristics and responses to environment and seasonal changes. There is an emphasis on plants as unique elements of landscape design. Both aesthetic and functional uses of plants will be covered. Design that favours natural distribution and ecological considerations will be explored. Class assignments will involve graphic and presentational techniques using computer and small-scale modelling to explore architectonic aspects of planting like massing, texture, colour, form and shape.

LA4212 Tropical Plant Identification 2 – 4 MCs

This module follows from Tropical Plant Identification 1. Matching plants to site will be one of the topics covered. Because of the tropical context the focus will be on trees. The course will leverage on the experience gained through establishing Singapore as a “Garden City”. The creation of a forest within a city, an “urban forest”, is one of its aims. The course will start with an appreciation of the immense biodiversity of plants in our region. The irreplaceable values that natural primary forests have will be emphasized. The case of the need to extend these forests by recreating them in the urban context will be discussed. The appropriate use of non-indigenous plants will also be covered. The need to be ecological-minded when selecting plants will be emphasized with particular attention being placed on conservation; the beautification of place should not be done at the expense of making another landscape look less attractive. Lectures will be augmented with field trips which serve illustrate the application of the principles discussed to the ground. The business implications to matching the right plant to site, using quality plants and then being able to care for them professionally will be covered.

LA5701 Sustainable Regional Design – 8 MCs

This module investigates the sustainable issues surrounding land development of large scales. Methods to balance economic and human development with ecological aspects are highlighted and discussed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The module aims on tropical design issues in the urban context of Singapore and other tropical countries. Thinking globally, acting locally (regionally) forms the topical framework of design content.

LA5201 Politics of Landscape – 4 MCs

This module presents a review of current topics in landscape architecture through lectures, readings, and discussion. A broad sweep of contemporary issues is provided and students are challenged to critique current practice and to reflect on the relevance of landscape architecture to current society. Guest lecturers will provide a substantial portion of the lectures and present their perspectives based on their individual practices and careers.

LA5301 Site Systems – 4 MCs

The module focuses on developing the knowledge and techniques of site analysis and planning, which are essential for sustainable landscape architecture. The module is named as “site systems” because it emphasizes on the systematic thinking of site and site alternatives in broad context, in which the analysis is supported by contemporary theories and methodologies in landscape and urban ecology. This course will develop skills and explore issues and chances of modeling and understanding the physical and visual aspects of sites and their context using georeferenced digital resources. The topics of the module include site inventory, site and landscape assessment, landscape and vegetation modeling, scenario techniques, and interactive 3D visualization as well as how geo data and these methods can be incorporated into the planning and design process. The tool of geographic information system (GIS) is provided for the development of advanced techniques in analyzing, evaluating, managing, and modeling site systems.

LA5702 Final Design Project – 8 MCs

The final project is a demonstrative proposal by the student to highlight his strengths and special interests in landscape architecture. Projects that reflect and/or extend current research in the department are encouraged. Students are assigned a supervisor who will guide the student in terms of selecting and developing the final project.

LA5402 Professional Practice – 4 MCs

This module conveys to the student the requisite knowledge encompassing professional practice as it pertains to the practice of landscape architecture in Singapore. Major topics covered are the Singapore legal system, organisation of the landscape industry, role of the landscape architect, statutory requirements, specification writing, cost control and contract administration.

LA5742 Research Dissertation – 8 MCs

The research dissertation engages the student in a short research project related to the research interests of the department. The student will be exposed to previous and current research in the department and will then frame a research project of his own that utilizes the research methodology and issues adopted by his supervisor and his team. The research will culminate in a written report not exceeding 5000 words.

LA5302 Landscape Construction & Detailing – 4 MCs

This module covers landscape construction techniques and detailing. The emphasis is in the integration of details in terms of performance and coherence of the overall design. Consistency in the use of materials and adaptation of detailing to develop thematic strategies to carry design conceptual ideals are explored. The interrelationship and interdependence of parts and whole, between near and far, and between small and large scales are engaged. Current examples of local and international designs are presented and critique.

Modules from other Master programmes offered by SDE

BL5102 Environmental Science – MSc(EM) – 4 MCs

The module discusses earth's environmental dimensions of air, water and land, and the interaction between living and non-living components. Earth is considered as a system through which materials are continuously cycled. Impacts caused by natural or human influences affect the state of balance, leading to environmental problems, with human impacts causing more serious consequences to the environment and human society. The module covers the properties of air, water and land, ecosystems, biogeochemical cycles, ecosystem integrity and environmental capacity, pollution pathways and impacts, conservation science, integrated management approaches. The scientific basis of environmental management is stressed.

DE5107 Environmental Planning – MSc(EM) – 4 MCs

This module will introduce students to the multi-disciplinary nature of environmental planning, by exploring the basic principles of sustainable development and the physical planning instruments that can be employed to achieve it. It will include an introduction to urban and regional planning theory as the framework for the discussion of environmental planning procedures. The decision environment involving the policy framework and resources, the use of strategic, sectoral, master and local plans, regulatory instruments, economic measures, participatory processes and public investment projects will be covered. Processes of identifying desired developments and intensities, site selection, planning, design and construction management, mitigation and augmentation of environmental impacts would be discussed. The module will include a planning project, that will demonstrate the technical, decision-making and plan formulation, site planning and design procedures involved.

UD5622 Methods of Urban Design and Urban Analysis (MAUD) – 4 MCs

Methods of urban analysis and urban design will be taught to enable the students to tackle urban design projects of varying scales. The various aspects of urban growth, city limits/boundaries, urban structure, urban architecture, typologies as well as infrastructural planning, parcellation, public space and design guidelines will be introduced. The critical role that transportation plays in structuring the city will also be examined. This course will be conducted intensively on a daily basis over a period of three weeks beginning at the beginning of semester 1.

5.0 GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Successful completion of the MLA course requires a candidate to complete 80 MCs of a dissertation and seven essential modules. To graduate, students have to fulfil the degree requirement of:

- Minimum CAP of 3.0 &
- Minimum grade B- for both LA5701 and LA5702

The course shall be conducted on a full-time basis lasting 2 years consisting of 4 semesters. The maximum period of candidature is limited to 6 semesters.

6.0 KEY INFORMATION

English Language Requirement:

If applicants' medium of undergraduate instruction is not in English, applicants must submit TOEFL/IELTS score sheets as evidence of their proficiency in the English Language.

A candidate's English language proficiency will be determined by

- the TOEFL score of at least 580 (paper-based test), 237 (computer-based test) or 92 (internet-based test); or
- the IELTS result of at least 6.0

The School's TOEFL/GRE code is 9080. Certified true copies of the original TOEFL scores can be sent together with the application forms. TOEFL score sheets should not be more than 2 years old when used in applying for the program.

Intake dates: Bridging course starts in May 2010. Regular semester starts in August 2010.

Application deadline: 1 February 2010

To apply: <http://www.sde.nus.edu.sg/ACAD/drgs/drgs.php>

Fees: Please check <http://www.nus.edu.sg/registrar/edu/gd-fees.html>

For further information on the programme, please contact: Programme Director: A/P Dr. Joerg Rekitke (Email: akiJR@nus.edu.sg)

Every effort is made to ensure that the information is accurate and current. However, the University and the School reserve the right to make alterations without notice.