

University of Kentucky

Department of Landscape Architecture

LA 390: International Study

The Department of Landscape Architecture is committed to the global awareness of its students as the practice of design becomes increasingly international in scope. Our educational program has always focused on the capability of our graduates to compete successfully for professional positions in landscape architecture and related fields and for placement in respected graduate programs. International study is now an experiential benchmark that enhances individual competitiveness. Education abroad has a broader benefit of helping students become more globally aware citizens able to engage the business, social, and political environments in which they will operate.

Background

The Department of Landscape Architecture began its international study programs in the early 1990s. Programs in that period occurred less often than they do at present. Early study abroad offerings included China, Japan, Italy, France, and the United Kingdom. As student interest grew, trips to Argentina, Chile, and Spain were added.

UKLA underwent a major curriculum change for the Bachelor of Science in Landscape Architecture in 2014. We shortened the degree program from five years to four and added international study (LA 390) to the required curriculum. This reduced the overall cost of a degree in landscape architecture while enhancing external experience.

Financial Considerations

Landscape Architecture students have always insisted that money spent on travel/study experiences was a valuable investment in their educations. There is no denying, however, that international travel requires financial planning by students.

The Department commits to making programs led by Landscape Architecture faculty as valuable and as cost conscious as possible. The Department contributes value through the dedication, expertise, and planning effort of the faculty who organize international travel. In addition, the Department commits financial resources to subsidize expenses and lower the cost of study programs for all student participants. The department's student enrichment endowment and the Tom and Jan Nieman International Study Fund both contribute funding to department travel programs.

At least once in any three-year period, a department-organized study program will travel to North American, Central American, or Caribbean destinations, which entail lower travel costs.

Finally, landscape architecture students have often been successful in competing for Education Abroad scholarships from the University of Kentucky.

Faculty Led Programs

Most students participate in programs organized and led by faculty members in the Department of Landscape Architecture. These programs are typically 14-16 days in duration and usually occur in May, very soon after the end of the spring semester. This timing is intended to allow students to participate in a travel program and an internship/professional position in the same summer. Department programs incorporate preparatory seminars and meetings in advance of the travel. The group creates a presentation after the travel to share the experience with other students during the following fall semester. Students on faculty-led programs enroll in LA 390 for three credits and EAP 599 for one credit. Students are charged tuition for the one credit of EAP 599, but not for LA 390. Some students have completed a travel program after their last semester in the LA program; in this case, they may participate May graduation ceremonies, but receive their diplomas in August.

Alternate Ways to Fulfill LA 390

Landscape Architecture students may take part in other programs to complete the degree requirement for international study in landscape architecture. These other programs may or may not offer course credits depending on the organization. In either case, the department typically waives the requirement for LA 390 and credits from the international study program appear as electives in your transcript. Below are examples of programs in which students may participate and complete the international study requirement:

- Other faculty-led programs at UK offered under the umbrella of UK Education Abroad.
- International study programs offered for credit by other universities.
- Semester abroad programs at universities or international study institutions in other countries. Students participating in these programs often find that the fall semester of their final year is the best time to go abroad for a semester because the number of LA courses in that semester is lower. The Danish Institute for International Studies is an example of this kind of program.
- Students may arrange independent travel with an itinerary agreed upon with a faculty advisor and approved by the DUS or chair. Students who travel independently need to meet the general parameters of faculty-led programs, including duration, attention to educational experiences and observations, and a presentation to other students upon return.
- Finally, students may participate in an internship that takes place completely or partially internationally.
- International students enrolled in the landscape architecture program are not required to participate in an international study program because they have essentially met that requirement by travelling to the United States for their education.

Department Plans for Future Travel

- Cordoba, Bariloche, and Buenos Aires, Argentina during the 2021/22 Winter Intercession (approximately December 27, 2021 – January 8, 2022). This program is a mix of experiences in Argentina's two largest cities and the outstanding natural environment of Patagonia.
- Quebec City, Montreal, Ottawa, and Toronto, Canada during May 2022. This is a mainly urban design/urban landscapes program in four vibrant, but very different Canadian cities.
- Barcelona, Madrid, and the Andalusian region of Spain during May 2023. This program combines urban design and landscape experiences in Barcelona and Madrid with the Moorish tradition of landscape development in the smaller cities of Andalucía.