

A set of guidelines for:  
Project-based Masters degree in Landscape Architecture  
University of Wisconsin-Madison

The following sets forth guidelines for the Project-based Masters option within the graduate program in Landscape Architecture / Landscape Studies. Presently this degree option can lead to an MALA, with the intent to build criteria for this option in an MSLA, depending on the project and student intent. *NOTE: Like the research degrees, the project-based MALA option is not an accredited professional design degree.*

A Project-based Masters is a form of design scholarship based on interpreting and integrating research and theory, while exploring possibilities through design.

Project-based scholarship will advance understanding of landscape spaces, functions, and dynamics, as well as interactions between people and the built and natural environment through design exploration and research.

1. Specifically, a Project-based Masters should:

- Use existing research to establish the context and significance of the work,
- Explore questions through design as well as through traditional forms of analysis,
- Develop design outcomes,
- Reflect critically on the outcomes and compare to related works,
- Propose plans for installation, adoption, exhibition, and/or dissemination to a client, organization, publication outlet, or design competition.
- Include a written component (thesis) documenting the project and its relation to the above criteria (see forthcoming thesis outline requirements).

2. Possibilities for a Project-based Masters MAY include: (this list suggests only a sample of possibilities; the shape and form of individual projects will depend on the student and his/her committee, but should not compete with the work of licensed professional landscape architects.) In all cases the student would have to defend the project relevance for graduate study:

An exhibit / landscape interpretation  
An ethnobotanical garden design  
A learning landscape design  
A cultural landscape evaluation / Historic landscape survey  
An application of green roof design research / technology  
Design guidelines for a specific area (e.g. LEED)  
A restoration plan applying new research

3. The Project-based Masters targets design professionals (architects, landscape architects, urban designers, urban planners, and public artists). This focus allows the program to:

- Provide a setting in which practicing professionals can focus their scholarship on a specific design issue
- Provide professionals with expertise in a particular area of design

- Offer opportunities for faculty advisors to apply research to specific projects

4. Eligibility for a Project-based Masters degree:

- A design degree in LA or affiliated field with demonstrated design experience  
*There are limited design courses at the graduate level, so they must have had this training already.*
- Evidence of creative work and design ability (portfolio)
- Demonstrated proficiency in written and graphic communication
- Letter of intent describing interest in pursuing a project-based masters
- An interest matching that of a faculty advisor in Landscape Architecture
- Commitment of a faculty member to advise

6. Courses required for a Project-based Masters curriculum:

Credits	Course
2	LA 720
2	LA 710
3	LA 750 (or other design / planning theory)
3	LA 920 - workshop
2	LA 940 (2 semesters)
3	Field / studio methods
1-4	Seminar
1-6	Practicum (like research credits)
25	<i>+ 11 credits of electives related to project</i>