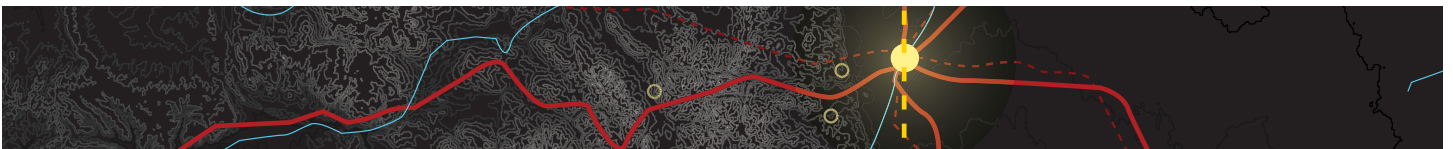




CHAPTER 0

INTRODUCTION



**Self-Evaluation Report Format for
FIRST-PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS IN
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE**



Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board

**American Society of Landscape Architects
636 Eye Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001-3736**

FEBRUARY 6, 2010

PROGRAM SELF-EVALUATION REPORT

For Academic Year

2015 - 2016

Institution

University of Colorado Denver

Program

Department of Landscape Architecture

Degree Title

Master of Landscape Architecture

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Report Submitted by:

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MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

For Achieving And Maintaining Accredited Status

1. The program title and degree description incorporate the term "Landscape Architecture".
2. An undergraduate first-professional program is a baccalaureate of at least four academic years' duration.
3. A graduate first-professional program is a master's equivalent to three academic years' duration.
4. Faculty instructional full-time equivalence (FTE) shall be as follows:
 - a. An academic unit that offers a single first-professional program has at least three FTE instructional faculty who hold professional degrees in landscape architecture, at least one of whom is full-time.
 - b. An academic unit that offers first-professional programs at both bachelor's and master's levels, has at least six instructional FTE, at least five of whom hold professional degrees in landscape architecture, and at least two of whom are full-time.
5. The parent institution is accredited by a recognized institutional accrediting agency.
6. There is a designated program administrator responsible for the leadership and management functions for the program under review.
7. A program accredited by LAAB shall:
 - a. Continuously comply with accreditation standards;
 - b. Pay the annual sustaining and other fees as required; and
 - c. Regularly file complete annual and other requested reports.

The program administrator shall inform LAAB if any of these factors fails to apply during an accreditation period.

The University of Colorado Denver program meets the minimum conditions to apply for LAAB accreditation.

<u>Ann E. Komara</u>	<u>Associate Professor and Chair</u>
<i>Program Administrator Name</i>	<i>Title</i>

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<i>Program Administrator Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>

0. INTRODUCTION

1. HISTORY OF PROGRAM.

In chronological form provide a brief history of the program being reviewed, concentrating on events since the last review.

Institution

In 1876, the University of Colorado was founded in Boulder. In 1912, the University of Colorado's Department of Correspondence and Extension was established in Denver to meet the needs of the state's largest and most rapidly expanding population center. The Denver Extension Center was renamed the University of Colorado-Denver Center in 1965 and, by 1969, 23 fields of undergraduate study and 11 fields of graduate study were offered in downtown Denver. In 1972 the Colorado General Assembly appropriated support to build the Auraria Campus immediately west of the downtown business core. CU Denver shares this 171-acre campus – and the Auraria Library -- with two other institutions: Metropolitan State University of Denver, and the Community College of Denver. In 1972 the Denver Extension Center was formally renamed the University of Colorado at Denver. In 1974, the University of Colorado as a whole was reorganized into four campuses individually accredited by the Higher Learning Commission North Central Association of Colleges and Schools: Boulder, Denver, Health Sciences (Denver), and Colorado Springs.

In 2004, the downtown Denver entity consolidated with Health Sciences to establish the University of Colorado Denver | Anschutz Medical Campus, which is the state's number one research-funded university. Faculty and researchers are the foundation of the reputation for discovery and innovation characteristic of the University of Colorado; in FY 2013 they had received over \$390 million in sponsored research awards, breaking ground in a number of areas from advancing cancer treatments, to creating more sustainable urban infrastructures and better public schools.¹ CU Denver | AMC offers comprehensive programs for undergraduate and graduate students online, and on two campuses — downtown Denver and the Anschutz Medical Campus developed in Aurora, Colorado on the former Fitzsimmons Army Base — as well as in more than 90 centers and institutes across the state.

The University of Colorado Denver downtown campus hosts the college's administration and its programs. In 2014 less than 9 percent of total revenues were drawn from state appropriations, with tuition generating the majority of the campus' funding. The Denver campus's primary role is to address the need for university-based undergraduate and graduate instruction. Originally a commuter campus, CU Denver now offers student housing adjacent to campus. The urban location supports programs with convenient access to businesses, organizations, government offices and cultural venues, yielding hands-on, relevant learning experiences through research and innovation, internships and class projects. CU Denver seeks to provide students, whatever their ages or circumstances, with opportunities to enhance their lives and careers through higher education. Emphasis is given to professional, pre-professional, and liberal arts instruction, with a strong multi-disciplinary and applied focus for the campus's research and service functions. CU Denver is one of the most important educational resources in the Denver metropolitan area: a major urban campus located in the heart of the city with a broad range of civic, cultural, business, professional, and governmental activities in close proximity. CU Denver is committed to research, technology, creative scholarship, and to providing an institutional culture that reflects the plurality, collegiality, and integration of an increasingly diverse global workplace.

¹ (<http://www.ucdenver.edu/about/departments/InstitutionalResearch/Pages/ReportLibrary.aspx>)

In FY 2014-15, the CU Denver | AMC campuses served over 22,000 students in 13 schools and colleges, offering 136 degree-granting programs, with the Denver campus offering 96 degree programs, including 50 masters programs. Students come to CU Denver | AMC from 67 countries and 50 states, with the majority of students from Colorado. Racial and ethnic minorities comprise 34% of the undergraduate, 14% of the graduate, and 27% of the first professional degree student population. CU Denver is home to the only schools of architecture and planning, medicine, pharmacy, and dental medicine, as well as, the largest accredited graduate schools of education and business in the State of Colorado. In FY 2014-15 the university conferred 4,784 degrees, including 2,242 bachelor's and 1,876 master's degrees.

CU Denver faculty members actively promote the campus role of an urban institution in meeting the needs of the university's graduate and undergraduate students. CU Denver | AMC has over 3,500 faculty, comprised of about 1,900 tenured or tenure-track faculty, with the balance non-tenure eligible regular faculty, clinical/clinical teaching faculty, and research faculty and fellows. As educators they are alert to the challenges and advances of the urban environment, and recognize and respond to the needs of students and the Denver community. The combination of CU Denver's dedicated faculty, its highly motivated students, and its dynamic urban environment creates a vital and exciting educational environment - an environment in which students are offered the unique educational opportunity of combining real world experiences with academic excellence.

College and Department

The college is comprised of three departments -- Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Planning and Design -- each offering a professionally accredited master's program. The college also offers two post-professional degree programs -- the Master of Urban Design [MUD] and the Master of Science in Historic Preservation [MSHP], as well as a multi-disciplinary Ph.D. Program in Design and Planning, and a Bachelor of Science in Architecture program established in 2013. A growing number of certificate programs are also being offered at the college. The college is home to four active research centers that support faculty and students and extend the impact of the college throughout the state and the nation. The College of Architecture and Planning has approximately 350 graduate students and 310 undergraduate students, with that number expected to increase over the next few years to hit capacity based on our building space.

In 1925, the University of Colorado in Boulder began offering a Bachelor of Science in Architectural Engineering degree established within the Civil Engineering Department of the College of Engineering. In 1950, a five-year Bachelor of Architecture degree was added. In July 1962, the Board of Regents established the School of Architecture as an independent administrative and academic unit, to further enhance the identity and autonomy of the first-professional architecture program. In the two decades that followed its establishment, the school continued to respond to the dramatic social, cultural, economic and demographic shifts occurring in Colorado and the rest of the nation. These transformations ultimately resulted in several changes. The name of the school was changed in 1969 when it became the College of Environmental Design. A change in the school's mission and focus also occurred, broadening its agenda to include the Master of Architecture, Master of Architecture in Urban Design, and Master of Urban and Regional Planning degrees. During the early 1970's graduate professional courses were offered with increasing frequency in Denver to make full use of the city's rich context and professional community. By 1976 the Master of Landscape Architecture degree was initiated; like all of the college's professional graduate programs, it was offered at the University's Denver campus. At this point, the college's administration was transferred from the Boulder to the Denver campus and it was again renamed, becoming the College of Planning and Design to reflect its broadened mission.

On July 1, 1992 a new multi-campus college, the New College of Architecture and Planning, was established in accordance with the provisions of the 1990 Laws of the Regents, reflecting the re-unification of the School of Architecture and Planning, University of Colorado at Denver, and the College of Environmental Design, University of Colorado at Boulder.

In 2011, the college engaged in a self-study review process that included external input, to assess options for continued operations and pedagogical alternatives within the two-campus structure. As a result of that

study, in July 2012 the two units formally separated. Today, the college is a strong academic unit on the Denver campus, with a new undergraduate program in architecture to complement its established graduate programs.

TIMELINE: History of the Department of Landscape Architecture

1976	University of Colorado system establishes the Master of Landscape Architecture program in Denver
1976-81	Master of Landscape Architecture Program refines mission, focus and curriculum
1981	Landscape Architecture program applies for and receives its initial two-year LAAB accreditation on November 10
1983	Interim accreditation review results in full five-year LAAB accreditation
1984	Undergraduate programs in Boulder and professional programs in Denver formally split; Landscape Architecture Program changed to more closely reflect the school's new mission and focus emphasizing the theoretical, historical, cultural, disciplinary and intellectual forces shaping the design professions and their work
1987	Harry Garnham appointed Director of the Landscape Architecture Program; Mark Johnson hired as Associate Professor, Adjunct
1988	Landscape Architecture Program applies for and receives a full five-year LAAB accreditation; Lois Brink hired as Assistant Professor
1989	Assistant Professor Lois A. Brink appointed the Director of the Landscape Architecture program; William Wenk hired as Associate Professor, Adjunct
1992	Denver and Boulder design programs rejoin in a new administrative unit
1993	Landscape Architecture Program applies for and receives a full five-year LAAB re-accreditation
1993	National search: Carmela Canzonieri hired as Assistant Professor tenure-track
1994	Lois Brink steps down as Program Director to devote more time to teaching, research and publication. Professor Harry Garnham appointed Interim Director
1995	John Frankhouser, Senior Instructor becomes Interim Director of Landscape Architecture; a national search commences for a director of the program
1996	Professor Raymond Studer, Chair of the Department Planning and Design, becomes Interim Director of Landscape Architecture
1996	Alan Berger hired as an Instructor; Carmella Canzonieri departs
1997	National search: Alan Berger and Ann Komara hired as Assistant Professors in Landscape Architecture; Professor Garnham retires
1997	Gene Bressler hired as Associate Professor and Director of Landscape Architecture program
2000	University of Colorado Board of Regents changes the unit's status from program to "department"
2002	Alan Berger departs; Patricia O'Leary steps down as dean of the college and a national search is begun to replace her
2002	Anthony Mazzeo hired as a part-time Instructor
2003	Mark Gelemter appointed Dean of the College of Architecture and Planning

2003	Lori Cockerham Catalano and George Pond hired as part-time Instructors
2003	Landscape Architecture Program applies for and receives a full six-year LAAB re-accreditation
2004	Lori Catalano promoted to full-time Senior Instructor and appointed as Associate Chair
2005	National search: Austin Allen hired as Associate Professor; Joern Langhorst hired as a Visiting Assistant Professor
2006	Joern Langhorst hired as Assistant Professor tenure-track; George Pond departs
2006	National search shared with Department of Planning and Design: Charles Chase hired as a full-time Instructor
2006	Gene Bressler departs; Austin Allen appointed Interim Chair
2007	Austin Allen appointed Chair of the Department of Landscape Architecture; Leila Tolderlund hired as a full-time Instructor
2008	Department of Landscape Architecture begins focused delivery of courses in the undergraduate Environmental Design program; Charles Chase promoted to Senior Instructor
2009	Austin Allen departs; Lori Catalano serves as Interim Chair during the transition in leadership from Allen to Komara; Jake Frankhouser retires; Christopher Schooler hired as part-time Instructor
2009	Ann Komara appointed Chair of the Department of Landscape Architecture
2009	Landscape Architecture Program applies for and receives a full six-year LAAB re-accreditation
2009	Charles Chase assumes leadership of landscape studies in the ENVD program
2010	International search: Jody Beck, Ph.D. hired as Assistant Professor tenure-track
2010	Emmanuel Didier and Heath Mizer hired as a part-time Instructors
2011	Joni Palmer hired as a Visiting Assistant Professor on a one-year appointment
2012	Denver and Boulder programs separate and refocus their educational missions
2012	Heath Mizer departs
2013	Charles Chase departs
2014	Scott Carman hired as a Visiting Instructor on a one-year appointment to fill in for Lois Brink on sabbatical AY 2014-15

2. RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS LAAB REVIEW.

Describe the progress that has been made on the Recommendation Affecting Accreditation from the previous accreditation visit (not applicable to those seeking initial accreditation). List each prior Recommendation verbatim and provide an updated recap of responses made on annual interim reports. List each Suggestion for Improvement and provide an update.

In fall 2009, Professor Komara's first semester as department chair, the Landscape Architecture program underwent the re-accreditation process, and was awarded full re-accreditation. Throughout the six years since that accreditation, the department has continued to mature and engage in all aspects of college-wide governance. The department has focused its energies on the 2009 LAAB review's suggestions and recommendations, as well as on issues and initiatives that have arisen, including a self-study report in 2012

leading to the separation of the Denver- and Boulder-based programs, and a periodic Academic Program Review required by the Board of Regents in 2014.

Following are the program's specific responses to the suggestions and recommendation affecting accreditation from the report issued following the previous accreditation review in 2009.

Part 1: Program Mission and Objectives – Met

S-1 - “The departmental faculty bring its discussion on a new vision for the program to a conclusion and build a consensus to better position itself for sustained excellence.”

Department response: The faculty has completed the process of refining our vision to position the program with a clarified mission, and to align the faculty and curriculum to accomplish the associated educational objectives and learning outcomes. Faculty participated in workshop sessions to identify specific outcomes for graduates of our program, as conceived against broader trends for the future of landscape architecture that were identified through discussions with professionals, some market research, and affirmation of the higher education goals of the program. Further, the department conducted a series of “Professional Input Sessions” at the university with practicing professionals to share, review, and refine the program vision, mission and objectives.

The result: we are an issues-based program, responsive to opportunities that reflect our agenda **to create health, well-being and environmental resilience through design in the public realm**. Specific curricular changes being implemented to create opportunities for students to engage the discipline and practice include issues-based studio projects and immersion experiences, the latter possibly becoming a fully integrated semester of courses that allow flexibility for location-based experiences and online collaborative learning.

Part 2: Governance/Administration – Met with recommendations

R – 1 – “Provide sufficient faculty resources to meet expectations for delivery of the professional landscape architecture curriculum and to meet administrative and programmatic expectations such as relationships with other programs, scholarship and research.”

Department response: Since the last accreditation review in 2009, the department has had sufficient resources to meet the teaching needs, but it remains difficult to meet service and administrative requirements or to implement substantive new initiatives or partnerships. The department has gone through periods of growth and decline in student enrollments since the last accreditation review, with commensurate faculty resources reflecting these changes. Currently, the program faculty is comprised of four tenured/tenure-track faculty and four contingent faculty (all but one on part-time contracts); all these faculty have been associated with the department for at least five years. In fact, a Self-study within the university completed in 2013-14 had identified the program as one that was “inefficient” with its teaching resources, meaning class enrollment per faculty FTE course load is low compared to the potential. We have been working to address this by offering fewer courses, and targeting classes to boost enrollments.

In summarizing faculty resource changes over the last decade, it is important to note that half of the program's classes are currently taught by contingent, part-time faculty. The department has not replaced the tenured/tenure-track position vacated by Professor Gene Bressler, tenured faculty member and Department Chair who departed in 2006 prior to the last accreditation review. When Associate Professor Austin Allen, also a tenured faculty member and Department Chair, departed in 2009 the program conducted an international search and hired Jody Beck, who started as an Assistant Professor, tenure-track, in fall 2010.

Program expansion into the undergraduate program in Boulder in 2010 enabled the hire of additional teaching resources; at its peak that undergraduate landscape division included six dedicated landscape architecture faculty members, supplemented by others who rotated through. In the wake of the division

from Boulder, it became necessary to release faculty from the department's roster; by 2012-13 with the decline in Denver enrollments in the graduate MLA program, additional faculty were released from contracts teaching in the graduate program. Fewer lecturers have been hired to fill any needs, as the current faculty has been put into place to fill courses. Note also that three of the four current contingent faculty are working on reduced percentage loads of 50-67% FTE, and the Department Chair and Associate Chair have course releases for administration.

With a tenured faculty member on sabbatical in 2014-15, the program hired a Visiting Instructor; he remains valued for his additional expertise on the faculty although now hired per class as a lecturer.

In spring 2015 two Senior Instructors, Lori Catalano and Leila Tolderlund, applied for and were given full departmental support for conversion to a new clinical teaching track; these appointments are presently under review in the Office of the Provost.

Part 3: Professional Curriculum – Met

S-2 – “Develop and implement some form of rigorous student self-assessment and advising at the curricular mid-point to create metrics identifying appropriate advanced studio topics and electives.”

Department response: The faculty is committed to rigorous assessment of student performance and using this data to improve the program. The faculty have repeatedly discussed the idea of a formative assessment in the mid-point of a students' career, and debated the position within the curricular sequence for such a reflective assessment, as well as what outcomes and content this assessment should contain. At our faculty retreat in May 2015 we finalized a plan for this assessment and will implement a portfolio review for core competencies for the Fall 2015 incoming class. This review process will begin implementation in December 2016. Courses will include exercises and skills intended to achieve core competencies, and other workshops or training will be offered to facilitate the preparation of the portfolios.

Threshold portfolio

To be submitted to the faculty at the end of the 3rd semester in the program. Submission requirements are:

- portfolio of work demonstrating core competencies
- studio projects requiring accompanying statements of design ideas/concepts/goals/methods and processes
- reflective statement indicative of accomplishments and personal goals for the remainder of their graduate studies.

S-3 – “Develop a more structured training in research methods to improve the capability of students to work with faculty on focused research topics.”

Department response: The landscape architecture faculty has identified research as one of the five program learning objectives upon which our program is structured. As such, several courses now incorporate research as a specific learning objective, and this outcome is measured in particular ways depending on the class.

To specifically address this, the curriculum was revised in 2012 requiring all students to take the course on research methods in the history/theory core; *LDAR 6949 Research Tools and Methods* is offered once every academic year. A research course had previously been offered as an elective, but had been only required for those students pursuing an MLA thesis. The research course has been revised to address design as an inquiry-based process, in addition to covering traditional research methodologies, scholarship, and approaches applicable to our field and discipline from the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences.

Finally, faculty continue to generate opportunities to hire students as research assistants working with them on grants and projects, which affords selected students direct experience on research projects.

Part 4: Faculty - Met

S-4 – “Implement a better system for identifying instructional needs for part-time faculty earlier and give consideration for how part-time faculty can make contributions to the department beyond instruction.”

Department response: In 2010 the college hired Leo Darnell to assist with managing student and academic services. In 2013 he was appointed Assistant Dean of Academic Services and Extended Studies. Darnell works with the chairs and directors of each respective program to develop and implement structured hiring plans for the delivery of the program curricula. A direct outcome of this has been the ability to identify needs for part-time faculty much earlier than in the past, and to hire them with enough time to prepare course materials.

In our department, 50% of the teaching faculty is part-time instructors and senior instructors, with only a few supplemental lecturers hired to deliver the program curriculum. They contribute significantly to the department through their dedicated and expert teaching, substantive service, and support of our departmental initiatives and our mission.

Part 5: Students – Met

No suggestions

Department response: None required.

Our students are a strong asset and contribute to the success of the program by bringing diverse backgrounds, expertise, and aspirations. The faculty and department administration work to foster and maintain open and effective communication with the students, and to support their endeavors. Specific examples include faculty serving as advisors for student organizations, meeting to discuss careers and internships, and participating to direct their Independent studies and theses. The students, through their ASLA chapter, created a student survey and worked with faculty to refine this survey instrument; the results are included in the appendices of this report.

Part 6: Alumni – Met

S-5 – “Develop a more complete and up-to-date alumni database.”

Department response: As the responsibility of the university, the alumni tracking continues to improve although slowly. The department views our connections with alumni as critical and therefore has put considerable effort into engaging them. The department has invited them to teach, give lectures and participate in juries. As a department we are also more present at the ASLA national convention and hosted a large event during the 2014 ASLA convention in Denver. A larger challenge is not just to keep in touch but also to collect data about employment and licensure.

It is highly likely that a Landscape Architecture Advisory Board will be established in the next year. It is also possible that we will form a landscape architecture alumni group, and thus expand our current Facebook and LinkedIn relationships with this group.

Part 7: Practitioners - Met

No suggestions

Department response: None required.

Over the last three years the Department Chair has made targeted efforts to connect with local firms and practitioners. Often, this has been facilitated through alumni, but it has also opened communications and relations with firm principals and staff.

Efforts have resulted in connecting students, especially graduating students, with employment opportunities and internships. Local offices and government agencies reach out to the department and seek faculty input to locate qualified job candidates. Faculty members have strong relationships with particular local offices, and the Department Chair has been forging new relationships. One specific effort was a series of "Professional Input Sessions" held in spring 2015; attendees included an impressive roster of local professionals.

Faculty attend events hosted by firms, as well as national and local ASLA chapter events; they were substantively involved in the ASLA annual meeting held in Denver in fall 2014. Finally, local practitioners are invited to participate in our program through design reviews, guest lectures, and Career Fair held at the college. Local firms have also been invited to teach; since the last accreditation visit, several sections of the advanced design studio have been taught or "hosted" by local offices including Civitas, Inc., AECOM, and Bill Wenk and Associates.

Part 8: Relationship to the University and the Community – Met

No suggestions

Department response: None required.

The department's faculty and students are deeply committed to working with communities in Colorado and elsewhere, and do this at many levels and venues. We also value work with our campus and academic partners and accomplish this in many ways, from student efforts to class work and faculty engagement.

Part 9: Facilities, Equipment, and Information Systems – Met

S-6 – "Plan and implement a reading room for the college during the space planning for expansion that will occur over the next several years."

Department response: As the college continues to plan for and implement building renovations, the possibility of dedicated reading rooms remains viable. At present, two areas are dedicated as student reference areas: a materials library in Suite 330, and a general reference and resource library on the 3rd floor hallway. A space dedicated to current journals and magazines would be welcome as an additional resource. Other new spaces recently added to the college include student study areas and a student lounge on the 2nd floor.

A space for current journals and standard references remains a desire, as does a reading room dedicated to current topics, such as urban agriculture, open to both students and faculty as well as to the public.

3. DESCRIBE CURRENT STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES.

The department retains a spirit of growth and enthusiasm while achieving a level of maturity and identity. The following lists of strengths and weaknesses summarize comments generated by faculty during several discussions and workshops, and also reference responses of students, alumni and local practitioners generated through surveys conducted in Spring 2015 soliciting their impressions of and relations to the program. Their comments are reflected throughout sections of this report, with various comments that identified suggestions aimed at improving the program incorporated below. (NOTE: Summaries for the student, alumni, faculty and professional surveys are included in Appendices D, E, F and G.)

STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Geographic Location

Denver and the Rocky Mountain West afford a unique educational environment:

- Denver and the state offer diverse natural and built landscapes with rural and urban development, ecological diversity, and a variety of climatic and physiographic regions;
- The college's physical location in a newly renovated building situated at the juncture of the campus and the city provides ready access to the benefits of both settings;
- The college's urban location offers a dynamic environment for research and study;
- Colorado has received national attention regarding the devastating floods of 2013. The Kresge Foundation and Community Foundation of Northern Colorado with the technical assistance of the Urban Land Institute (ULI) has focused timely and expert attention to resiliency and sustainability for northern Colorado communities. (See the 2014 ULI Advisory Services Panel Report "Building Resilience and Prosperity" for the Northern Colorado Region.) The program's mission and vision are in line with many of the statewide environmental issues related to natural disasters and resiliency;
- Major economic changes in the mountain region, in conjunction with dynamic geophysical and ecological systems provide a laboratory to engage with and address current and pressing issues of growing and shrinking communities, and develop responses to disasters such as recurring wildfires, floods etc.; this carries relevance and impact beyond Colorado.
- Numerous landscape architecture and design and planning firms are located near our college, and the Denver metro area provides many opportunities for professional engagement.
- Rapid growth in the Denver metro region offers jobs and opportunities and also presents problems that create a laboratory for study of the impacts and issues attendant to urban growth.

College of Architecture and Planning

The college's multi-disciplinary programs, department structure, and stable leadership contribute to the advantages offered, which include:

- Interdisciplinary dual-degree programs and certificates, and the potential to offer cross-listed interdisciplinary seminar classes;
- The college's research centers: Colorado Center of Preservation Research [CoPR]; Colorado Center for Community Development [CCCD], the longest operative center on the Denver campus; the new Advanced Center for Research in Traditional Architecture [CARTA]; and a rekindled Center for Sustainable Urbanism. These centers contribute to the focus on applied research, and engage/employ students in these efforts;
- Potential for the Ph.D. program to include students pursuing research interests in landscape architecture;
- The addition of dedicated staff for recruiting and student advising;
- A staff member dedicated to facilitating student internships and mentorships;

- Career Fair, Portfolio Workshops, Portfolio Night, and the ACE Mentorship Program;
- A dynamic college-wide lecture series drawing national and international speakers from diverse disciplines and areas of expertise.

Department

As the department has matured, it has achieved a level of confidence and gained recognition in the college and university, and at local, national and international levels. This has happened in part due to the department's commitment to:

- Delivery of a carefully integrated, learner-centered educational experience that stimulates and encourages students, as demonstrated in the development of program-level and course specific student learning outcomes and assessment;
- Offering a curriculum cultivated by an "issues-based" approach to design;
- An integrated and coordinated curriculum grounded in professional competencies and enhanced by focused attention to research, writing, and critical thinking skills;
- Challenging students to engage research and scholarly methods in areas that provide expertise or expanded knowledge related to the profession;
- Preparing students for a dynamic and changing field by exposing them to non-traditional projects and challenges;
- Expanding internship/externship opportunities for active learning;
- Offering courses and educational opportunities that require civic engagement and community connections;
- Creating opportunities to work collaboratively with allied fields;
- Now a full member of WICHE, the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education's Western Regional Graduate Program, and the opportunity this brings for student enrollments.

Faculty

The department and students benefit from creative, passionate and committed faculty who:

- Share a vision for the program and are collegial and committed to working together to advance student learning, the program and the profession;
- Are engaged and innovative teachers, and available for the students;
- Are actively engaged in professional and academic arenas and bring their experience with current and relevant issues into the classroom;
- Actively pursue research and publish articles on topics that impact the field, profession and discipline of landscape architecture;
- Exemplify strong critical thinking and professional behavior;
- Receive awards and recognition for teaching, research and creative work, and service from the university, and from national and international organizations;
- Foster relationships with the allied professionals;
- Are willing to think and act locally and globally in service to their communities.

Students

The educational experience offered by the department continues to attract motivated, talented and committed students. The strengths of the student body are exhibited through:

- The diverse educational and demographic backgrounds of students in the program;
- A collegial esprit de corps, with supportive and spirited interactions between students enhanced by shared courses and activities;
- Robust student activities and organizations including the Student Chapter of the ASLA, and the Horticulture Club, now a campus wide organization;
- The student-edited, award-winning journal ROOT, with its 7th volume published in Fall 2015; ROOT is also a recognized student organization receiving campus funding;
- Student engagement in research and creative work through faculty partnerships and the research centers, and through individual theses and independent studies;
- Students selected to present their research and design work at national and international conferences and symposia, indicators of solid critical thinking, communication, and design skills;
- Recognition of students through departmental achievement awards and professional awards and honors: ASLA Honor and Merit awards, and the LAF Olmsted Fellows;
- Winning competitive awards and scholarships such as the Jane Silverstein Ries Award; the Colorado Garden Foundation Graduate Scholarship; national ASLA Student Design Awards; and national competitions like the ACSA Haiti Design Competition.
- Students selected to participate in nationally competitive professional internship programs at firms such as Norris Design, Design Workshop, and EDSA.

Alumni

The department benefits from a talented, hardworking and growing group of alumni who bring recognition to the program and who work on behalf of the program. Our alumni:

- Garner recognition from professionals for their critical thinking and design abilities;
- Attain employment across the nation and internationally in all facets of practice;
- Are in positions of leadership in our field, serving as principals and upper level management in design firms, professional organizations, and government agencies, and as professors and department chairs in design and planning programs;
- Participate in events and educational opportunities at the college such as Career Fair, Portfolio Review, design juries, guest lectures in classes, alumni gatherings, and lecture series;
- Host office visits, and internship and externship opportunities for current students;
- Support the department through financial gifts and scholarships.

Professionals

The department's relationship with our professional community is dynamic and productive. We conducted a series of "Professional Input Sessions" in spring 2015, and attending professionals indicated that they want to be even more involved and connected to the program. Local offices host firm walk-throughs, seek us out to recommend current students and recent graduates for them to interview – and then hire, and professionals engage with us in the delivery of our advanced design studios. The following opportunities have been specifically identified:

- Engage local firms and practitioners to become sponsors in an Extern Program;

- Include additional professionals in our design reviews and as guest speakers in classes, and for other college events such as Career Fair;
- Consider reinstituting a Professional Advisory Board for the department.

Facilities

The college and university have made great strides in redesign and renovation efforts that help give a strong visual identity and offer updated equipment and facilities, as follows:

- The college has bought new equipment - desks, seating, lighting, fabrication equipment, and computers;
- There are several newly renovated physical spaces within the college – student services area, studios, labs and fabrication workshops, presentation spaces, reception and exhibition areas;
- Through a campus-wide application and selection process, CAP faculty can create cross-disciplinary courses through InWorks, the Office of Innovative Initiatives. Located on the first floor of our building, InWorks draws upon ideas from modern entrepreneurial practice for to provide hands-on, human-centered, team-based educational experiences that develop intellectual capacities related to creativity and innovation.;
- The Facility for Advanced Spatial Technology, or FastLab, is a shared CU Denver computing facility housing advanced capacity for Geographic Information Sciences [GIS] and geospatial studies;
- Auraria Library has undergone significant renovations and has transformed its mission to reflect state-of-the-art learning environments and media access while remaining a broad service-based entity supporting education and learning.

Community Outreach

Community outreach and the intention for “engaged communities” is one of the college’s key tenets. Despite its relatively small size, the department actively participates in these efforts through classes in the department to college-wide initiatives and national efforts:

- The Learning Landscapes program carries national impact for its research, having completed playground design and community engagement at every elementary school in Denver Public School system; it is now expanding to other cities;
- Participation in work done through the Colorado Center for Community Design [CCCD]; during AY 2015-16 the department will offer three classes in partnership with CCCD and the Hometown Colorado Program (HCP), a year-long partnership between CU Denver and Lakewood, CO, a community that has agreed to engage students and faculty on projects related to sustainability and livability;
- Faculty and students have worked in design studio projects with local metro-area communities to explore issues ranging from access and visitor experience at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal, to issues of hunger and food security for citizens of North Aurora, to working with citizens of Lyons Colorado affected by the floods of 2012, to those affected a year earlier by the fire in Four Mile Canyon near Boulder.
- Community design efforts for our campus, such as two projects at Auraria Library.

4. DESCRIBE CURRENT WEAKNESSES AND CHALLENGES.

College

Current challenges for the department that exist at the college or institutional level include:

- Challenges in creating and offering fully interdisciplinary or integrated classes and learning experiences both within the college and across the university. At present, these kinds of classes have limited support; some limitations result from embedded administrative practices within the university tied to allocating faculty and accounting for student numbers. Implementation of cross-disciplinary opportunities would enhance student learning and increase student satisfaction;
- The college and department would benefit from developing more strategic approaches to creating and offering international programs;
- The department seeks to gain more traction with undergraduate courses, including possible "minor fields of study" and certificates for landscape architecture and landscape studies;
- Continuity with a funding base; the current budget model may negatively affect the program if enrollments remain flat;
- The Ph.D. program, while more inclusive than in the past, could become more attractive to students interested in pursuing topics related to landscape architecture.

Facilities:

Enrollment for the College of Architecture and Planning continues to grow, resulting in the current concerns:

- Convenient, informal pin-up space and spaces for formal design reviews are needed;
- Fabrication lab/shop will need to expand to meet growing needs with expected increases in undergraduate enrollment in the BS Architecture program;
- Printing and production services can be unreliable, with poor color quality and long lines for getting work printed, especially at high volume junctures in the semester;
- Wireless network (bandwidth, connections, strength, speed) is inconsistent throughout the building;
- FastLab (shared with campus) needs more seats/computers to support required GIS classes and certificate instruction, and potentially for professional continuing education.

Department

The department recognizes the need for attention to the following:

- Increasing our national visibility, more effectively and communicating to relevant audiences our accomplishments and what makes our program distinctive;
- Implementing a thoughtful and effective transition in leadership;
- Creating stable financial base of support to enhance student recruitment and retention;
- Recruiting overall; we operate in a numbers based system for funding and resources, and we need to grow our department's enrollments to a minimal holding capacity of 30 students/year;
- Increasing selectivity for admission of students;
- Increasing our racial and ethnic diversity;

Faculty

The department's faculty is collegial, creative and energetic, however, the department has identified the following issues that need attention and solutions:

- Service responsibilities such as advising, RTP, and committee assignments create an unusually challenging administrative burden for the small number of permanent faculty in the department;
- Faculty find it increasingly difficult to devote adequate time to research and other professional development activities, as well as teaching additions like independent studies and theses;
- It is difficult for part-time contingent faculty to be available for students, resulting in even more burden falling to the tenured/tenure-track faculty;
- Find a balance of part-time contingent faculty / clinical faculty and tenured/tenure-track faculty so that the program is stable and diverse in its make-up and expertise.

Instruction and Assessment

The department is working on these issues related to the effective delivery of the curriculum:

- Implementation of the final curriculum revisions, including an "immersion semester";
- Seeking opportunities for interdisciplinary teaching and learning especially in studios;
- Implementing a deliberate, reflective and rigorous assessment of student's "core competencies" to be submitted at the end of the third semester in the program;
- Identifying and offering electives that address students' desires and create the potential for more in-depth study beyond the required courses, such as plant and horticultural knowledge, technology, construction methods, and design-build;
- Full implementation of externship program;
- Introducing courses in undergraduate curriculum – both within the college and across the university;

Enrollments and recruiting

The department has struggled over the last four years with declining enrollments with deleterious effects on the program. Further, with this decline we have moved to open admission. We aspire to circumstances in which we can recruit and retain as follows:

- With increased diversity;
- With a level of competitive admission and selectivity;
- With increased numbers of entering students to create a robust two-section cohort.
- An additional area of weakness is scholarship support for students; not only does this affect recruitment, it puts our students at a disadvantage against the other program in the college which have more developed scholarship bases and assistance in fund-raising.

Alumni and Professional Relations

The department has made great strides with alumni and professional relations over the last few years, but more needs to be done.

- The alumni list is incomplete and often inaccurate, and the list management team (which is NOT the department) needs to keep up with additions and revisions. A part-time staff member in the college to assist with alumni data would be welcome;

- Additional contact should be made with department alumni and professionals to update them on department and college events and successes, not just to seek funds or support as communicated through the university's alumni office;
- Professionals can be even more involved with the college and department for design reviews, Career Fair, externships, etc.;
- The university is purchasing and implementing a new database system, "SalesForce". Which purportedly will help with managing alumni data and outreach efforts; this should be in place in AY 2015-16.

5. DESCRIBE ANY SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES IN THE PROGRAM SINCE THE LAST ACCREDITATION REVIEW.

Leadership has been stable, with the Chair and Associate Chair functioning in a highly effective partnership. Under their guidance, the department has moved through the following substantial changes:

- Separation from ENVD/CU Boulder and its impacts, including the loss of faculty and curricular areas of expertise;
- Completion of two internal reports or self-studies with implications for program delivery;
- Loss of faculty reflecting declines in enrollment, which remain viable but need to grow;
- A beneficial refinement of departmental focus including a strong mission statement, curricular goals, and teaching objectives;
- Implementation of measurable learning outcomes and strong annual reports describing these;
- Creating the opportunity for undergraduate presence within CU Denver and the BS Architecture program;
- Faculty attaining tenure and reappointment;
- The Dean has appointed a landscape architect to his external "Advisory Board", which represents Architecture, Urban Planning and Landscape Architecture; the board members assist the department chairs in reaching more practicing professionals and advancing the placement of recent graduates.

6. DESCRIBE WHO PARTICIPATED (FACULTY, ADMINISTRATORS, STUDENTS, ALUMNI, OUTSIDE PROFESSIONALS, ETC.)

In preparing this self-evaluation and briefly state their roles. The LAAB recommends involving as many people as possible in preparing the SER, as the process of self-evaluation can be one of the greatest benefits of accreditation.

Preparation of this SER included input from the faculty, students, alumni, administrative staff and individuals from the professional landscape architectural community. Ann Komara, Chair, and Lori Catalano, Associate Chair, wrote and assembled the document; administration, staff and faculty contributed data and text to this document, and local practitioners, alumni and students provided insights and feedback through surveys and review of sections. Faculty contributed not only resumes and course materials but also information, such as lists of guests and jurors, and reviewed chapters in draft and final form, and offered comments on drafts of the SER. MLA student Matthew Roth assisted with document collation and formatting. Copy-edits for the entire report were completed by Executive Assistant to the Dean and CAP Director of Communications, Betsy Metzger, Ph.D..

The Landscape Architecture Department's faculty are involved in all aspects of the department, including curriculum development and implementation, aspects of operation, and external relationships with alumni and professionals. The focused process of SER documentation began in Fall 2014, and was engaged at

some level in most of the departmental faculty meetings held monthly during Spring 2015. A faculty retreat held in May 2015 included the SER as an agenda item. During that retreat and in subsequent small group meetings the faculty reflected on and identified significant activities and accomplishments since the last accreditation visit, discussed program strengths and weaknesses, and identified potential plans for improvement.

In Spring 2015 the department conducted surveys of faculty, students, alumni and professionals, gathered and compiled the necessary data, and developed and documented responses for the report. Keeley Sedlak helped develop the survey instruments (faculty, students, alumni, professionals); these surveys were conducted anonymously through her office, the CU Denver Office of Institutional Research. That staff also provided other institutional data.

Local professionals were also involved. The faculty retreat in May was held at the office of Norris Design. Department alumnus Don Brandes, principal at MATRIX Design and a member of the Dean's Advisory Board for the college, reviewed sections of the SER. Mark Johnson, principal of Civitas, Inc. and adjunct faculty member since 1987, also offered comments and guidance. In short, the departmental community developed this report.