



# LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS TECHNICAL COMMITTEE CALIFORNIA ARCHITECTS BOARD

PUBLIC PROTECTION THROUGH EXAMINATION, LICENSURE, AND REGULATION

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GOVERNOR

## SUMMARY REPORT

### CALIFORNIA ARCHITECTS BOARD LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Education Subcommittee  
December 2, 2005  
Sacramento, CA

#### Subcommittee Members Present

Richard Zweifel, Chair  
Christine Anderson  
Linda Gates  
Steve Lang  
Alexis Slafer

#### Subcommittee Member Absent

Heidi Martin

#### Staff Present

Doug McCauley, California Architects Board Executive Officer  
Mary Ann Aguayo, Landscape Architects Technical Committee (LATC) Program Manager  
Mary Anderson, Examination Analyst  
Justin Sotelo, Special Projects Analyst

#### Guests Present

Mona Maggio, Past LATC Program Manager

#### **A. Welcome and Introductions**

Education Subcommittee Chair Richard Zweifel called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m. He expressed his appreciation for the Subcommittee's hard work and accomplishments over the last 14 months in reviewing and evaluating California's eligibility requirements for examination and licensure.

Mr. Zweifel welcomed Mary Ann Aguayo, who joined the LATC as the new Program Manager on December 1, 2005. Ms. Aguayo came to the LATC from the Division of State Architect where she was the Executive Director for the Advisory Board, which consisted of Architects, Engineers, Board Members and Building Officials. Ms. Aguayo stated that she was excited to join the LATC and was looking forward to working with the LATC.

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Mr. Zweifel welcomed Mona Maggio, past LATC Program Manager, as a guest and thanked her for attending the meeting to help during the transition period.

## **B. Approve the June 17, 2005 Education Subcommittee Summary Report**

Alexis Slafer stated that a sentence on page four, second paragraph, under Item E read, "...the Subcommittee determined that the curricula of the community colleges were mostly consistent..." Ms. Slafer indicated that the curricula of the community colleges were not mostly consistent. The Subcommittee agreed that the sentence should read "...the Subcommittee determined that the curricula is varied, however the Associate Degree in Landscape Architecture is overseen by the Board of Governors, California Community Colleges, Chancellor's office (CCCCO). The Subcommittee recommends that the current one year of educational credit continue to be granted for an Associate Degree in Landscape Architecture; however, in the future, the curricula for community colleges may need to be reviewed for consistency."

Ms. Slafer asked for clarification about a sentence on page four, last paragraph, that stated, "Mr. Klein suggested that the LATC advise these schools with certificate programs of its role as the licensing/regulatory agency for the practice of landscape architecture and how the programs could consider modifying their curricula in order to make them meet the CCCCCO criteria for associate degree programs." Ms. Slafer asked to confirm that the Subcommittee did not agree to take on the task of reviewing the community college curricula and that the comment was a suggestion from Mr. Klein. The Subcommittee and staff confirmed that Mr. Klein stated he would be willing to disseminate information to the programs to help educate them about an Associates Degree in Landscape Architecture and that the degree meets the minimum educational requirement for examination and ultimately licensure in California.

Ms. Slafer asked to make a correction to a sentence on page eight, third paragraph, that read, "...landscape architecture degree or an extension certificate in landscape architecture..." Ms. Slafer requested that the sentence should read "...landscape architecture degree or an approved extension certificate in landscape architecture..." The Subcommittee agreed to add the term approved.

- **Steve Lang moved to approve the June 17, 2005 Education Subcommittee Summary Report with the indicated corrections.**
- **Alexis Slafer seconded the motion.**
- **The motion carried unanimously.**

## **C. Review and Approve Candidate Education/Experience Tracking Chart and Reciprocity Candidate Tracking Chart**

While making the final edits to the tracking chart, as requested, staff proposed separating the original chart into two separate charts: one containing the examination candidate information and the other containing the reciprocity candidate information. Due to the differences in requirements for each group of candidates, two separate charts would allow the LATC and staff to better assess trends that may be specific to each. The new tracking system will produce more accessible data

that will assist the LATC with future policy changes and/or changes to examination and reciprocity requirements.

At the meeting, the Subcommittee reviewed the revised *Proposed Candidate Education/Experience Tracking Chart* and the *Proposed Reciprocity Candidate Tracking Chart* and directed staff to add a “comment” column to each chart to capture any issues not identified on the chart. The Subcommittee agreed to accept the chart with the added “comment” column and directed staff to begin using the charts.

#### **D. Discuss and Recommend Changes to California’s Eligibility Requirements for Examination**

##### **1. Acceptance of Related Degrees**

Based on the Subcommittee’s directive from the June 17, 2005 meeting to identify the existence of Accrediting Board for possible related degrees, an Accrediting Board for Planning was identified. Staff obtained the curricula from the seven Planning degree programs in California, as well as the outline of the Planning Accreditation Board’s standards. All Subcommittee members were sent this information prior to the December 2, 2005 meeting, however, Linda Gates and Ms. Slafer volunteered to evaluate the information and present their findings and recommendations at the next meeting. A review of the schools was conducted to understand the relationship to a Landscape Architecture degree. The process included a review of the course description, number of years and units required to earn the degree for each school. The Planning Accreditation Board summary was also examined. The coursework was reviewed to determine how the courses corresponded to areas of instruction for a landscape architecture program curriculum listed under California Code of Regulations 2620.5 (i), which are similar to those listed in the Landscape Architectural Accreditation Boards Standards of Accreditation.

Ms. Gates stated that during the review of the planning curricula, there are a number of courses related, however, there are a number of key core public health, safety and welfare courses that are missing. Courses that are typically obtained from a landscape architecture program that are not obtained in planning programs.

The various Masters Degrees in Planning were very diverse. Within those degrees there is even more diversity, much of which is minimally or not related to landscape architecture. These include a variety of focus areas, concentrations, or areas of concentration and fields. The names vary by school, such as Social Planning and Analysis, Economics and Public Policy, and Community Health Planning and Analysis, Economics and Public Policy, and Community Health Planning. Others, such as Designing Livable Communities, Urban Design and Behavior, Transportation Planning, or Community Development and Social Policy, seemed like they would have a strong connection, in actuality they offered very few courses that had a link to landscape architecture in a variety of areas, but especially related to protecting the public’s health, safety, and welfare. Many of the required areas of study listed above had no corresponding course that was offered, even with the broadest criteria for evaluation. The variety of titles for degrees and programs would create an undo amount of work for staff in determining which Planning degrees were appropriate to fulfill the educational requirements for eligibility for sitting for the licensing exam..

Ms. Gates reiterated that during the June 17, 2005 meeting, the Subcommittee agreed to accept accredited degrees in Architecture and Civil Engineering to meet the educational requirement.

The curriculum of the professional Architecture and Civil Engineering schools emphasize the acquisition of critical thinking and technical skills necessary to address the health safety, and welfare issues that are essential to the practice of landscape architecture.

As a result of the analysis and discussion, the Subcommittee agreed to recommend to the LATC to accept accredited professional degrees in Architecture and Civil Engineering to meet the educational requirement and credit should be provided for these degrees.

For the reasons presented above, there is not a clear rationale for granting similar educational credit for other related degrees. Acceptance of related degrees will not be recommended for acceptance towards meeting the educational requirement.

Staff received a telephone call on December 1, 2005 requesting that a letter be submitted to the Education Subcommittee for consideration during the discussion of acceptance of related degrees. Staff received the letter and in turn shared the letter with Mr. Zweifel. The letter was requesting that a Master of Arts in Landscape Design degree be accepted and receive credit toward meeting the educational requirement for sitting for the LARE.

Mr. Zweifel shared the request with the Subcommittee and after a brief discussion, confirmed that the degree does not meet the current educational requirement for eligibility. In addition, based on today discussion, other related degrees are not being recommended to the LATC towards meeting the educational requirement. A letter will be sent to the individual reiterating the current regulatory requirements as well as the consideration of related degrees.

## **2. Acceptance of Partial Completion of Accredited Undergraduate Landscape Architecture Degrees and Method for Granting Credit**

At the December 2, 2005 meeting, Richard Zweifel stated that after reviewing a sampling of transcripts and course curricula, it may be quite challenging for staff to determine that a candidate has met the previously indicated 50% of the core coursework.

Mr. Zweifel proposed considering other methods of granting credit (i.e., meeting a total number of units, a percentage of total units completed, a percentage of units completed to complete the degree).

After in depth discussion, the Subcommittee agreed to recommend to the LATC to provide one year of educational credit for partial completion of an accredited degree in landscape architecture.

The Subcommittee further agreed to recommend that in order for a candidate to receive credit for partial completion of an accredited degree in landscape architecture, completion of 80% of the total units required to earn the degree from the institution where the student attended must be completed and passed.

The Subcommittee also recommends that the burden of proof be placed on the candidate to demonstrate that the 80% requirement has been met in order to receive educational credit (i.e. transcripts, course curriculum for the period of time when degree was awarded, confirmation from the Registrar's office, documentation of units required to earn the degree).

In addition, Ms. Slafer requested that the LATC further review granting partial credit to Extension Certificate candidates who may not have received their certificate.

### **3. Early Eligibility for Examination with an Accredited Landscape Architecture Degree**

During the December 2, 2005 meeting, Mr. Zweifel gave a brief overview of the reasoning behind considering to allow candidates to sit for the Landscape Architects Registration Examination (LARE) immediately after graduation and prior to meeting the training/experience requirement. The Council of Landscape Architectural Registration Boards (CLARB) identified that there was not statistical evidence to prove that sitting for the multiple-choice sections of the exam early was detrimental to pass rates. Although sample sizes were small, there wasn't any evidence that taking the multiple-choice sections early had any effect on pass rates.

Christine Anderson reported that she reviewed the information collected from CLARB. In addition, she spoke to two representatives from the Washington and British Columbia member boards. Both member boards allow graduates of accredited programs in landscape architecture to sit for sections A, B and D upon graduation and without any training/experience credits. Ms. Anderson reported that the representatives indicated there are many positive aspects to allowing candidates to sit for the examination directly after graduation with very few negatives. Some of the positive aspects noted are; 1) getting more candidates into the system, therefore increasing the pool of potential licensees; 2) an increase in the pass rates of two of the sections; 3) a greater volume of candidates taking the three test sections; and 4) the ability for candidates to focus on the vignette sections since the three multiple choice sections should already be complete by the time they sit for these sections. Among the negatives, a very slight decrease in the pass rates of the professional practice section.

As a result of Ms. Anderson's review and evaluation, her recommendation would be to allow candidates with an accredited degree in landscape architecture the ability to sit for the three multiple-choice sections (A, B and D) of the examination prior to gaining training/experience. In addition, Ms. Anderson recommends monitoring the results of California candidates using the newly implemented tracking system.

Steve Lang reported that he also reviewed the information received from CLARB. In addition, Mr. Lang spoke with landscape architects that he had come into contact with through the American Society of Landscape Architects and students from the University of California Los Angeles. Mr. Lang stated that similar to Ms. Anderson, the negatives for taking Sections A, B and D directly after earning an accredited degree in landscape architecture prior to meeting training/experience appear to be minimal.

Mr. Lang stated that one aspect discussed was the possibility of the initial pass rate on the multiple-choice sections being lower because they might be taken post-graduation with less preparation, relying on what was retained from school. Mr. Lang also stated that candidates knowing that these sections are offered more than once a year could also encourage a more casual approach. There was some thought that practical experience on the job could be a benefit as well, for passing the objective sections. Overall, it seemed that many of the individuals that Mr. Lang had spoken with thought it was a good idea to get recent graduates into the examination process early on. Mr. Lang stated that most of the candidates he had in the recent LARE prep class for Design Section C had taken Sections A, B and D and seemed relieved to have those out of the way so that they could concentrate on the design sections.

As a result of Mr. Lang's review and evaluation, his recommendation would be to allow candidates with an accredited degree in landscape architecture the ability to sit for the three multiple-choice Sections (A, B and D) of the examination prior to gaining training/experience. In addition, Mr. Lang also recommends monitoring the results of California candidates using the newly implemented tracking system.

As a result of Ms. Anderson and Mr. Lang's reports and discussion by the Subcommittee, the recommendation to the LATC is to allow candidates with an accredited degree in landscape architecture the ability to sit for the three multiple-choice Sections (A, B and D) of the LARE prior to meeting the training/experience requirement.

#### **4. Amount of Credit for Each Education and Experience Category**

During the December 2, 2005 meeting, the Subcommittee reviewed the updated chart. Based on discussion throughout the day, the Subcommittee reviewed each item and proposed some changes and others will remain unchanged. A few of the recommendations for the LATC to consider are to accept accredited degrees in architecture and civil engineering and provide one year of educational credit for either of those degrees. Another would be to accept partial completion of an accredited degree in landscape architecture and provide one year of educational credit.

In addition, based on previous discussions and proposed changes, Ms. Slafer requested that the amount of educational credit provided for an Extension Certificate in Landscape Architecture be increased from two years to three years..

Ms. Slafer stated that the Extension Certificate in Landscape Architecture is an intense program focused specifically on landscape architecture. When the amount of credit being either proposed and or currently provided under current regulations is considered, it seems only appropriate to increase the amount of credit provided to Extension Certificate candidates.

The Subcommittee agreed to recommend to the LATC to increase the amount of educational credit currently being granted for an Extension Certificate in Landscape Architecture from two years to three years.

#### **E. Review and Make Recommendation Regarding Reciprocity Requirements**

At the December 2, 2005 meeting, the Subcommittee was asked to confirm their recommendation from the June 17, 2005 meeting which was to retain the current reciprocity requirements. The Subcommittee confirmed to recommend retaining California's current reciprocity requirements. As discussed, staff has been directed to track all examination and reciprocity candidate information via the proposed Candidate Education/Experience Tracking Chart and Reciprocity Candidate Tracking Chart. The new tracking system will allow staff to collect information on an ongoing basis, which would be available for future use and analysis by the LATC. In the event the LATC wishes to reconsider its position with respect to this issue, data will be available to assist the LATC with their decision.

**F. Review and Approve all Final Recommendations for the LATC to Consider Regarding California's Eligibility Requirements for Examination and Other Related Items**

*The Education Subcommittee confirmed its final recommendations as follows:*

- **Accept Accredited Professional Architecture and Civil Engineering Degrees**

*The Subcommittee confirmed its recommendation that the LATC accept accredited professional degrees in architecture and civil engineering towards satisfying the education requirement for examination eligibility and that one year of credit be granted for completion of such programs*

- **Related Degrees**

*There is not a clear rationale for granting educational credit for other related degrees. Acceptance of related degrees will not be recommended for acceptance towards meeting the educational requirement.*

- **Grant Credit for Partial Completion of an Accredited Landscape Architecture Degree**

*The Subcommittee recommended that the LATC grant credit for partial completion of an accredited degree in landscape architecture, that one year of educational credit be granted for such, and that an applicant demonstrate that he/she has completed at least 80% of the total units required for such degree program*

- **Allow Early Eligibility for Examination with an Accredited Degree in Landscape Architecture**

*The Subcommittee confirmed its recommendation to allow candidates with an accredited degree in landscape architecture to sit for the three multiple-choice sections of the LARE (Sections A, B, and D) prior to meeting training/work experience requirements*

*If this option is approved, the Subcommittee recommends that the LATC closely monitor the success of these candidates on the examination via the proposed Candidate Education/Experience Tracking Chart*

- **Implement a Candidate Education/Experience Tracking System and Reciprocity Candidate Tracking System**

*The Subcommittee recommends that LATC staff implement a Candidate Education/Experience Tracking System and Reciprocity Candidate Tracking System and collect data by utilizing the tracking charts.*

- **Revise Certificate of Applicant's Experience and Qualification Form**

*The Subcommittee recommends that the LATC revise the Certificate of Applicant's Experience and Qualifications Form to include a checklist of specific practice categories that are tested for on the LARE*

- **Create Candidate/Employer Brochure**

*The Subcommittee recommends that the LATC create a Candidate/Educator/Employer Brochure*

*The Subcommittee recommends that the LATC reference the Board's CIDP brochure when developing such brochure*

- **Six-Year Education/Experience Requirement**

*The Subcommittee confirmed to recommend retaining the six year combined education/experience requirement be retained at this time.*

- **Associate Degrees in Landscape Architecture**

*The Subcommittee recommends that the LATC should not take on the responsibility of reviewing associate degree programs at this time*

*The Subcommittee confirmed its recommendation that one year of educational credit continue to be granted for completion of an associate degree in landscape architecture*

- **Reciprocity**

*The Subcommittee recommends that the LATC retain its current requirements for reciprocity.*

*The Subcommittee recommends that LATC staff track reciprocity candidate information via the proposed Reciprocity Candidate Tracking Chart (discussed under Recommendation 4; also, see Attachment 4) and, if necessary (at a future date), have the data available for the LATC to reconsider its position on this issue*

- **Rolling Time Clock for Examination Candidates**

- *The Subcommittee confirmed its recommendation that the LATC not implement a “rolling time clock” for examination candidates at this time*
- *The Subcommittee recommends that LATC staff track candidates’ number of attempts to pass each section of the Landscape Architect Registration Examination (LARE) via the proposed Candidate Education/Experience Tracking Chart (discussed under Recommendation 4; also, see Attachment 3) at this time and, after two years, gather data from the Board and other CLARB member jurisdictions and have the LATC reassess whether implementing a “rolling time clock” would be appropriate at that time*

- **Eligibility for Examination with Experience Only**

*The Subcommittee recommends that candidates not be allowed to sit for the examination with work experience alone at this time*

- **Credit for Teaching and/or Research**

*The Subcommittee confirmed its recommendation that credit not be granted for teaching and/or research experience at this time*

**G. Adjournment**

The LATC staff presented the Education Subcommittee members with a Certificate of Appreciation for all their hard work and dedication in evaluating California's Education and Training/Experience Requirements for the licensing examination. A Certificate of Appreciation was also sent to Karina Verhoeven who participated in the first three meetings, however relocated to Canada and was unable to attend the December 2005 meeting and Heidi Martin.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.