

**THESIS GUIDELINES FOR THE PROGRAM IN
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
AT ARLINGTON:
DATA ARE PLURAL**

by

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Presented to the Student Body in Landscape Architecture at

The University of Texas at Arlington in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON

SUMMER 1995*

(Updated 1997; 1999; 2001; 2002; 2003; 2004; 2005; 2006; 2007; 2008; 2009; 2010; 2011; 2012; 2013;
2014; 2015)

Original draft by J. Randle Harwood in consultation with the
landscape architecture faculty and in accordance with the policies of the School
of Architecture, the Program in Landscape Architecture and, the Office of Research and Graduate
Studies.

A Thesis Outline and Table of Contents:
A Prototype

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ABSTRACT

This document outlines certain expectations of the faculty in landscape architecture regarding style, quality and content of theses produced by master of landscape Architecture (MLA) students. Because the Program requires a thesis for graduation, students are expected to conduct research in scientifically and academically acceptable ways, selecting an appropriate research method, delving deeply and thoroughly into the literature on their topic, and presenting their ideas, findings and conclusions in a well-written and logical manner. This document and other writing guides lay out for the reader the procedures and actions which, when followed, can keep the student on-course toward a quality research paper. However, this document is neither infallible nor is it a substitute for the creativity and initiative needed to complete a thesis. It is only a guide albeit one based on years of faculty experience. It is also written in thesis format to the degree possible.

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION
Research Objectives

The objective of this paper is to explain certain procedures and expectations for conducting thesis research as required of graduate students in the Program of Landscape Architecture at The University of Texas at Arlington. This paper represents only one of the guidelines or aids available to graduate students and it must be used in conjunction with other stylistic and procedural requirements of the University's Office of Graduate Studies and the faculty of landscape architecture.

Research Questions

The principle questions raised in this paper are:

1. What are the expectations of the faculty regarding appropriate scientific methods, data analysis and thesis formats?
2. What are student responsibilities in meeting these expectations?

Definitions of Terms

Original Research: A control requirement in academic discovery which puts forward the unique perspective or experience of the researcher and thereby makes distinguishable his or her research from the work of others. It is a requirement passed

on or approved by the graduate student's thesis committee principally through the thesis committee chair.

Qualitative Methods: Social science research techniques in which emphasis is placed on actors' explanations of their social participation. Qualitative methods are characterized by training observers who enter a social setting over a period of time and participate in that setting with varying degrees of involvement. Examples of qualitative methods commonly used in landscape architecture research include participant observations (of individual or group behaviors), content analysis, group or individual interviews, perception studies, certain forms of historical inquiry, critical analysis and various techniques for generating data from public participation. Qualitative methods rely primarily on words rather than numbers (Henderson, 1991, p. 146.)

Quantitative Methods: Research techniques which convert complex data into numerical values. Quantitative methods are characterized by rankings, percentages or clusters of related values, as garnered from data which appear mathematically unrelated. Examples of quantitative methods include surveys (telephone, mail, personal and the like) and the various statistical techniques used to analyze the data. Quantitative methods rely primarily on numbers rather than words (Henderson, 1991, p. 146.)

Reference List: The body of work relating to the student's research topic including published and unpublished sources. As opposed to a bibliography which is a complete body of work, a reference list contains the current, historical and tangential sources which inspire, support and document the elements of a researcher's scientific work. All references cited in a thesis are listed in the reference list. However, all entries in the reference list need not be cited in the body of the thesis.

Review of Literature: A comprehensive discovery or explanation of the salient literature on the student's research topic. The review of literature is based on those necessary words or phrases which link the perspectives or findings of various authors through explanations and hypotheses which help justify the student's own research. **A review of literature is not a research method** but it is essential in all scientific inquiry. All literature mentioned in the review of literature is cited in the reference list, but all entries in the reference list need not be discussed in the review of literature.

Degree Candidate: Any student who has completed all of the course work—except for thesis and thesis defense—necessary to complete the Master of Landscape Architecture degree. Upon becoming a degree candidate a student is allowed to enter into his or her thesis research.

Thesis: A document that reflects the scholarly rigor necessary for conducting original research and presenting its findings prior to publication. An example of a

thesis outline—which can be modified or adapted to fit the researcher’s needs—appears as the table of contents for this document and is found on page two.

Thesis Committee: A group of three to five (occasionally more) academicians, from the student’s major and minor areas of study, and practitioners (when appropriate) who steer the research, conduct reviews and ultimately approve the scholar’s work prior to submission of the thesis to the Office of Graduate Studies. At least three full time members of the landscape architecture faculty are required on MLA thesis committees. Selection of the committee follows the selection of a thesis committee chair with whom the student consults regarding overall membership of the committee. After reviewing drafts of the thesis individual committee members notify the thesis committee chair when the research work is ready to move to its next step.

Thesis Committee Chair: The primary academician from the student’s resident area of study, with whom the student works most clearly in his or her scholarly research. The thesis committee chair notifies the student when the student’s research work is to be presented to other committee members. In turn, the thesis committee chair receives from other committee members the amended writing or edits before the draft is returned to the student.

Thesis Proposal: A developed paper which includes an overview of the problem studied, the review of literature, and the scientific method(s) used to explore the problem-at-hand. The thesis proposal originates from the concepts which the

student is exploring, in conjunction with guidance from the thesis committee chair. The final draft of the thesis proposal—basically the first three chapters of the thesis—is presented to the thesis committee upon completion by the student and upon acceptance by the thesis committee chair. It also is presented to the thesis committee before data are collected or analyzed.

Overview of the Topic

Responsibilities for Completing the Thesis

It is the responsibility of the student to identify and comply with the regulations, requirements and deadlines pertaining to candidacy, to the thesis, and to graduation from The University of Texas at Arlington. Information regarding these matters is found through such outlets as the Office of Graduate Studies, the University's Graduate Catalog, and the UT Arlington Institutional Review Board (IRB.) In addition, all students enrolled in Thesis (LARC 5698) receive notice of and are expected to attend the thesis orientation meeting conducted each semester by the Office of Graduate Studies. It is at these meetings where specific questions are answered regarding deadlines, procedures, mechanical and graphics requirements and other rules and regulations affecting the thesis and graduation.

Examples of the Topic

Theses completed in the UT Arlington Program in Landscape Architecture

since 1990 include:

<u>Title</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Year</u>
**Humor in the Landscape	Rosanna Brown	1990
*A Study of Geographic Information Systems: Applications for Land Planning and Natural Resource Management in Sub-Saharan West Africa: A Rationale for a Community-Based Approach	Beth Ann Pinney	1991
Integrating Cultural Districts into the Fabric of the Urban Landscape	Jimmie L. King	1992
Reciprocal Influences Between Designer and Designed: The Career of Richard B. Myrick	James M. McRee	1992
Do Urban Ecosystems Have Standing: Attitudes of Landscape Architects Toward urban Ecosystems	Kathleen Cook	1993
A Qualitative Search for the Spirit of Place of Arlington, Texas	Brian G. Cotter	1993
Context and Connection in Urban Parks	Cheryl Graham	1993
Post Occupancy Evaluation of an Innovative Zoo Exhibit: Caldwell Zoo Case Study	Joel M. Hamilton	1993

User Characteristics of Selected Open Spaces in the Fort Worth Central Business District	Claire C. McQuitty	1993
A Study of the Licensure and Professional Practice of Landscape Architects: A Comparison of the Attitudes of Architects, Landscape Architects and Landscape Designers in Three States Having Differing Licensure Laws	Alison Schroeder	1993
Establishing That the Spatial Characteristics of Preindustrial Pedestrian Precincts Coincide With the Important Components of Effective Urban Spaces	Ian J. Barwick	1994
* Design Criteria for Outdoor Space and Human Behavior: A Better Fit for Alzheimer's Disease Patients	Katherine Gilson	1994
* Gender Values, Personality and Response to Environmental Issues in Students of Landscape Architecture	Richard G. Wiebe	1994
* A Survey and Comparison of the Landscape of Two Early-Twentieth Century Coal-Mining Communities: Thurber, Texas and Buxton, Iowa	Cantey H. Ferchill	1994
A Survey Method to Assess the Design Quality of Urban Parks	San Liu	1995
Recycling the Dream: The Rails to Trails Movement in North Texas: An Ecological Approach to Development of Recreational and Transportation Greenways on Abandoned Railways	Sally Allsup	1996

Trauma and the Garden: Inquiry into the Presence of Response Difference Among Traumatized and Non-traumatized Viewers to Garden Design Influenced by Aspects of Trauma	Antoinette Gilkey	1996
* History and Myth in the Cultural Landscape: A Cross Cultural Perspective on Preservation	Madhuri Nandgaonkar	1996
* Landscape Palimpsest: Layers of Meaning in the Dallas Built Landscape	Patricia Quaid	1996
The Cultural Landscape Inventory: A Research Process for the Platt District of the National Park Service	Kay Sallee	1996
The Secret Garden: Archetypal Landscape or a Personal Aesthetic Adaptation of Nature	Elizabeth Smidt	1996
* The New Vernacular Garden: An of Self-Expression in the Residential Landscapes	Angie Zimmer	1996
Environmentally Friendly Residential Subdivisions	Chris Colley	1997
The Design Characteristics of the Restorative Landscape in a Corporate Setting	Clay Walker	1997
The Replication of Japanese Landscape Aesthetics in American Culture	Lu Zhou	1997
Landscape as Museum	Lorie Offutt-Kinler	1998
* Rural Cultural Landscape Analysis Applied to a Historic Mining Landscape	Carol Feldman	1998

* The Role of Affective Response in in Culturally Based Landscape Design	Almudena Gonzalez	1998
*** Towards a Critical Regionalism for Rapidly Developing Areas of Texas	David Hopman	1998
* Cemeteries as Sacred Landscapes	Sharon Fuller	1998
The Healing Dimensions of Hospital Outdoor Spaces	Sharmila Ghose	1999
Documenting the Historical Significance of Cultural Landscapes in Fort Worth City Parks: A Case Study	DJ Schoneweis	1999
* Evaluation Paradigms and the Value of Landscape in Commercial Real Estate	John St. Clair	2000
Phytoremediation in Redeveloping Urban Residential Areas: A Tool for Landscape Architects	Emily Williams	2000
Landscapes of Meaning: The Implications of Postmodernism on Transportation Corridors and the Roles of Landscape Architects	Steve Robertson	2002
The Fitness of the Inward landscape Design Ideal in Texas: Deviations in Chinese Temple Landscape Design	Way-yu Lin	2002
Towards Collaboration Between Scientist and Designer in Ecological Restoration	Noelle Flocke	2002
* De-Memorialization and the Lifespan Memorials	Erica Simon	2002

** A Proposed Strategy for the Collection and Use of Academic Data to Support Research and Education in Landscape Architecture	Amy Archambeau	2003
* Learning to Listen from the Visually Impaired: The Landscape Experience	Susan Atkinson	2003
The Effects of Habitat Quality and Human Disturbance on the Attractiveness of Urban Environments to Wood Duck Populations in North Texas	Ryan Shackelford	2003
Designing and Planning for Biological Diversity at the Community/Ecosystem Level: Attitudes and Roles of Landscape Architects; Architects; and Land Planners in North Central Texas Versus Sweden	Anna Shine	2003
Reconnecting to the Land: Discovering Ancestral Landscapes	Terri West	2003
* Straighter is Not Always Better	Kelly Pugh	2003
Understanding Landscape Urbanism	Edwin K. Beilharz	2004
Demonstrating Natural form Through Environmental Art	Brian Douce	2004
Integral Roles of Ecopsychology in the Field of Landscape Architecture	Josh Dunlap	2004
Development Factors of Roof Landscapes	Emily Drake	2004
It's Not Just Child's Play: A Retrospective Approach to Wet Playground Design Recommendations with Consideration To User Preferences, Social Play, and Spatial Configuration	Kayce M. Hammack	2004

Reconsidering the Middle Ground: Evaluation Paradigms and the Role of Agricultural Landscape as Intermediate Ground	Susan M.C. Higgins	2004
Real Estate, Terrorism and Secure Design: Implications for Landscape Architecture	Michele Jacobs	2004
The Involvement of Survivors and Stakeholders in the Selection of Designs and Designers of Memorials and Monuments: A Paradigm Shift in the Design of Monuments and Memorials	Kuo-Liang Liao	2004
Historically Accurate Plant Palettes and Historic House Monuments: A North Texas Study	Johnny G. Patin	2004
The Roles of Hand Drawing and Computer Assisted in the Professional Practice of Landscape Architecture	Lisa Ballew	2005
Defending Golf Courses Against Technology: The Impact of Modern Golf Equipment on the Design of Golf Courses	Trey Kemp	2005
Children's Visions Of Outdoor Beauty	Sarah Mundy	2005
Places to flourish: Place-making that nurtures ideas, creativity and commerce	James Richards	2005
The connection between landscape and water quality: A survey of landscape architects in Texas	Andrea Davis	2006
21 st century approach to park and recreation planning: The fifth era	Maria A. Pena	2007

Global outsourcing in landscape architecture: A study of current and future trends and effects	Azra Kahn	2007
Leaving a legacy: The career of Gene Newman	Michael Kashuba	2007
A Symbiotic Relationship between Mid-Century Modern Masters: The Collaborative Works of Arthur and Marie Berger, Landscape Architects and O'Neil Ford, Architect	Diane S.D. Laurence	2007
Persistence of memory: Scent gardens for therapeutic life review in communities for the elderly	Wendy Meyer	2007
Roadside naturalization and Texas highway 190: a comparison between best practices and plant selection	John Scott	2007
Effects of plants on inmate recidivism: Potential effects of plant material on prisoners	June Gumo	2008
Innovative storm water best management practices: Their influence on landscape architecture in North Texas	Jason Voight	2008
Ecological design in resort hotel properties: Management perceptions of ecologically performative landscape practices	Kristen Mitrakis	2008
**Developing eligibility criteria for daylighting streams as applied to Dallas' Mill Creek	Deepa H. Koshaley	2008

Influences and mental processes involved in generating creative products and their implications for landscape architects	Theunis Devilliers	2008
Labyrinths in the landscape: Who is advocating; who is using; and are there benefits?	William Skeet Norton	2008
Art and the built landscape in the central business district of Dallas: Influences from an identifiable era in the late twentieth century	Lara Moffat	2008
Application of the historic preservation index strategy to vernacular landscapes	Sonal Parmer	2008
Dialectic aesthetics: The landscape aesthetics of Steven Bourassa and the architecture aesthetics of Roger Scruton	Jake Baker	2009
**Nature deficit disorder: An examination of the role for landscape architecture in the no-child left inside movement	Wade A. Miller	2009
**Suburban Landmarks: Perceptions of Experts and Non-Experts	Su-yu Cheng	2009
**Multi-National Licensure in Landscape Architecture: Searching for its Impact on the Profession	Madhavi B. Sonar	2009
Designers' Perspectives of Walkability and Accessibility of DART'S Downtown Transitway Mall in Dallas, Texas	Vaidehi N. Gupte	2009
North Texas Stakeholders: Perceptions of Extensive Green Roofs	Matthew Heath House	2009

**Perceptions of Pedestrian Accessibility to Green Infrastructure: Fort Worth's Urban Villages	Petrine M. Abrahams	2010
Anti-Terrorism Site Design Guidelines for US Military Installations: An Evaluation of the Implementation Process at US Army Forts in Texas and Louisiana	Joey Ball	2010
A Comparison of Perceptions among Amateur and PGA Professional Golfers to the Five Design Principles of Golf Course Architecture	Ryan W. Johnson	2010
**Assessing Stormwater Runoff and Pollution with SWAT in Mixed-Use Developments: Learning from Southlake Town Square and Addison Circle	Brian Parker	2010
The Compatibility of Urban Edible Landscapes to the Sustainable Sites Initiative's Goals and Design Criteria	Cheryl Beesley	2010
Elementary Schoolyard Landscapes as Outdoor Learning Environments: Perceptions of North Texas Stakeholders	Shawn M. Bookout	2010
**Toward an Ontology of Design Philosophy In Landscape Architecture: Developing a Personal Design Philosophy	Rhonda Fields	2010
A Search for Appropriateness: Using Qualitative Techniques to Contrast the Mountain Resort Core Communities of Vail Village and Beaver Creek Village	Jared Sylor	2010
Impacts of Suburbs: Assessing Tree Coverage Change with Geo-Spatial Tools in the City of Ft. Worth	Colt Yorek	2010

An Exploration of the Attributes of Sense Of Place in a Culturally Diverse Dallas District: Learning from a Cedar Springs Case Study	Susan Alford	2011
**Protocols for Use of the CELA Academic Information System	Alexandra Leister	2011
Mobile Device Usage on Campus Spaces: Implications on Design and Behavior	Grace Herman	2011
*Landscape Practices on Gas Well Sites in North Texas: Perceptions of Selected Industry Representatives and Regulators	Sarah Kuehn	2011
Evaluating the Design and Planning Services of the Arlington Urban Design Center: Clients' Perspectives	Yunhui Zhou	2011
Assessing the Impacts of Converted Rails - Trails in North Texas Communities: Learning From the Stakeholder's Perspectives	Bhavana Kidambi	2011
The Influence of a Marketing Plan on the Professional Practice of Small Landscape Architecture Firms	Lynne M. Carpenter	2012
*Design and Implementation Processes of Low Impact Development in the Dallas-Ft. Worth Area	Alice Cameron Holmes	2012
The Career of Gary O. Robinette in the Contemporary History of Landscape Architecture	Jason Lackey	2012
The 'Pedestrian Realm' as a Genesis of Commerce: Bazaars of the East and Mixed-use Centers of the West	Zoha Niazi	2012

Native Plant Palettes: Perceptions of North Texas Homeowners in Upper-Income Suburbia	Amber Michelle Davis	2012
Urban Park Benefits and Community Identity: A Study in Arlington, Texas	Leonelle V. D'Souza	2012
Precursors to Context Sensitive Design (CDS) in non-CSD Projects	Xiwen Feng	2012
*Identifying Perceptions of the Creative Class Regarding Lost Space in Downtown Dallas	Yao Lin	2012
*Developing Methods on Measuring Naturalness of Stream Restoration Projects: Learning from Johnson Creek	Nhasala Manandhar	2012
Stakeholders' Perceptions on the Design and Feasibility of the Fused Grid Street Network Pattern	Hong Anh Mang	2012
Planting Design and its Impact on Efficacy in Therapeutic Garden Design for Dementia Patients in Long-Term Care Facilities in North Texas	Cuiyan Mei	2012
Master Planning for the Arts: Identifying the Skills and Roles for Landscape Architects	Jack Randal Phillips	2012
Professional Service Dependencies between Architects and Landscape Architects	Alexandra Lorraine Romero	2012
Semiotics and New Urbanism in North Texas: Comparing Designer Intention and User Perceptions	Chia Yin Wu	2012
Uses of Sacred Spaces in Urban Neighborhoods: A Study of Cemetery Spaces in Uptown Dallas	Huei-Chung Cheng	2013
Crime in Transit Oriented Districts:	Devin D. Guinn	2013

Learning from Dallas, Texas The Utilization of Social Spaces Near Soccer Fields by Attendees of Hispanic Soccer League Matches in Dallas, Texas	Blake Samper	2013
*The Study of Cultural Landscapes in Texas: An Inquiry for Policy Recommendations	Dorothy Wright	2013
Urban Morphology, Open Space Planning and Analysis Tools: Ft. Worth since the 1909 Kessler Plan	Dandan Zhu	2013
Subsurface Wastewater Treatment Wetlands: Understanding Barriers to Implementation in the Landscape	Geoffrey Hall	2013
What does a Landscape Architect Need To Know About Water? Assessing Knowledge Needs of Professionals in North Texas	Kent Matthew Elliott	2013
The Impact of Green Walls and Roofs to Urban Microclimate in Downtown Dallas, Texas: Learning from Simulated Environments	Dalit Bielaz Sclar	2013
*** * Landscape Fragmentation as an Impact of Shale Gas Drilling in North Texas	Anjana Pradhananga	2014
User's Perceptions of Open Space Benefits in Master Planned Communities in North Texas	Chiyang Xu	2014
The Relationship between Park Character- istics and Human Social Behavior: Learning from Main Street Garden in Dallas Texas	Junjie He	2015
Restraints on Design: Adventure Playgrounds and Landscape Architecture	Karen Teague	2015

Complete Streets Design Elements Alexandra T. Tracz 2015
 and Their Impact on Travel Behavior:
 Learning from Bagby Street Recon-
 struction in Houston Texas

***National/Regional Award Winner**

****Selected for presentation at ASLA, TxASLA and/or CELA annual conferences.**

***** Selected for presentation at other national or international conferences**

Selection of a Thesis Topic

Selection of a thesis topic is the responsibility of the student. Topics often emerge from an area that reflects the student's personal and professional interests. They also emerge from the student's electives while in graduate school, from the availability of faculty (to serve on the thesis committee) with interest in work, and to some degree from the student's previous academic background, professional experience or career goals. The weight of each criterion varies with each student, so if career objectives, for example, do not mesh with one's interest in a topic, no rule is violated. Instead the faculty has learned that an individual's passion and dedication to a topic are indicators of solid academic work, particularly when coupled with an open mind, self-discipline, self motivation, persistence, and a willingness to implement suggestions from the thesis committee.

Frequently, thesis topics emerge from the academic exercises of a studio or class such as the thesis proposal exercise required in Research Methods (LARC 5380). As much as possible, the faculty encourages the development of theses from

sponsored research on which students occasionally work while in the program. In other cases, a particular faculty member can have a project or topic in need of rigorous examination wherein he or she is encouraged to find a student who can share in the research. No common well-spring of ideas exists for finding a thesis topic, but instead there exists in the academic ambiance of the program a belief that any good idea has the potential of leading to a thesis. Any faculty member is capable of conducting preliminary exploration with a student to help nurture along such examination ideas. A concentrated examination of this exploratory process, however, occurs in the research methods class (LARC 5380). This class is taken prior to the last semester of a student's classroom work and no earlier than the second year of enrollment in the program, the exception being with those students already possessing the first professional degree in landscape architecture.

It is not necessary to quantify all theses nor is it necessary to techniques from both methods in order to achieve scientific acceptance. Either method can stand alone when properly practiced.

Both methods require time preceding a student's enrollment in Thesis (LARC 5698) in the form of pre-testing. For example, when a quantitative survey (telephone, mail-out or personal interview) is implemented, it first must be pre-tested for utility, function and analysis. Qualitative techniques do not always require pre-testing but frequently require adjusting to fit the social conditions of a particular research milieu.

In addition, qualitative techniques generally are longitudinal, meaning that they require time and sequence to yield useful data. Therefore, and in all cases, students find it necessary to have completed their thesis proposal—which includes their selection of research methods and research techniques—before completing their data collection and analysis.

Does this mean that the proposal is prepared prior to enrollment in Thesis (LARC 5698?) Generally, the answer is yes, unless the student enrolls in the course for consecutive semesters, which is common since quality research usually requires more than a semester's sixteen week time frame.

Summary

This section contains an overview of thesis research in UT Arlington's Program in Landscape Architecture. It spells out certain responsibilities of the student in completing the research process and it lists examples of theses completed in the Program since 1990. In addition, this section generally describes certain factors affecting the selection of a thesis topic, and it prepares the reader to ask specific questions some of which are addressed in subsequent sections.

Additional Questions Regarding Thesis Writing

Question A:

What is a design thesis?

Answer:

A design thesis traditionally is a culminating project in design curricula and is defined as an extended or grand studio project. Its focus is on product rather than process, while the process-oriented thesis emphasizes the scholarly requirements of research. A thesis with a design emphasis is acceptable in the Program at UT Arlington as long as appropriate measures of rigor and logic are met. For example, students can use a specific design product or design process with which to test, measure, or add validation to their thesis topic. A number of recent theses have used this approach.

Question B:

When is the thesis proposal carried out?

Answer:

The thesis proposal—which essentially is the first three chapters of a thesis and which is never written in future tense—is completed prior to or at the very beginning of the first semester the student enrolls in Thesis (LARC 5698). **Specifically the thesis proposal is due in the thesis committee chair’s office no later than one week after the deadline to file for graduation (see Graduate School Calendar.)** This means that the student by this time already has completed the selection of his or her thesis committee (including securing a chair) and has pre-tested his or her research

methods and techniques. Generally, this also means that the student is a candidate for graduation, meaning that he or she has completed all course work except for Thesis (LARC 5698) and the Master's Comprehensive Exam (LARC 5294.)

Question C:

How often does one enroll in Thesis (LARC 5698?)

Answer:

One enrolls in this course until one has completed the thesis and has filed all the paperwork required to graduate. In a student's final semester, he or she will enroll exclusively both in Thesis (LARC 5698) and the Master's Comprehensive Exam (LARC 5294.) A student must be enrolled in Thesis (LARC 5698) in order to receive input and direction from his or her committee.

Question D:

Are candidates allowed to enroll in these courses and graduate during the summer?

Answer:

Generally, candidates cannot graduate in the summer, thus they generally do not enroll in Thesis (LARC 5698) except during the fall and spring semesters. The reason is that the faculty appointments are for nine months and these appointments

exclude the summer months. Special conditions arise, however, and with the approval of the thesis chair, the thesis committee and the Program Director, summer enrollment and graduation can occur. These are rare.

Question E:

How often does a thesis committee meet?

Answer:

Ideally, a thesis committee meets weekly with a candidate, but workloads make this rate of scheduling difficult. The landscape architecture faculty advocates a flexible schedule policy depending upon a student's particular needs. In all cases, the decision to call a full committee meeting requires approval from the thesis committee chair, while the implementation and execution of the meeting are the responsibilities of the student.

Once a proposal has been accepted, edits and reviews of subsequent chapters are carried-out by the chair. In other words, when the committee chair and the student have reached an agreement on a draft of the document, the document then can be distributed to the committee. Likewise, all edited drafts are returned to the student through the committee chair so that he or she is kept apprised of the input of the full committee. The committee is likely to meet as the document reaches its final stages and, of course, the entire thesis committee is present for the thesis defense.

Question F:

What is the thesis defense?

Answer:

The thesis defense is a verbal and/or graphic presentation of the topic, the process of the findings of the thesis, and it is the primary coursework required for Master's Comprehensive Exam (LARC 5294.) The defense is open to the public and generally requires one to one-and-a-half hours depending upon the length of the student presentation which is recommended at thirty minutes or so. Upon completion of the presentation and the discussion the thesis committee adjourns into a meeting at which time it makes its final recommendations on a student's graduation status.

Thesis defense announcements are posted publicly by the student in accordance with criteria from the Office of Graduate Studies. While these defense sessions have an awesome ring to them, if properly conducted by a prepared candidate, they are stimulating and enlightening exercises in which all parties express their interests regarding the thesis topic.

There is an unwritten rule about the thesis defense that places the proof of preparation equally on the candidate and the thesis committee chair: If the candidate is not prepared, the chair should not allow the thesis defense to be carried-out. Thus, lack of preparation seldom is a problem. There is a final note about the thesis defense,

however. Students in landscape architecture who use visual aids of any kind are expected to reflect high standards where the quality of graphics, designs, signage, slides or other visuals are concerned. Thus, time to prepare these materials must be factored into the completion schedule of the research and the thesis.

Question G:

How many copies of the thesis are required?

Answer:

The Office of Graduate Studies requires three copies, but each student needs to confirm this number (along with other requirements) with officials from that office. Students also are required to present one bound copy to his or her thesis committee chair, one bound copy to the Program Director, and one unbound copy and one digital copy also to the Program Director upon receiving final approval of the document. Also, a copy of each thesis in landscape architecture must be deposited at the appropriate archive at the University of Michigan. The UT Arlington Office of Graduate Studies can assist the student in meeting this requirement.

Question H:

How long is a typical thesis?

Answer:

A thesis' length is based on what it takes to conduct the research and report it in a brief, yet thorough, way. Good scientific writing is crisp and objective. It is not verbose. When these conditions are met it is common for a thesis to be from seventy-five to one hundred-twenty five or so pages long. However, some are shorter and some longer.

Question I:

What happens to theses or their results after the author graduates?

Answer:

All students in UT Arlington's Program in Landscape Architecture are encouraged to submit their theses for national competition sponsored by the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) or other competition as appropriate. These competitions occur primarily during early summer, and either the student's thesis chair or thesis committee is capable of preliminary judging the competitiveness of a thesis. In addition, all students are encouraged (in some cases members of the thesis committee require one) to prepare a publishable paper from his or her thesis. This

paper then is submitted to an appropriate refereed journal—such as *Landscape Journal*—for consideration.

Again, all students should be prepared to follow through on these actions depending upon the advice of his or her thesis committee. In this way, important research findings take a measurable step toward being diffused beyond the University.

Errors Frequently Encountered in Scientific Writing

Not Acceptable

- *830 parks were counted...
- *The data indicates...
- *39% of the survey respondents said...
- *Activity settings are frequently considered...
- *The Landscape Architect who designed this...
- *Results of this study may help designers to...
- *It is hoped that this thesis will contribute to...

Acceptable

- Eight hundred and thirty parks were counted...
- The data indicate... (or the datum indicates; remember data are plural; so are media)
- Thirty-nine percent of the survey respondents said (percentages always are spelled out except in tables or charts)
- Activity settings frequently are considered... (never divide or invert verbal forms)
- The landscape architect who designed this... (avoid over capitalizing)
- Results of this study can help designers to... (avoid tentative words)
- This thesis contributes to... (avoid tentative positions)

*This methodology will be used to...	This methodology uses... (avoid future tense)
*I mailed-out four hundred questionnaires	Four hundred questionnaires were mailed-out (avoid first person and other references to yourself)
*A lot of people showed-up for the interview.	Over three dozen people showed up to the interview (avoid imprecise or vague descriptions)
*...enrolled in Thesis 5698 (LARC).	...enrolled in Thesis 5698 (LARC.) (place punctuations inside parentheses and quotation marks, in most cases)
* It is important to study environmental psychology while in landscape architecture programs...	Environmental psychology is important to landscape architecture because it provides designers with an understanding of the impact of human beings (never preach about something being important unless you can justify it.) (Avoid using the term “important”.)
* Johnathon Smith, in his book <u>The Plight of Landscape</u> , published by Tree Press Inc. in 2001 said...	Smith (2001) noted that... Use only last names when citing; do not include names of books or articles, or publishers and the like.
* Data were studied and reviewed.	Data were analyzed through content analysis and componential analysis (Spradley, 1980.) (Specify all references to analysis.)

Original Paragraph:

The birds have caused other problems besides killing the plant materials. There were certain seating ledges that were virtually unusable due to their droppings. There was also a concern for sitting in the shade due to the probability of receiving bird droppings. And there were dead birds seen throughout the park. The droppings and dead birds both contributed to the bad odor that permeated the park. both of these factors gave the park an unclean and unhealthy feel.

Edited Version of Original Paragraph:

~~The birds have~~ caused other problems besides ^{the} killing ^{of} the plant materials. There were ^{Some} certain seating ^{surfaces} ledges that were virtually unusable due to ^{the presence of bird droppings,} their droppings. There was also ^{was} a concern for sitting in the shade due to the probability of receiving bird droppings. And there were dead birds seen throughout the park. ^{and} The droppings and dead birds both ^{factors} contributed to the bad odor that permeated the park. Both of these factors gave the park an unclean and unhealthy feel.

Final Version of Original Paragraph

Birds caused other problems besides the killing of plant materials. Some seating surfaces were unusable due to the presence of bird droppings and dead birds were seen throughout the park. Both factors contributed to a bad odor which permeated the park, and both gave the park an unclean, unhealthy feel.

Other Editing Aids

Thesis writers can expect rigorous edits from landscape architecture faculty. International students whose first language is not English are expected to use tutors or other editorial aid from their first draft to final product in order to demonstrate mastery of the English language. Stated more broadly, no landscape architecture faculty should be seen as a thesis writer's first editor. Editing help comes before faculties are given copies of theses to review.

Additional Editorial Aids:

Below are common editorial abbreviations students are likely to encounter from faculty edits:

- CT: Check throughout (referencing to the writer's obligation to apply faculty edits;)
- DNR: Do not repeat;
- DMS: Doesn't make sense (this one is used a lot;)
- SP: Space (referring to a needed change in margins or in spacing between lines;
- NFT: No future tense;
- No abbrev: No abbreviations;
- NRQ: No rhetorical questions;
- NS: No symbols;
- RW: Re-write.

Summary

This paper presents an outline of requirements and procedures for completing a thesis in the Program of Landscape Architecture at The University of Texas at Arlington. It is designed to continue the high research standards set for MLA students in this nationally ranked design Program. Further questions on the subject should be directed to Program faculty, or more directly, to one's thesis committee chair.

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APPENDICES

If only one item appears in this section, it is an appendix. Two or more items are called appendices.

Appendices typically include items tangential to or supportive of the main document. Examples include copies of survey instruments, survey results or other data not presented in the thesis, separate but related studies or publications, newspaper articles or complete interview notes. In essence, appendices represent the important back-up files to the research paper.