

INTEGRATION OF LANDSCAPE PERFORMANCE INTO SITE ENGINEERING CURRICULUM

DIMOND, KIRK

University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ, kirkd@email.arizona.edu

1 ABSTRACT

The breadth and depth of the profession of Landscape Architecture merits a comprehensive professional curriculum. With time intensive studio sequences and a myriad of supporting topics to introduce to students, typical landscape architecture curricula are tight. This challenge is expounded as pressures influence programs to consider changing from five years to four years, while most first professional graduate programs are already compressed to three years. Pedagogical goals and objectives need to be refined and synergies explored to continue to meet the core knowledge, skills, and applications of landscape architecture.

As a recent addition to LAAB, Landscape Performance joins the list of topics under "Assessment and Evaluation" in the Professional Curriculum section of the 2016 Accreditation Standards, making it necessary to address how professional programs are including this important topic in their already tight curriculum. Through the Landscape Architecture Foundation's Landscape Performance Education Grant, there are resources to aid in the incorporation of landscape performance into specific studios, seminars, and special topics courses, but this paper seeks to explore and describe the opportunities and challenges of integrating landscape performance into a core Site Engineering course while enhancing the learning experience in this technically challenging fundamental course. The format and objectives of Site Engineering at the University of Arizona were modified to include Design Decisions and Performance, with a focus of developing an understanding of design decision implications related to the four elements of Earth, Water, Fire, and Air with the means to measure and evaluate landscape performance in each. The success of the course was measured through use of student surveys, interview with the teaching assistant, use of an assessment rubric and an instructor reflection. Findings indicate that Site Engineering is a good fit for introducing landscape performance as required by LAAB Accreditation Standards. While challenges with time and progress in fulfilling other course objectives posed a challenge of prioritization, student understanding and awareness of measurable social and environmental aspects of the landscape helped enhance comprehension and meaning of typical site engineering course material.

1.1 Keywords

Landscape Performance, Site Engineering, Pedagogy