The CELA Board voted on the following Position and Recommendation on February 16th, 2012

Position:

CELA does not support the ASLA recommendation to change the charge of LAAB to include accreditation review of non-degree-granting programs.

Recommendation:

The CELA Executive Board recommends that CELA members contact their local ASLA chapter Trustee and chapter members to convey disapproval of the proposed by-law change before the ASLA BOT meeting scheduled for May 11-12, 2012. The rationale behind the proposed by-law change as a means to promote and grow the profession appears flawed. More research and conversation between ASLA, CELA, CLARB, CSLA and LAAB is needed before such a drastic change to the position of landscape architecture education is needed.

Discussion:

The ASLA proposes to change the by-laws in order to allow more licensure candidates to pursue licensure and reciprocity across jurisdictions. Review of current regulations reveals that the by-law change would only expand the candidate pool in three states, and then only if these state boards define certificate holders as graduates.

CELA Review of Current State Regulations on Licensure

The ASLA Report of the Task Force on Accreditation and Reciprocity states that: “Allowing for alternative paths to landscape architecture may contribute to the growth of the profession... Potentially, the California [certificate] programs may grow as a result of accreditation. There is a greater potential for additional extension programs to be created in California with the availability of accreditation” (ASLA, p. 5). It should be noted that certificate holders in California are already allowed by California state regulation to pursue licensure with this education credential.

Review of current state regulations governing licensure in the United States found the following regarding restriction of access to pursue professional licensure:

- 25 states currently allow experience only options to pursuing licensure thereby not restricting those with experience only from pursuing licensure.
- Six states require some type of education outside of attainment of a landscape architecture degree. These states also require experience. These educational avenues differ by state and are described in the regulations.
- Twelve states specifically require a degree in landscape architecture, or a related area, plus experience. The by-law change will not allow certificate holders to pursue licensure or reciprocity in these states;
- Nine states specifically require either a degree from or graduation from an accredited
or approved educational program.
   - Five of these require graduation from a degree program, the by-law change
     will not allow certificate holders to pursue licensure or reciprocity in these
     states.
   - One specifies from a college or university program; because non-degree-
     granting programs are not consistent in their degree of affiliation with the
     academic standards of a college of university it is unclear if the by-law
     change would affect pursuit of licensure in this state. The regulating board
     would have to make a ruling.
   - And three of these states require graduation only. If certificate holders are or
     were to be considered graduates, then these three would/could accept non-
     degree education options.

If this by-law change is passed, only three states (Kentucky, Missouri and South Dakota)
would/could immediately expand their pool of candidates to pursue licensure and/or
reciprocity. In each of these three states, the state boards would have to define
certificate holders as graduates.

For this by-law change to increase the ability of those with a non-degree education to
pursue licensure or reciprocity, all except three, or perhaps four, states would have to
change their state enabling regulations.

**CELA Review of Perceptual and Potential Unintended Impacts of a By-Law Change**

Landscape Architecture education and accreditation processes in the United States
provide national and international direction and the range of real and perceptual impacts
should not be underestimated or discounted. The CELA Board believes that negative
perceptual impacts and potential unintended impacts of the by-law significantly out-
weigh the number of potential new candidates in these three states.

Issues of concern identified by CELA members and member institutions include:

1) Accreditation of certificate programs diminishes our profession. No other peer
   profession (architecture, engineering) accredits certificate programs.
2) Perception is reality and the perception of our profession as a lesser profession
   will be detrimental to recruiting students. Why would a student want to pursue a
discipline based upon a certificate when they can have a "real" degree in
architecture or another field?
3) This action will open the door for "for profit" professional degrees, compromising
   our discipline's hard won position in higher education. This would come at a time
when our discipline is engaged in research, scholarship and creative activity that
is changing the way others in the university think and act. Educational models
developed in the United States have a significant impact on international models.
This change perceptually diminishes the position of landscape architecture
internationally.

And, perhaps most importantly,
4) Accreditation of certificate programs will open the door for renewed and new
   licensure fights across the country. And
5) An accredited degree leading to licensure that is based upon a series of classes
   rather than a collective degree program places the health, safety and welfare of
the public at risk.
6) Faculty and students in a degree-program are responsible for advancing the body of knowledge in our discipline. This is a condition of hire for higher education. Teachers in non-degree programs rarely have this mandate.