

Incoming BLA class,

Welcome! We look forward to having you join the BLA program in Autumn. I know some of you have had questions about registration and other next steps, and I hope the following information resolves some of these concerns. You can also find this information, along with other crucial resources on the [Incoming Students](#) page of our website.

The University of Washington Student Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects, our department's student organization, has also compiled [UWASLA's Guide for Starting the LA program](#) so you have first-hand advice from our current students on a variety of topics as well.

### Design Prep Week and Orientation

Don't forget that the program requires you to attend Design Prep Week and Orientation before classes begin. There is a \$100 fee associated with Design Prep Week. Please RSVP for both events and fill out information in the REQUIRED [2025 Department Directory + Skills Survey + Prep Week RSVP](#) by **August 15**.

#### **Key dates to keep in mind**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Register for Classes  | Varies ( <i>current UW students</i> )<br>July 7 ( <i>transfer students</i> ) |
| Design Preparation Week   | Sept 15 – 19 (9:00 am to 4:30 pm)  |
| Department Orientation  | Sept 22  |
| College Orientation   | Sept 23  |
| First Day of Classes  | Sept 24  |
| Immunizations Deadline<br>( <i>esp. for transfer students</i> ) | Oct 16   |

### Change of Major

For current UW students, we're in the process of submitting paperwork to declare your new major. You'll officially be listed as a BLA student beginning Autumn 2025.

### Transfer Admissions

For transfer students, I've reached out to UW admissions to let them know that you've been accepted into the BLA program. You should receive additional information from UW soon.

### Conditional Acceptances

For students who have been conditionally accepted into the program, Change of Major forms will not be submitted until you have completed the conditions outlined in your acceptance letter.

### Autumn Registration

Seats are guaranteed for you in the courses that are major restricted (listed below). Once your Change of Major form has been processed and you are officially a BLA student, you will be able to enroll yourself in these classes. Note that the timeline for this process may vary depending on how quickly the Registrar's office works.

You may (and are encouraged to) enroll for non-major restricted classes as soon as you are able to register for classes.

- L ARCH 401 B Design Foundations Studio - BLA section (major restricted)
- L ARCH 411 Landscape Representation (major restricted)
- L ARCH 431 Landform and Grading (major restricted)
- L ARCH 341 Site Design and Planning (open registration, register yourself unless you've already completed this course)

This course load equals 15 credits (12 credits if you've already completed L ARCH 341). This is an appropriate course load for your first term in the program. However, if you have space in your schedule and would like to take something else, you can explore those options and register for that course on your own. You can use the Autumn 2025 BLA Directed Electives course list found at the top of the [Courses](#) page of our website. Feel free to contact me if you have questions about your course load or other course options.

### Connecting with Incoming Students

Join our [UW//LA Student Discussion Forum on MS Teams](#). This is a space where we share all kinds of news with students and for you to connect with one another. We've created a channel #year-0-(incoming-2025) as a place where you can chat with incoming students this summer.

Additionally, you can choose to share your information with other incoming students through the optional [Incoming Student Directory](#). The UW//LA Incoming Students Directory is an "opt-in" resource for new students; your participation is optional. The intent of the online directory is to make connecting with other incoming students easier. The directory will only be shared with MLA + BLA incoming students who submit their contact information.

Once your information is submitted, you will be given access to the directory. Although not a hard deadline, we recommend students who are interested in the directory submit their information by **July 1, 2025**.

### Computer + Software Information + Recommendations

Students entering the program should own a laptop or mobile workstation for use in studios and courses. We have prepared [UW//LA Computer Recommendations for Students](#) which provides specifications for what to purchase and also has a whole host of useful information including software resources and where to find financial support/discounts. We estimate students should expect to spend \$1500-3000 for a computer, necessary accessories, and required software.

If digital tools are new to you, spend some time this summer learning your way around the computer and some of the basic software programs for design (listed in the above document by frequency of use). The more familiarity you arrive with some of these programs, the easier the transition will be. [Computing - Built Environments](#) has links to several online tutorials as does LinkedIn Learning. All enrolled students have access to [LinkedIn Learning – Career & Internship Center](#) through the University.

### Summer Activities

My number one recommendation is to enjoy some time outdoors if you are able. Visit outdoor spaces and observe the ways people use them and find places that inspire you as a future designer of landscapes.

Some great outdoor spots in Seattle you might consider include:

- Gas Works Park (designed by Rich Haag, founder of our department)
- Freeway Park
- Burke-Gilman Trail
- Occidental Square
- Ravenna Park and Cowen Park
- Ballard Locks
- Lake Washington Boulevard
- Discovery Park
- UW Arboretum
- Seattle Waterfront

Feel free to take photos, sketch or write notes about these spaces.

If you want a topical book to read in any of these places, here's [a short list](#) of some foundational books for our department. These readings are not necessary, but a starter if you want to dig in.

You may also be interested to see examples of what you will soon be doing. [EXTENTS](#), the student-led publication of our department showcases student work from past years. Recent studio work is also available on our website ([larch.be.uw.edu/portfolio](http://larch.be.uw.edu/portfolio)).

### Questions and Drop-In Advising

I'll be at UW through the summer. If you have questions, I encourage you to reach out by email or request a meeting.

Congratulations once again and welcome to the BLA program!

Jennie