



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations  
Council on Postsecondary Education  
**OFFICE OF THE POSTSECONDARY COMMISSIONER**  
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Enclosure 5b2  
June 22, 2016

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TO: Members of the Council on Postsecondary Education

FROM: Jim Purcell, Ed.D, Commissioner for Postsecondary Education

DATE: June 14, 2016

RE: **Proposal from the University of Rhode Island to offer a minor in  
Landscape Architecture**

### **Background**

The University of Rhode Island is announcing its intent to offer a Minor in Landscape Architecture through the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) for students who wish to expand their knowledge of this discipline and to learn how human interventions impact the landscape.

### **Rationale**

URI's proposal states that the Landscape Architecture Department has seen a growing number of student inquiries about obtaining a minor in this discipline. An unofficial minor in Landscape Architecture has been offered for years to URI students if they passed 18 credits from a list of required and elective classes with the following course codes: Community Planning (CPL), Landscape Architecture (LAR), Plant Sciences (PLS) and Art (ART). However, the Department of Landscape Architecture moved from the College of the Environment and Life Sciences (CELS) to the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) and the focus within the profession has changed. As a result, URI states that they have revised the unofficial minor by removing classes deemed less relevant in today's world and adding courses from different departments whose course codes include: Biological Sciences (BIO), Geosciences (GEO) and Natural Resources Science (NRS). With this revision in curriculum and the growing number of students who are interested in a minor in this area, URI is seeking to add Landscape Architecture as a formal, university-approved minor with an updated curriculum.

### **Institutional Role**

The Bachelor of Landscape Architecture (BLA) degree is already an accredited program within URI's College of Arts and Sciences.

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## **Program**

Students in this minor will be exposed to concepts, principals and examples of landscape architecture design. They will study landscape installations in urban, suburban and rural settings and learn about landscape materials and practices, as well as the cultural applications relating to plants and their environments. Students declaring this minor are required to complete 18 credits with no more than 6 of these credits below the 200 level including:

### Core Courses:

- LAR 201: Survey of Landscape Architecture (3 Credits)
- LAR 202: Origins of Landscape Architecture (3 Credits)
- LAR 353: Landscape Plants 1 (3 Credits)

### Elective Choices (Select 3 courses):

- BIO 262: Introduction to Ecology (3 Credits)
- CPL 450: Urban Design (3 Credits)
- GEO 120: Geology of U.S. National Parks (3 Credits)
- LAR 302: GIS for Landscape Architecture (3 Credits)
- LAR 491/492: Special Projects in landscape Architecture (1-3 Credits)
- NRS 100: Natural Resource Conservation (3 Credits)
- NRS 300: Introduction to Global Issues in Sustainable Development (3 Credits)

## **Faculty**

The program will utilize existing faculty. No additional faculty will be required.

## **Staff and Administration**

No additional staff, advisors, or program director will be required.

## **Students**

URI states that this minor will attract students looking to build knowledge and provide a concentration that can enhance their careers and job searches. The minor is not intended to compete with majors, but to enrich the education and provide an additional credential for interested students. Students are encouraged to meet with the program's advisor or course faculty to develop a plan of study that meets their goals.

## **Financial Viability**

The courses in the minor are existing courses. Since no additional faculty or learning resources are required for this minor, there should be no additional resources needed.

## **Evaluation**

The chairman of the department will keep track of the number of students signing up for the minor as a way of measuring student interest. Because the BLA program is reviewed through the accrediting process of the American Society of Landscape Architects, the learning outcomes of the courses have been reviewed by external evaluators.

## **RIOPC Review**

RIOPC staff reviewed the proposal to offer a minor in Landscape Architecture through the College of Arts and Sciences. The academic changes presented are within the mission, role and scope of the University of Rhode Island and do not require Council approval.