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30 March 1999

TO: Members, University Senate

FROM: University Senate Council

RE: AGENDA ITEM: University Senate Meeting, Monday, 12 April 1999.
Proposal to establish a Department of Landscape Architecture. If approved, the proposal will be forwarded to the Administration for appropriate action.

Background and Rationale:

Attached is a proposal to form a Department of Landscape Architecture by separating the existing Department of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture into two separate educational units. This change has been under discussion for over a decade

In recent months there have been discussions with the Dean of the College of Agriculture and the Chancellor to evaluate and deal with administrative and budgetary issues that may result from this proposed transition. Once these details were resolved to everyone's satisfaction, the proposal was formally circulated to the entire college for comment. There has been no opposition to the proposal.

In January of this year, the existing Department of Horticulture & Landscape Architecture underwent a Periodic Review as required by Administrative Regulations. A draft of that committee's findings is presently under examination by the college administration. In its report, the review committee fully endorsed the creation of a Department of Landscape Architecture.

This proposal is a reflection of the natural evolution that has taken place in most other universities with a landscape architecture program. It is believed the creation of a discrete academic unit is in the best interest of the students, the profession and the University of Kentucky.

The proposal has been reviewed by the entire faculty of the Department of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture and received unanimous approval. It has been discussed and endorsed by the current students as well as the Landscape Architecture Advisory Council (professionals who act as a consulting group to the Landscape Architecture Program). It has been reviewed and approved by the Senate's Academic Organization and Structure Committee and the University Senate Council.

Proposal to Establish the Department of Landscape Architecture

**College of Agriculture
University of Kentucky**

Proposal

It is proposed that the Landscape Architecture Program become a discrete academic unit by designating it as a Department within the College of Agriculture. This will entail separating from the Department of Horticulture & Landscape Architecture and will allow Horticulture to revert to its departmental designation held prior to the establishment of the Landscape Architecture Program.

Current Status:

Landscape Architecture is a profession that is built on the principles of dedication to the public health, safety and welfare, and protection of the land and its resources. These principles form the foundation as well of the Landscape Architecture Program at the University of Kentucky. The program applies social, physical, economic and aesthetic concepts to the planning, design and management of the natural and built environment. In this sense we deal with problem solving relative to land use planning, urban and suburban environments, natural ecosystems and their integration for human use and ecological stability.

The College of Agriculture began offering a degree in Landscape Architecture in 1973 and in 1976 the Horticulture Department was renamed the Department of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture. Since that time both Horticulture and Landscape Architecture have continued to develop in directions that have little similarity or continuity. Horticulture has expanded in the area of molecular biology and plant physiology while Landscape Architecture has developed its strengths in environmental design and land use planning. As a result of these changes, there is virtually no interaction between the two programs that justify retaining the existing departmental status.

Departmental status will give recognition to Landscape Architecture at the University of Kentucky as an academic unit which represents a distinct discipline and profession. It will further enhance educational, research and outreach opportunities on campus and throughout Kentucky as a specific unit dealing with environmental design and land use planning. This is critical at a time when public concern with creating quality sustainable environments is at an all time high. Visibility is a critical issue if landscape architecture is to assume its role among other planning and design professions in the State of Kentucky. Having a department chair would provide the opportunity, time and expertise needed to promote the visibility of Landscape Architecture as a Department within the College of Agriculture.

Rationale and Supporting Documentation:

These will follow the *Guidelines for Proposals to Create an Educational Unit or Alter its Status*.

A. Programmatic Considerations

1. *Is the proposal consistent with University, Sector, or College strategic plans?*

This proposal conforms to the University's Strategic Plan and listed goal which states, "The University will strengthen its commitment to academic excellence and enhance its stature among the nation's most distinguished public institutions."

This is the only accredited landscape architecture program in Kentucky. It is nationally only one of four programs associated with horticulture. Of the 74 accredited programs, 55 have departmental or higher standing. The lack of recognition as an academic unit has a negative impact on our status among peer institutions and impacts student and faculty recruitment. The lack of departmental status causes people who are not familiar with this program to make incorrect/biased assumptions about its level and direction of development when comparing it to other accredited programs. This is especially true for prospective students working with guidance counselors who do not have the necessary information to make the distinctions between landscape architecture and the landscape or "green" industry. A clearer distinction will enhance retention of students.

Attainment of departmental status has been a specific goal of this program and a general goal of the College of Agriculture for more than a decade as stated in strategic plans and other documents prepared throughout that time. It is a necessary step in the evolution of this program as it plans for a graduate program and seeks to expand its research/service function.

Departmental Strategic Plan, 1991 and 1994
Department Periodic Review, 1999

2. *What will be the impact on other programs?*

Since Horticulture will continue as a department they will retain their identity and should not be impacted, certainly not in a negative way.

3. *Does the new organization or structure meet accreditation criteria?*

Yes. The Landscape Architecture Accreditation Reports have repeatedly stressed the need for autonomy for this program.

***Appendices available upon request]**

1997 Accreditation Report: Standard #2. Governance/Administration
Accreditation Standards and Procedures

4. *What are the advantages and disadvantages of the change?*

- a. *Academic - are there other good universities with such a structure or program?*

As stated in Section A.1., 55 of the 74 accredited programs have department or higher status. These include all of the major schools such as Harvard, UC-Berkeley, LSU, U.Mass, Wisconsin, Ohio State, Virginia, Texas A&M, Florida and Michigan.

- b. *Financial - for example, what is the scale of savings or expense?*

There will be some expense in making this separation, e.g., duplication of some office equipment. Other expenses are related to adding staff or faculty which are necessary evolutionary changes, such as obtaining a computer technician to manage changes in technology.

B. *Individual Considerations*

1. *Faculty*

- a. *Does it respect academic freedom, both in form and substance?*

Academic freedom will be enhanced for both programs by this change because the faculty of each discipline will conduct peer review for only that area of expertise with which they are familiar.

- b. *How does it affect the interests of untenured faculty? Are prospects for tenure decreased?*

There should be no change affecting tenure. Presently, the horticulture faculty are reviewed by the Biological Sciences Committee or Extension Committee. The landscape architecture faculty are submitted to the Arts and Humanities Committee for tenure review. With the addition of one faculty, there would be increased opportunities for sabbatical and other types of research leave.

- c. *Are the credentials of affected faculty consistent with their newly constituted unit and adequate to its mission?*

Of the five full time faculty, all have a terminal degree (MLA) with one holding a Ph.D. Three are full professors, one an associate professor with tenure, and a newly hired assistant professor. The status change will allocate 50% administrative time for the Chair which will enable this individual and the program to increase visibility and allow for greater involvement within the academic community and the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

- d. *How does the proposal affect resources and opportunity for research, teaching, and service activities? For example, will teaching loads be altered, laboratory space be changed, support staff curtailed?*

Landscape architecture is primarily a teaching program - only .25 FTE's is devoted to funded research. Other faculty area typically 80% teaching, 5% service and 15% unfunded research. There are no changes in facilities anticipated for either faculty offices or studio spaces. Teaching loads may be altered slightly with the creation of a Chair and the addition of one faculty position. Opportunities for additional research and service will be enhanced when a graduate program becomes a reality but not with this administrative change.

2. *Students*

- a. *Will the proposal properly honor commitments to students in the affected programs?*

There will be no change in either the Horticulture (Plant & Soil Science) or Landscape Architecture curricula.

- b. *How will instructional resources be affected? For example, will class size increase?*

Since Horticulture and Landscape Architecture have been operating as two discrete programs for over 20 years, no change is anticipated.

3. *Staff*

- a. *How will reductions and/or relocations be handled? Will the University's rules affect them fairly, or should some dispensation be made?*

The staff assistant to the Landscape Architecture Program will receive a position upgrade. With minor changes in responsibilities between existing staff there will be no other major changes. A request for an additional clerical position relates to an existing need in the program and would allow some enhancement to program services.

Note: If approved, the proposal will be forwarded to the Administration for appropriate action.