

Master of Arts in Environmental Design: An Interdepartmental Graduate Program in Environmental Design

Program Overview

The purpose of the Master of Arts in Environmental Design is to train prospective or practicing professionals to address the complex interdisciplinary nature of environmental design. Students will develop a highly individualized plan of study with a focus in design areas such as: design process, historic preservation and conservation, environment and behavior, design communication media, lighting, healthcare design, universal design, culture and design, golf course architecture, landscape reclamation, visual quality modeling, landscape restoration, interiorscapes, wellness/therapeutic garden design, landscape development systems, plant management systems, adaptive reuse facilities for tourism and recreation, site design safety, park and tourism development, design with ecological systems, green roof design and sustainable design.

The Master of Arts in Environmental Design (MED) addresses four areas of professional development. These include:

1. acquisition of in-depth knowledge in the area of environmental design theory;
2. development of problem solving skills within an interdisciplinary professional context;
3. development of technological expertise and knowledge base in a selected area of environmental design; and
4. advanced ability in graphic, written, and oral communications skills.

The program is planned to provide an alternative to traditional professional degrees by addressing the needs of students with undergraduate design backgrounds who wish to work in an interdisciplinary setting while pursuing an area of individual interest.

Program Components/Plan Options

Students in MED must carefully consider choosing a Plan A or Plan B option for their academic program of study.

Plan A

The purpose of the Plan A thesis is to facilitate student endeavors related to environmental design science, conducting a research investigation, and publishing results. Plan A also prepares the student for pursuing a PhD.

Plan A students must complete a minimum of 6 credits of Master's Thesis Research (899) in one of the following departments/programs:

- Horticulture
- Interior Design
- Community, Agriculture, Recreation, and Resources Studies
- Landscape Architecture.

They must also:

- Complete a written thesis
- Pass an oral examination in the form of a presentation open to the public with a question and answer period, which will be administered by the student's guidance committee.

Plan B

Students in Plan B complete a Master's Practicum (898) which allows the student to explore, through planning and design, the creation and practical application of precedents, normative theories processes, technology, ordinances, philosophies, and related ideas. Such studies facilitate specialization in a planning and design topic and prepare the student with a professional area of expertise.

Plan B students must complete a minimum of 6 credits of Master's Thesis Practicum (898) in one of the following departments/programs:

- Horticulture
- Interior Design
- Community , Agriculture, Recreation, and Resources Studies
- Landscape Architecture.

They must also:

- Complete a final report
- Pass an oral examination in the form of a presentation open to the public with a question and answer period, which will be administered by the student's guidance committee.

Admission

Admission Standards and Requirements in Addition to University Application Requirements

Admission to the Master of Arts in Environmental Design is competitive; only a limited number of applicants will be admitted each year. Admission standards and requirements given below are in addition to Michigan State University requirements. All applications are reviewed by members of the MED faculty. Students are not admitted to the MED program unless a faculty member is willing to accept an applicant as a major professor's advisee. Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact MED faculty to discuss topics of mutual interest and the possibility of developing an advisor/advisee relationship. More details about advising and a list of current potential major professors can be found in the "Advising and Guidance Committees" section of this handbook.

Application deadlines for priority consideration of financial funding are:

- February 15 for Fall Semester Admission
- August 15 for Spring Semester Admission

Later applications are considered on a rolling (on-going) basis.

Applicants must meet these base requirements:

- 1- Possess a four-year degree with a minimum GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale
- 2- Provide scores from the Graduate Record Exam (GRE)

Many factors are considered for admission and the GRE performance is only one factor in the decision process. The SPDC prefers to see minimum combined scores of 297 for the verbal and quantitative sections and an analytical writing score of no less than 3.5. However, students with lower scores who are outstanding in other areas also are considered for admission.

- 3- International applicants must submit Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) scores. The minimum accepted scores are based on the test version as follows:
 - Paper-based version: minimum average score of 550, with no sub-score below 52
 - Computer-based version: minimum average score of 213, with no sub-score below 19
 - Internet-based version: minimum average score of 80; with no sub-score below 19 for reading, listening and speaking; no writing sub-score below 22

Completing the Application

- 1- Complete the MSU Online Application for Graduate Study found at <http://grad.msu.edu/apply/>
 - a. Apply for Major Code 5268 – MA Environmental Design
 - b. Submit \$50 Application Fee online
- 2- Submit Academic Statement- A concise academic statement of your plans for graduate study, your topics of interest, your career goals, and how MSU's graduate program will help you meet your career and educational objectives. This may be completed online in the application or submitted to SPDC directly with other application documents.

- a. This statement is very important in the admission decision and should indicate the precise area of design which the student wishes to pursue or study. For example, a former student wished to study the fractal pattern of tree species in Iron County, Michigan for reclaiming surface mines. In another example, a student wished to study the environmental quality of houses built in Grand Rapids, Michigan from 1890-2000. This is the type of specificity which faculty are looking for in academic statements. To assist students in stating the area of study which interests them, students are encouraged to email faculty to discuss research interests and possible topics of research. A list of faculty may be found later in this document
- 3- Submit Personal Statement- A statement about how your background and life experiences, including social, economic, cultural, familial, education, or other opportunities or challenges motivated your decision to pursue a graduate degree. This may be completed online in the application or submitted to SPDC directly with other application documents.
 - 4- Submit resume or curricula vita
 - 5- Submit portfolio of work
 - 6- Provide official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended. Transcripts MUST be in an envelope sealed by the college or university.
 - 7- Provide three recommendations from references using the method given in the online admissions application.
 - a. References may submit a paper recommendation if they so desire.
 - b. The reference should place the recommendation in a sealed envelope, place their signature across the label and return it to the applicant for mailing with application documents.
 - 8- Have GRE scores electronically reported to MSU by ETS testing service
 - a. For reporting purposes use School Code 1465 (MSU) and Major Code 4499 (Architecture & Environmental Design- Other).
 - b. GRE scores must be from a test taken in the last three years.
 - 9- International applicants must report scores from the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language)
 - a. For reporting purposes use School Code 1465 (MSU).
 - b. TOEFL Scores should be from a test taken within the last 18 months, as the scores must be no more than 2 years old at the time of matriculation or entry to MSU.
 - 10- After you have submitted your online application and paid the application fee, submit all other documents in one large envelope to:

MSU School of Planning, Design and Construction
ATTN: Graduate Program Secretary
Human Ecology Building
552. W. Circle Drive Room 102
East Lansing, MI 48824-1030

APPLICANTS FROM CHINESE UNIVERSITIES: Please arrange for a verification report of your university academic records with the **China Academic Degree and Graduate Education Development Center (CDGDC)**. The report must be mailed directly to the department to which you are applying by the CDGDC, rather than by you or any third party.

China Academic Degree and Graduate Education Development Center

Verification Division

B-17, Tongfang Scientific Plaza

No.1 Wangzhuang Road, Haidian District, Beijing, 100083, P.R.China

Tel: +86-10-82379480

Fax: +86-10-82378718 (24 hours)

Email: cqv@cdgdc.edu.cn

Website: www.chinadegrees.cn

Applicants Interested in Applying for 2 Graduate Programs

Michigan State University now permits concurrent applications for admission to two graduate programs, each with a separate application fee. This option will be available for applications starting for Fall 2014 admissions.

Degree Requirements

MED students must complete a total of 33 credits for the degree under either Plan A (thesis option) or Plan B (practicum option). A minimum of 17 credits must be at the 800 level or above, distributed as follows:

<u>Course</u>	<u>Credits</u>
IDES 891 Research Fundamentals	3
LA 816 Environmental Design Theory	3
LA 817 Environmental Design Studio	3
LA 883 Environmental Design Seminar	3
Elective Courses	12-15
__ 899 Master's Thesis Research (Plan A)	6-9
OR	
__ 898 Master's Thesis Practicum (Plan B)	6-9
<i>Total Credits (Minimum)</i>	<i>33</i>

Please note: Currently the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources suggests that students take no more than 6 hours of 898. It is strongly suggested that students limit themselves to 6 hours of 898.

Plan A students must also:

- Complete a written thesis
- Prepare, present and complete a final presentation open to the public
- Pass an oral examination administered by the student's guidance committee

Plan B students must also:

- Complete a final report
- Pass an oral examination, in the form of a presentation open to the public with a question and answer period which will be administered by the student's guidance committee.

**Sample Academic Program of Study
Master of Arts Environmental Design**

Student Starting Fall Semester

Fall Semester I

IDES 891	3
LA 816	3
Elective	<u>3</u>
Total	9 credits

Spring Semester I

LA 817	3
LA 883	3
Elective	<u>3</u>
Total	9 credits

Fall Semester II

LA 898 or LA 899	3
Elective	3
Elective	<u>3</u>
Total	9 credits

Spring Semester II

LA 898 or LA 899	3
Elective	<u>3</u>
Total	6 credits

TOTAL 33 credits

Students Starting Summer Semester*

Summer Semester I

LA 898 or LA 899	6
Elective	<u>3</u>
Total	9 credits

Fall Semester I

IDES 891	3
LA 816	3
Elective	3
Elective	<u>3</u>
Total	12 credits

Spring Semester I

LA 817	3
LA 883	3
LA 898 or LA 899	3
Elective	<u>3</u>
Total	12 credits

TOTAL 33 credits

***It is not normally recommended that a student begin studies during a Summer Semester. However, if a student is highly motivated, has a major professor in place and has a clearly defined research topic, which has been approved by the major professor, starting in a Summer Semester is feasible.**

Required Academic Program of Study

All students are required to complete and submit a formal plan of study, which is called the Academic Program of Study. An Academic Program of Study with signatures from all guidance committee members must be submitted to School Office before the end of the second semester of study. It is strongly suggested that students develop their program of study as early as possible during the first year of study. Once submitted, changes to the Academic Program of Study must be approved by both the student's guidance committee, the Masters Program Director, and the Associate Dean of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

Courses related to the student's area of design interest are chosen in consultation with, and approved by, the student's guidance committee. The program of study may include courses related to statistical methods and research techniques. In addition, the program of study may include technology classes such as Bio-Engineering, Geographic Information Science/Systems (GIS), Global Positioning Systems (GPS), and remote sensing. Other program of study choices may include courses concerning topics addressing the student's area of specialization and interest. Interdisciplinary seminar classes are strongly recommended. Directed independent study, readings, and term papers related to highly specialized topics also are suitable.

Advising and Guidance Committees

In both Plan A and Plan B, a student's guidance committee is composed of the student's major professor and other members of the Environmental Design faculty. Plan A students are required to have at least 3 faculty members on their committee, while Plan B students are required to have at least 2 faculty members. The guidance committee gives guidance during the practicum experience or research investigations and determines the results of the oral examination.

It is strongly urged that a student identifies members of his/her guidance committee in consultation with her/his major professor by the end of the first semester of classes. This will allow the committee to give advice concerning course work and research activities. In forming the committee, the student is encouraged to meet with their major professor and develop a list of potential committee members. The student should then make an appointment to visit with the potential committee members. The process involves the consensus of both the student and potential committee members.

The composition of the guidance committee (excluding the major professor) can change providing a faculty member is willing to step down and a new member is found. This should be accomplished with the approval of the student's major professor. A Request to Change the Academic Program of Study must be submitted (see the appendices for the form) to the School Office.

If a student's major professor leaves the university or is unable to continue advising, a new major professor must be identified by mutual consent of both faculty and student. If a different major professor in the MED program accepts the student, the student may continue their existing program of study. However, if a new major professor can not be found, the student will be advised to complete their degree under the supervision of a major professor appointed by the Associate Director.

MED Faculty available to act as a major professor or member of a student guidance committee are listed below:

Dr. April Allen, Assistant Professor

NCIDQ Certificate No. 013314

Interior Design

MSU School of Planning, Design and Construction

Human Ecology Building

552 W. Circle Drive Room 201N

E. Lansing, MI 48824-1030

517.432.3239

FAX 517.432.8108

allenapr@msu.edu

Research interests: history of interiors, historic preservation, sustainability, creativity and visualization

Dr. Jon Bryan Burley, ASLA, Associate Professor

Landscape Architecture

MSU School of Planning, Design and Construction

Human Ecology Building

552 W. Circle Drive Room 302B

E. Lansing, MI 48824

517.353.7118

FAX 517.432.8108

burleyj@msu.edu

Research interests: landscape reclamation, restoration, habitat design, landscape planning, spatial modeling, design theory, visual quality, landscape science, and research methods

Dr. Pat Crawford, ASLA, Associate Professor

Landscape Architecture

MSU School of Planning, Design and Construction

Human Ecology Building

552 W. Circle Drive Room 101

East Lansing, MI 48824

517.432.1148

FAX 517.432.8108

crawf203@msu.edu

Research interests: participatory design, park planning and design, design pedagogy, universal design

Dr. Suk-Kyung Kim, Associate Professor

Interior Design

MSU School of Planning, Design, and Construction

Human Ecology Building

552 W. Circle Drive Room 201B

East Lansing, MI 48824

517.353-9367

FAX 517.432.8108

kimsk@msu.edu

Research interests: housing, health care research, sustainable design, environment behavior studies

Dr. Eunsil Lee, Associate Professor

Interior Design

MSU School of Planning, Design, and Construction

Human Ecology Building

552 W. Circle Drive Room 201L

East Lansing, MI 48824

517.432.3249

FAX 517.432.8108

leeunsi@msu.edu

Research interests: human perception and behavior in relation to culture, sustainable lighting design, workplace design and performance, evidence based design

Dr. Young S. Lee, Assistant Professor

Interior Design

MSU School of Planning, Design, and Construction

Human Ecology Building

552 W. Circle Drive Room 201C

East Lansing, MI 48824

517.432.3242

FAX 517.432.8108

leeyou35@msu.edu

Research interests: sustainable indoor environment, long-term care environment, healing environment, post-occupancy evaluation, building information modeling

Dr. Patricia L. Machemer, Associate Professor

Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning

MSU School of Planning, Design and Construction

Human Ecology Building

552 W. Circle Drive Room 404

East Lansing, MI 48824

517.353.9047

FAX 517.432.8108

machemer@msu.edu

Research interests: landscape planning and management, land cover change, growth management, participatory design

Dr. Robert E. Schutzki, Associate Professor

MSU Horticulture

A218 Plant and Soil Science Building

E. Lansing, MI 48824

517.355.5191x1337

schutzki@msu.edu

Research interests: environmental horticulture, planting design, landscape specifications, landscape contracting

Dr. Joanne M. Westphal, ASLA, Professor

Landscape Architecture

MSU School of Planning, Design and Construction

Human Ecology Building

552 W. Circle Drive Room 201P

E. Lansing, MI 48824

517.355.9729

FAX 517.432.8108

westphal@msu.edu

Research interests: wellness gardens, therapeutic environments, rural landscape preservation, recreation planning and design

Academic Performance

Acceptable academic standing is considered to be a GPA of 3.0 or higher. Satisfactory progress to completion of the degree is flexible; however, each student should be aware of the University time limits for the completion of the degree (see front section of this handbook). In addition, the student must carefully plan and coordinate the completion of their degree in consultation with their major professor and complete their degree while their major professor is still a faculty member at MSU.

Students in poor academic standing, students nearing the end of their time limit and students who must finish their degree before a change of status of a major professor will receive written notice from the Masters Program Director informing them of their status/standing.

Thesis Defense and Final Oral Examination

The final master's presentation and evaluation is the culmination of a student's graduate education and training and reflects not only on the accomplishments of the graduate student but also on the quality of the graduate program. A Plan A approved thesis or a Plan B practicum becomes a single-author publication and contributes to the body of knowledge within MED.

The student presentation concerning the results of the thesis or practicum is presented in a seminar that is open to the academic and public community. At the end of the presentation, an open question and answer period will follow.

Upon completion of the presentation and question and answer period, all visitors will be asked to leave, and the student's committee may ask further questions. Then the student will be asked to leave the room so the committee may confer. When the committee has made its decision the student will be asked to return to the room and the committee will discuss their decisions/conditions/results with the student.

To ensure fairness in the examination procedures and maintenance of academic standards, the Dean of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources and/or Director of the School of Planning, Design and Construction may appoint an outside member to the examining committee. The outside member of the committee will read and critique the thesis/practicum, will participate in the oral part of the exam, and will submit a report to the Dean and/or the Director.

For Plan A students: The final draft of the thesis must be submitted to each guidance committee member at least two weeks before the thesis presentation. Students must be registered during the semester in which they give their oral thesis presentation

For Plan B students: The Plan B practicum must be submitted to each guidance committee member at least two weeks before the thesis presentation. Students must be registered during the semester in which they give their oral thesis presentation. A bound copy or electronic copy of the practicum (with all corrections made) should be given to each guidance committee member according to their preference, and an electronic PDF to the School of Planning, Design and Construction (submitted to the graduate secretary). The size and format for the document

should accommodate drawings, plans, and related documents. A CD of images may also accompany the document to give full-sized detail to graphic presentations, digital movies, and other communicative material. In addition, the student must comply with all university requirements regarding Plan B submittals and graduation.

Certification for Graduation

The student must apply to graduate by completing an Application for Graduation (available at <http://www.reg.msu.edu/StuForms/GradApp/GradApp.asp>) Check this web site for specific application deadlines. When the Office of the Registrar receives the student's application, a Degree Certification form is forwarded to the School. The Graduate Program Director will review the Academic Program of Study in the student's file to determine if the student has fulfilled the requirements and may be certified for graduation.

Degree Calendar & Progress Checklist

Prior to Attending the First Semester of Classes

- **Activate** your NetID and MSU E-mail account. MSU E-mail is the official mode of communication at MSU. Students are advised against forwarding their MSU E-mail accounts to other outside accounts. MSU uses e-mail for a variety of official communications related to employment, student, and safety concerns. For instance, notices regarding a tuition bill are sent to a student's MSU e-mail account. It is important to [activate your NetID](#) because your MSU account is the only e-mail account to which official notices are sent. Students use their aPID and PAN for activation. Activate at <http://techbase.msu.edu/article.asp?id=139&service=>
- **Attend** the required SPDC graduate student orientation. Students are encouraged to participate in orientation activities offered by the Graduate School (and for international students, by the Office of International Studies and Programs).
- **Contact** the Masters Program Director and/or your major professor when you arrive in East Lansing to discuss degree requirements, to plan your courses (especially those for the first semester), and to discuss other student-related concerns.
- **Register** for classes. Master's students must be registered for a minimum of 9 credits per semester (6 if hired as a graduate assistant) to be considered "full time"

First Semester

- **Select** Guidance Committee members with your advisor and major professor.
- **Schedule** and **hold** a meeting with your Guidance Committee to discuss your academic and professional goals and the courses you intend to take. You may wish to discuss preliminary ideas for a Plan A Thesis or Plan B Practicum Project.
- **If Provisional Acceptance:** Meet all provisional requirements as specified in letter of acceptance (or plan developed with your Advisor).

Second Semester

- **Finalize** your Academic Program of Study; complete and submit a Masters Academic Program of Study form with appropriate signatures from all Guidance Committee members. A copy of your completed, approved form will be placed in your permanent academic file.
- **Prepare** a written draft of your Plan A Thesis or Plan B Practicum Project proposal. Discuss it with your major professor and secure his/her approval prior to submitting it to your Guidance Committee.

Second or Third Semester

- **Revise** your proposal based on the feedback from your major professor and schedule a meeting of your Guidance Committee to discuss your proposal. Provide each member of your Guidance Committee with a copy of your proposal at least two weeks prior to the committee meeting.
- **Schedule** and **hold** a meeting of your Guidance Committee to discuss and approve your proposal and review progress on your academic program.
- **Secure** approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), as appropriate to your research. Instructions and application templates are available on-line:
<http://www.humanresearch.msu.edu/>

Last Semester

- **Preparing for Thesis Defense/Practicum Project Final Examination**

- **Check** deadline dates for that semester as they pertain to completing the MA degree at:
<http://grad.msu.edu/current/final.htm>.
- **Enroll** for a minimum of one (1) credit in the semester in which you plan to defend your thesis/practicum project.
- **Check** StuInfo to be sure all DFs (deferred grades) have been converted to grades and that your GPA is at least 3.00.
- **Complete** and **submit** the on-line Application for Graduation early in the semester of planned graduation: <http://www.reg.msu.edu/StuForms/GradApp/GradApp.asp> You must apply for graduation even if you do not plan to attend the ceremony, in order for final paperwork to be sent to the departmental graduate secretary and your degree to be conferred.
- **Obtain** a copy of the Thesis/Dissertation Submission Packets from the Graduate School web site: <http://grad.msu.edu/current/packet.htm> *Not Required for Plan-B Practicum*
- **Prepare** for commencement; see guidelines and checklist provided by the University:
<http://www.msu.edu/unit/acadevnt/commencement>

- **Completion of Thesis/Practicum Project**

- **Complete** all required forms in the Thesis/Dissertation Submission Packets (see <http://grad.msu.edu/current/packet.htm>). *Not Required for Plan-B Practicum*
- **Submit** a draft of your Thesis or Practicum Project to your major professor and Guidance Committee members.

- **Edit** your draft, as needed. MS- Plan A students should refer to <http://grad.msu.edu/current/formatfinal.pdf> for format guidelines.
- **Schedule** a seminar/examination time with your Guidance Committee for presenting and defending your work. This seminar is an open session to which students and faculty in the School of Planning, Design and Construction are invited. You may schedule a conference room with the Graduate Secretary.
- **Announce** the date of your thesis or practicum project presentation. Contact the Graduate Secretary at least 2 weeks prior to the seminar. The Graduate Secretary will notify faculty and students of your presentation by email and/or posted flyers prior to the seminar.
- **Provide** your Major Professor and each member of your Guidance Committee a copy of your Thesis or Practicum Project at least 2 weeks prior to the seminar.
- **Present** and **defend** your Thesis or Practicum Project at the seminar.
- **Modify** your thesis/practicum project as required by your guidance committee.
- If Plan A, **Prepare** the final copy of your thesis according to the Graduate School Guidelines (see <http://www.msu.edu/user/gradschl/format.htm>).
- If Plan A, **prepare** an abstract of your thesis to be filled with “Dissertation/thesis Abstracts”.
 - If Plan A, **Submit** an unbound copy of your thesis to the Graduate School. If you are a Plan B student and completed a Practicum Project, the Graduate School does not receive a copy.
 - **Distribute** both digital copies of your thesis/practicum project to the graduate secretary, your Major Professor, and Guidance Committee members. Individual committee members may request an alternative format, such as softbound, unbound, or digital.

Final Logistics:

- **Read** and **comply** with MSU’s Exit Check List to ensure that you have met the requirements and submitted forms and other paperwork: <http://www.msu.edu/user/gradschl/current/formatexit.pdf>
- **Submit** your on-line exit survey: https://ntweb11.ais.msu.edu/csp_gas/
- **Complete** all final forms/questionnaires required by the Graduate School. Pay final fees.