



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

Klaipėdos universiteto  
***PROGRAMOS KRAŠTOVAIZDŽIO ARCHITEKTŪRA***  
**(612K13001)**  
**VERTINIMO IŠVADOS**

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**EVALUATION REPORT**  
**OF STUDY PROGRAMME**  
***LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE (612K13001)***  
At Klaipėda University

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Išvados parengtos anglų kalba  
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## DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	<i>Kraštovaizdžio architektūra</i>
Valstybinis kodas	612K13001
Studijų sritis	menai
Studijų kryptis	architektūra
Studijų programos rūšis	universitetinės studijos
Studijų pakopa	pirmoji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	nuolatinė (4), iššęstinė (5)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	240
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	Kraštovaizdžio architektūros bakalauras, kraštovaizdžio architektas
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	2009-08-31, No.1-73

## INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Title of the study programme	<i>Landscape Architecture</i>
State code	612K13001
Study area	arts
Study field	architecture
Kind of the study programme	university studies
Cycle of studies	first
Study mode (length in years)	full time (4), part time (5)
Scope of the study programme in credits	240
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Bachelor of Landscape Architecture, Landscape Architect
Date of registration of the study programme	2009-08-31, No.1-73

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The Expert visited Klaipeda University on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of May 2013 starting at the University main Campus where the team met the Dean and the members of the self evaluation report, then teaching faculty, students, visited the library and the facilities used at the main campus as well the building that is converted to provide additional student work places (studios) and teaching spaces for the Landscape Architecture Programmes. The Team was shown the Botanical Gardens that are used for demonstration and as a teaching laboratory, also the exhibition of student projects. Finally team met alumni, employers and social partners. On the invitation of one of the social partners the Team, before leaving the town to return to Vilnius, stopped to visit the buildings and the grounds of the Klaipeda St Francis of Assisi Monastery that students have been doing practical work.

The Team would like to commend the University for the procedures observed for the self assessment and the Department for the very complete self assessment report. The Team also appreciated the enthusiasm and well meaning ambitions for the new to Lithuania Bachelors Programme of Landscape Architecture. Therefore the comments that are offered by the Team aspire to further improve and reinforce the efforts of the university.

## II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

### *1. Programme aims and learning outcomes*

The programme (general) aims are clear as stated in Paragraph 9, page 5 of the SELF-ASSESSMENT SUMMARY, 2012, as follows: **To prepare fully educated, meeting European and world standards, landscape architecture professionals** ( Programme aims and learning outcomes).

Therefore as a Professional Programme, is bound by specific qualifications and requirements, as it is a distinct profession from Architecture or Urban and Regional Planning.

The following points refer to the overstatements in the report, by emphasizing or repeating various **definitions of the aims** in different paragraphs of the report. This weakens or diffuses the main points of the aims rather than strengthening them. For example it is stated in the Paragraph 10, page 5: "...prepare landscape architecture bachelors **with expertise in humanities, arts, sociology**, ecology, environmental management technology, etc .. **with the ability to develop buildings, their groups** and urban landscape projects,..." A rather unusual list of expertises mentioned i.e. **humanities, arts, sociology**. **To be aware of the significance** of those it would be more appropriate.

The first statement that is written in Paragraph 9 is sufficient, and the only thing necessary to follow is **a brief explanation of what a Landscape Architect is**, for example *"The profession of Landscape Architecture is concerned with the design, use, management and preservation of the land, wherever people use areas of land, large or small public or private, for living, working and recreation"*, to quote the description offered by a university with a very long tradition of landscape architecture programmes, as the California State University where the late Professor John Lyle taught.

Regarding the learning outcomes, the presentation of aims, outcomes and the courses are systematically presented, however it would be easier for teaching faculty and students to

follow and to apply them if they were articulated into categories and rated by importance towards the main study area which is Landscape Architecture.

## 2. Curriculum design

Landscape Architecture is part of an interactive group of professions, Planning (Regional and Urban Planning) on one side and Design of Buildings (Architecture) on the other side. Urban Planning, Architecture, and Landscape Architecture deal with design as well as other distinct issues each one. Design is taught by case study problems (through projects) and trial and error learning. It seems that the curriculum includes the range of study subjects necessary to learn about the natural environment, plants, technology, human needs and design. However the teaching basis is the studio where through the design projects of case studies the students learn how to apply all the other areas of knowledge they acquired through the different subjects they studied. In this respect the curriculum does not seem to provide the continuous and intensive design studio sequence to expose the students to the whole range and scale of Landscape Architecture problems (from parks, recreational areas, to urban spaces, private gardens etc.) from the first semester to the eighth.

The Bachelors professional programmes provide normally a general knowledge basis and competence to deal with problems within that area. Specialization is achieved through the Masters level studies.

It seems that there are a number of subjects, such as *Applied Statistics* and *Advance Mathematics or Architectural Physics*, if the last mentioned course is dealing with mechanics (forces and structures), which overload the curriculum instead of offering more courses dealing with landscape architecture design case studies, a directly necessary knowledge and experience for the development of undergraduate students. Also a number of core courses as well as optional ones seem to deal with architecture related subjects. Landscape architecture construction has to do mainly with ground surface treatments (pavements etc), retaining walls, and light garden structures such as pergolas etc. and mechanical systems for irrigation or draining and electrical systems for lighting outdoors.

Some of the teaching faculty appear to be assigned to be responsible for an unreasonable number of teaching courses. So in addition to the regular curriculum courses 4 faculty are responsible for 24 courses of the **Optional specialty subject 1** and **Optional specialty subject 2**, that is the professor who is also the Chair is listed for 20 courses, another faculty for 2 courses and two other faculty for 1 course each. Several of these courses should be incorporated in the exercises of the landscape architecture design courses. Some other courses must also be incorporated in the core courses for example *Landscape Analysis and Assessment*.

The programme complies with legal acts requirements. The total volume of programme is 240 credits, number of subjects does not exceed 7, the number of credits allocated for practice and final work is in the frames of national requirements.

## 3. Teaching staff

Teaching faculty seem to be reasonably active receiving awards in competitions and recently first award in an international competition in China by the Chair of the Department. Regarding research work the faculty have published nationally and internationally considering their teaching load of approximately 20 hours per week. Mobility of the faculty is hindered by lack of funding, while salaries are low. Regarding qualifications some possess post graduate degrees, while others are working to obtain them, however in programmes leading to professional degrees as Landscape Architecture for those teaching design it is almost more

important to have professional experience. Aspirations that with the Marine Valley programme the situation is expected to improve generally.

#### ***4. Facilities and learning resources***

Lecture rooms, computer facilities and studio spaces seem reasonably sufficient, computer programmes and software are appropriate. The use of PCs do not correspond to the students needs in the best way, limiting the time the students can use those available. Improvement of the situation depends on the State funding, however, the University should also take efforts to make steps the State would make the necessary actions.

Furniture, computers and equipment have been bought and is anticipated that with the additional spaces prepared in the annex facilities in Donelaico str. 5 the situation will be improved (Para.57 page 21 of Self Evaluation Report). The Botanical Garden is used for educational purposes, it could also be used not only as a resource of plants but also to exercise design issues as well. The university has made agreements with national and regional park managers for practical exercise activities performed, such as the Botanical garden in Klaipeda as well as the Seaside Regional Park and several other national parks.

#### ***5. Study process and students' performance assessment***

Entrance and registration of students is done under national "General registration rules" the students entering are on the upper half of the score points. There is academic support, social and organizational support for the students. A very small number of students go abroad, obviously, for financial reasons, advanced students are granted free studies. The university encourages the students to participate in any of the existing 40 clubs. Student evaluations are done once a year. The intention of the anonymous completion of a written course evaluation by each student for each course is a useful practice slowly established in the whole of the EU, as is also mandated by the European Association for Quality Assurance (ENQA) of higher education.

The university regulations regarding the student progress are fair while the student progress is constantly monitored. These data are useful to review each year and make the necessary amendments, as indeed to prepare the internal annual self-evaluation report to the Rector.

#### ***6. Programme management***

The University appears to have clearly defined rules that have been adopted and applied regarding the programme management. The Methodical Committee is referred often as the decision making body, and for periodic reviews of the progress. Given that the university is relatively new it seemed that everything is in place, even if there was anything short was not because of management reasons but because of objective external reasons i.e. lack of funds to hire faculty, salary levels etc. The self evaluation process is in place and student participation is also encouraged as indeed is observed the participation even in the self evaluation report. At the end of each semester student evaluation forms are distributed for each course and filled anonymously, and most important is that data gathering for self-analysis is a constant process.

Emphasis is mentioned in the report for the provision of ISO for the university in 2014. ISO is useful but in higher education quantitative data and stereo type processes are only useful as indications, it is important that the evaluation of the indications and monitoring of a process should be based on the "diagnosis" of the effectiveness of the aims, curriculum, teaching and the learning process, which relies on qualitative assessment rather than indices and quantitative data only.

### III. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1. It is important to compare the Bachelors curriculum with that of other countries with a longer history having landscape architecture as an established profession and also more experience in educating them. It seems that the curriculum is fairly ambitious and however noble the intention, with the limited human resources it would be better to concentrate in offering the essential education, which can be further developed later through a Masters programme or through specific courses of Continuing Education. The design training takes time and creativity should be cultivated by trial and error through various design projects. The mention of “artistic” really refers to the ability to ‘create’. Innovation is a totally different issue that is more rare and some claim that is part of one’s’ genes.

The broader education that is suggested is something that the seeds should be first “planted” at the secondary education level, then questions raised at the university and the follow-up is completed during the life of each individual, by him/herself and according to his/her intellectual interests!

3.2 It is important for a Landscape architect to **understand how to work** with the other related disciplines and professions i.e. architect, urban planner or even a regional planner, and not to replace them. This can be done during the studies by learning what the others are concerned to resolve and by exercising at some point with students of the other professions. This is normally done through joined projects or even sketch design exercises with students from the other disciplines where each plays their role as a professional. In this case organizing a weekend common exercise with students of Architecture or Planning from other Higher Education Institutions would be a good practice.

3.3 Efforts must be made to increase the number of faculty staff with Landscape Architecture degrees, and if this is difficult for hiring full time staff at least try to hire part time or attract visiting faculty from other university abroad during their sabbatical leave.

### IV. SUMMARY

The Programme is dealing with a new profession which is introduced to Lithuania. In the past in continental Europe landscape design was done more often by people who studied Agriculture, Horticulture, Forestry or Gardening and dealt with such issues, and other times Architects, Artists or others. The profession of Landscape Architecture wherever it has existed has undergone significant changes and today has assumed a more important role as a central profession dealing with the environment and ecologic issues for the human made environment as well as for the preservation of the natural one.

In this respect the University has the responsibility to **refine the curriculum using the best experiences of other countries by adapting and improving them**. The constraints of today with the economic crisis facing the EU limit the possibilities to experiment while also less and less students have the funds to study!

The university did not appear to present administrative problems, the faculty are willing and the facilities are improving so the university can play a useful role in Lithuania and perhaps generally in the Baltic area for training Landscape Architects for the future through a focused and tight curriculum.

Concluding the Team members would like to express that they understand the difficulties faced in building a new programme, and appreciate the efforts made until now which should continue improving it.

## V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Landscape Architecture* (state code – 612K13001) of Klaipėda University is given **positive** evaluation.

*Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas.*

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation Area in Points*
1.	Programme aims and learning outcomes	2
2.	Curriculum design	3
3.	Teaching staff	3
4.	Facilities and learning resources	3
5.	Study process and students' performance assessment	3
6.	Programme management	3
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>17</b>

\*1 (unsatisfactory) - there are essential shortcomings that must be eliminated;

2 (satisfactory) - meets the established minimum requirements, needs improvement;

3 (good) - the field develops systematically, has distinctive features;

4 (very good) - the field is exceptionally good.

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## IV. SANTRAUKA

Programa skirta naujai profesijai Lietuvoje. Anksčiau žemyninėje Europoje kraštovaizdžio dizainą dažniau atlikdavo specialistai, baigę žemės ūkio, sodininkystės, miškų ūkio arba daržininkystės studijas, jie sprendė šiuos klausimus, o kartais tai atlikdavo architektai, menininkai ir kiti. Kraštovaizdžio architektūros profesija visur, kur tik ji egzistavo, labai pasikeitė ir šiandien įgijo svarbesnį vaidmenį, kaip pagrindinė profesija, sprendžianti aplinkos ir ekologijos klausimus žmogui, kuris sukūrė aplinką, taip pat sprendžia gamtos išsaugojimą.

Studijų kokybės vertinimo centras

Todėl universitetas privalo **tobulinti studijų programą, pasinaudodamas kitų šalių geriausia patirtimi, ją pritaikyti ir patobulinti**. Šiandienos apribojimai ir ekonominė krizė, su kuria susiduria ES, riboja galimybes eksperimentuoti, taip pat vis mažiau ir mažiau studentų turi pakankamai lėšų, kad galėtų susimokėti už studijas.

Akivaizdžių administracinių problemų universitetas neturi, fakulteto darbuotojai mielai dirba, materialioji bazė gerėja ir universitetas, parengęs kryptingą ir glaustą programą, gali atlikti naudingą vaidmenį Lietuvoje ir galbūt apskritai Baltijos regione ruošdamas kraštovaizdžio architektus ateičiai.

Reziumuojant, ekspertai patvirtina, kad supranta sunkumus, su kuriais susiduriama kuriant naują programą, ir vertina iki šiol dėtą pastangas, kurias reikėtų tęsti ir toliau.

### III. REKOMENDACIJOS

1. Svarbu bakalauro studijų turinį palyginti su kitų šalių, turinčių ilgesnę kraštovaizdžio architektūros, kaip profesijos, istoriją ir didesnę dėstymo patirtį, studijų turiniu. Studijų turinys yra gana ambicingas ir rodo kilnius ketinimus, tačiau atsižvelgus į ribotus žmogiškuosius išteklius, būtų geriau dėmesį sutelkti į esminį ugdymą, kurį galima toliau plėtoti magistrantūros programoje arba specialių tęstinių studijų metu. Dizaino studijos reikalauja laiko ir kūrybiškumo bandant ir mokantis iš klaidų įvairių projektų metu. Žodis „meninis“ tikrai reiškia gebėjimą kurti. Inovacijos yra visiškai kitas klausimas, jis žymiai rečiau pasitaiko, ir tai priklauso nuo kompleksinių sąlygų.

Siūlomas platesnis ugdymas reiškia tai, kad „sėklos“ turėtų būti pirma „pasėtos“ viduriniojo išsilavinimo metu, po to klausimai kyla universitete, ir tolesnis ugdymas vyksta visą kiekvieno žmogaus gyvenimą pagal jos arba jo protinius sugebėjimus.

2. Kraštovaizdžio architektui svarbu **suprasti, kaip dirbti** kartu su kitomis susijusiomis sritimis ir profesijomis, t. y. architektais, miesto projektuotojais ar net regiono projektuotojais, o ne juos pakeisti. Tai galima padaryti studijų metu mokantis, ką turi išspręsti kiti, ir tam tikru metu dirbant su kitas profesijas studijuojančiais studentais. Paprastai tai atliekama vykdant bendrus projektus arba lankant eskizų dizaino užsiėmimus su kitų specialybių studentais, kur kiekvienas turi savo, kaip specialisto, vaidmenį. Būtų gera praktika suorganizuoti bendrus savaitgalio užsiėmimus su architektūros arba planavimo studentais iš kitų aukštojo mokslo institucijų.

3. Stengtis padidinti fakulteto dėstytojų, turinčių kraštovaizdžio architektūros laipsnį, skaičių. Suprantant, kad įdarbinti visą darbo dieną dirbančius dėstytojus reikalinga papildomų lėšų paieška, reikėtų bent pabandyti įdarbinti ne visą darbo dieną arba į fakultetą pritraukti dėstytojų iš užsienio universitetų jų mokslinių kūrybinių atostogų metu.

<...>