



UNIVERSITY OF
GEORGIA

University Council

October 10, 2025

UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM COMMITTEE – 2025-2026

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Paula Lemons (Sciences)

Business – Andrew Miller

Ecology – Amanda Rugenski

Education – Amy Murphy

Engineering – David Stooksbury

Environment and Design – Katherine Melcher

Family and Consumer Sciences – Melissa Landers-Potts

Forestry and Natural Resources – Richard Chandler

Journalism and Mass Communication – Yan Jin

Law – Joe Miller

Medicine – Erica Brownfield

Pharmacy – Duc Do

Public and International Affairs – Ryan Powers

Public Health – Heather Padilla

Social Work – Jennifer Elkins

Veterinary Medicine – Paul Eubig

Graduate School – Rodney Mauricio

Ex-Officio – Provost Benjamin Ayers

Undergraduate Student Representative – Ella Colker

Graduate Student Representative – Yaw Buabeng

Dear Colleagues:

The attached proposal from the College of Environment and Design to offer an Undergraduate Certificate in Land Design and Development will be an agenda item for the October 17, 2025, Full University Curriculum Committee meeting.

Sincerely,

Susan Sanchez, Chair

cc: Provost Benjamin Ayers

Dr. Marisa Anne Pagnattaro

PROPOSAL FOR A CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

Date: September 25, 2025

School/College/Unit: College of Environment and Design

Department/Division: College of Environment and Design

Certificate Title: Land Design and Development

CIP: 04100100

Effective Term: Fall 2026

Which campus(es) will offer this certificate? Athens

Level (Undergraduate, Graduate, or Post-Baccalaureate): Undergraduate

Program Abstract: The Undergraduate Certificate in Land Design and Development will provide students with foundational knowledge and practical skills essential for designing, developing, and managing land and real estate projects. Participants will gain proficiency in interpreting and conducting site surveys, applying site evaluation methods, and understanding the legal and environmental factors that influence site design and development. The program emphasizes the integration of these elements into the production of comprehensive master plans and pro-forma budget forecasts, preparing graduates to contribute effectively to the planning, design, and development of land projects. The proposed certificate was developed as a collaboration between the College of Environment and Design (CED), the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, College of Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS), the School of Law, and the Terry College of Business.

1. Purpose and Educational Objectives

The Undergraduate Certificate in Land Design and Development is designed to equip students with foundational financial and design concepts, principles, and analytical skills essential to successful land development and management. Students will learn how to analyze, conceptualize, and finalize site designs for the built environment. These skills will be applied through collaborative, multidisciplinary service-learning projects, providing students with practical experience that connects classroom knowledge with community needs.

An important objective of this program is to expose students to the diverse ways of thinking and problem-solving that intersect in the land development process. Students in creatively oriented design programs will develop an appreciation for the logical, analytical approaches employed by those in engineering, management, and finance. Likewise, students from engineering, management, and financial disciplines will gain insight into the iterative, holistic, and experimental approaches characteristic of design practice. This cross-disciplinary perspective prepares graduates to work more effectively in collaborative professional settings.

The proposed certificate directly supports the University of Georgia's mission by providing an area of specialization that bridges design, planning, engineering, management, and finance—fields that are not fully integrated by existing programs. By engaging students in applied, community-focused service-learning projects, engaging with real-world stakeholders, the program enhances experiential learning and prepares graduates to make meaningful contributions in professional practice or entrepreneurial ventures, thereby fulfilling the University's commitment to fostering leaders who serve their communities and professions.

2. Need for the Program

The Undergraduate Certificate in Land Design and Development addresses a clear need for professionals who possess a holistic understanding of the complex processes involved in land development. Land developers are well-paid professionals in the United States and beyond. Developers and managers with design knowledge and designers with development and management knowledge are bound to excel in the job market. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Property, Real Estate, and Community Association Managers, a category that includes land development roles, was expected to grow by about 3% per year between 2023 to 2033.¹ Nearly 40,000 job openings are expected annually. The real estate sector overall employs nearly 2 million people as of mid-2025, with stable employment levels.² By combining classroom instruction with service-based, experiential learning projects, this program provides students with practical opportunities to collaborate across disciplines while assessing the economic viability of real-world development projects.

This certificate leverages the diverse expertise of faculty from landscape architecture and its allied disciplines, who have experience with real estate development, engineering, planning,

¹ <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/management/property-real-estate-and-community-association-managers.htm>.

² <https://www.cbre.com/insights/reports/2025-us-real-estate-market-outlook-midyear-review>.

preservation, property management, and law. Through this interdisciplinary approach, students gain the knowledge and skills necessary to analyze and evaluate the feasibility of land parcels for development and translate those findings into comprehensive development plans, schedules, and budget models.

Aligned with the University of Georgia's land-grant mission, the program emphasizes projects that support economic development across the state, with particular focus on Georgia's rural communities. By partnering with UGA Cooperative Extension, the UGA Archway Partnership, and the Carl Vinson Institute of Government, the program will help students engage in community-based projects that drive local and regional economic growth.

Furthermore, the certificate's emphasis on service-learning and experiential learning, especially in the new core courses, makes it one of the few programs of its kind in the United States. Other model programs include those hosted at Emory University, Texas A&M University, the University of Maryland, and the University of Missouri. By connecting students to real-world projects that benefit Georgia communities, the program prepares them to become collaborative leaders who can balance design creativity, economic, managerial, and logistical realities, environmental stewardship, and community needs—addressing a gap not currently filled by existing programs at UGA.

In addition, provide the following information:

- a. Semester/Year of Program Initiation:** Fall 2026
- b. Semester/Year of Full Implementation of Program:** Fall 2026
- c. Semester/Year First Certificates will be awarded:** Fall 2026
- d. Annual Number of Graduates expected (once the program is established):** 20
- e. Projected Future Trends for number of students enrolled in the program:** 50

3. Student Demand

- a. Provide documentation of evidence of student demand for this program, including a student survey.**

The College of Environment and Design (CED) polled students enrolled in its Bachelor of Landscape Architecture (B.L.A.) program. Working with leaders in the College of Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS) and the Terry College of Business, the faculty also polled students in select majors and classes within these colleges³. The results are illustrated below and point to strong student interest. Within CED, 86% of responding students expressed either a definitive or tentative interest in the certificate; within FACS, 65% of polled students expressed either a definitive or tentative interest; and within the Terry College of Business, 90% of responding real estate majors expressed either a definitive or tentative interest in the certificate.

³ The following classes were polled within FACS: FHCE 3350 and FHCE 3300/3300E. Per advice from leaders and faculty within the Terry College of Business, all students majoring in Real Estate (B.B.A.) were surveyed.

BLA Student Interest in Land Design and Development

YES	29	50.00%
NO	8	13.79%
MAYBE	21	36.21%

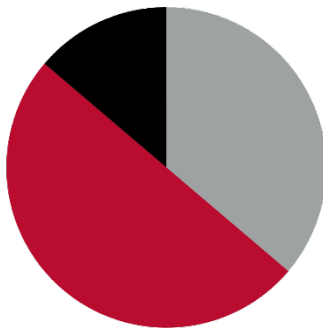
FACS Student Interest in Land Design and Development

YES	30	37.04%
NO	28	34.57%
MAYBE	23	28.4%

Terry Student Interest in Land Design and Development

YES	44	70.97%
NO	6	9.68%
MAYBE	12	19.35%

BLA Student Interest in Land Design and Development



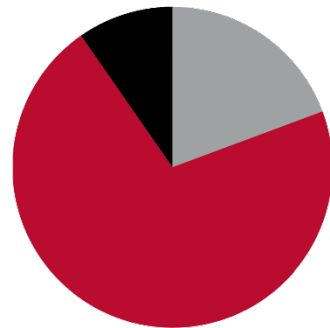
■ Yes (50%)
 ■ No (13.79%)
 ■ Maybe (36.21%)

FACS Student Interest in Land Design and Development



■ Yes (37.04%)
 ■ No (34.57%)
 ■ Maybe (28.4%)

Terry Student Interest in Land Design and Development



■ Yes (70.97%)
 ■ No (9.68%)
 ■ Maybe (19.35%)

b. Provide evidence that demand will be sufficient to sustain reasonable enrollment.

The college's B.L.A. students have been petitioning for a certificate like the one outlined here for several years. The certificate will benefit B.L.A. students who lean on the design, creative, and environmental side of projects by exposing them to real-world approaches to design and development and enhancing their analytical, logical, and financial skills. Simultaneously, the proposed program will build up the design exposure of undergraduate students enrolled in other majors, particularly within the College of Family and Consumer

Sciences, the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, and the Terry College of Business, to help them grow skills and methods used in multi-disciplinary design and engineering firms. An essential component of the proposed certificate is the elevation of students' knowledge in environmental ethics, environmentally conscious land stewardship, and sustainable land development, especially in rural settings, which are all traditional strengths of the College of Environment and Design and can be compellingly offered to students in the other UGA colleges. This type of awareness is essential for 21st-century professionals, regardless of their educational backgrounds. Given current student demand and the strong employment forecast for careers in the field, it is anticipated that there is sufficient demand at UGA to sustain the major.

c. To what extent will minority student enrollments be greater than, less than, or equivalent to the proportion of minority students in the total student body?

The extent of minority student participation is anticipated to be equivalent to the proportion of minority students in the total student body.

4. Program of Study

Provide a detailed program of study for the certificate program, including:

a. Specific course prefixes, numbers, and titles:

Required Courses (9 hours)

LAND 4600/6600, Fundamentals of Land Design and Development (3 hours) – **NEW**

LAND 4740/6740, Applied Land Design and Development (3 hours) – **NEW**

REAL 4000, Real Estate (3 hours)

Elective Courses (6 hours)

Choose two courses from the following:

EDES(PLAN) 4650/6650, City Planning (3 hours)

FHCE 4320/6320, Legal Issues in Residential Property Management Law (3 hours)

FHCE 4330/6330, Leasing Strategies for Residential Property Management (3 hours)

HFIM 2500, Introduction to Hospitality and Food Industry Management (3 hours)

HFIM 3000, Hospitality and Food Industry Marketing (3 hours)

HFIM 4580, Facility and Event Planning and Management (3 hours)

HIPR 2000, Introduction to Historic Preservation (3 hours)

HIPR 4510/6510, Financing Historic Preservation and Revitalizing Communities (3 hours)

LAND 3330, Landscape Engineering Processes and Materials (3 hours)

LAND 4350, Soil and Stormwater Management for Landscape Architects (3 hours)

LAND 4370, Applied Landscape Construction (2 hours)

AND Real-Estate-related Independent Study approved by certificate director (1 hour)⁴

⁴ For example, REAL 4800, Internship in Real Estate, or REAL4960R, Faculty-Mentored Undergraduate Research I.

LAND 4420S/6420S, Design Build (3 hours)

LAND 4500, Introduction to Construction Project Management (3 hours)

LAND 4710, Professional Practice (2 hours)

AND Real-Estate-related Independent Study approved by certificate director (1 hour)⁴

LAND 4730/6730, Issues and Practices in Sustainable Design (3 hours)

JURI(FANR)(ECOL) 4810/6810, Natural Resources Law (3 hours)

Total: 15 hours

5. Model Program and Accreditation

- a. Identify any model programs, accepted disciplinary standards, and accepted curricular practices against which the proposed program could be judged. Evaluate the extent to which the proposed curriculum is consistent with these external points of reference and provide a rationale for significant inconsistencies and differences that may exist.**

While there is no certificate in land design and development at the University of Georgia, the proposed certificate aligns with the interdisciplinary and experiential learning model exemplified by UGA's Land Conservation Clinic (<https://www.law.uga.edu/courses/land-conservation-clinic>). Like the Clinic, this certificate emphasizes applied, real-world projects that integrate academic knowledge with community service, supporting the University's broader mission as a land-grant and service-focused institution.

The certificate draws on accepted curricular practices within disciplines such as landscape architecture, real estate development, urban planning and design, civil engineering, historic preservation, property management, and regional and environmental design. Nationally recognized programs in these fields emphasize applied learning, interdisciplinary collaboration, and community engagement—elements that are central to this certificate. The certificate's inclusion of service-learning and cross-disciplinary faculty expertise reflects best practices endorsed by organizations such as the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA), the Urban Land Institute (ULI), and the American Planning Association (APA). Both required LAND courses will provide community engagement through service-learning projects. Real-world community partners will be instrumental in working with students on real world projects and will provide opportunities for reviewing progress, receiving feedback, and presenting final solutions.

As mentioned earlier, CED used other certificates in the country, such as those at Emory University, Texas A&M University, the University of Maryland, and the University of Missouri to benchmark the curricular goals and strategies of the proposed certificate. The proposed certificate has adopted the most common topics covered in the model certificates, such as real estate finance, risk management, sustainable design, and construction.

Consistency and Distinctions:

The proposed curriculum is consistent with these standards in its integration of design, finance, legal, managerial, and environmental components, as well as in its strong

experiential learning focus. A key distinction of this certificate is its deliberate inclusion of an interdisciplinary cohort that spans design, engineering, real estate, property and facilities management, and law. This breadth distinguishes it from more narrowly focused professional programs and provides students with a unique opportunity to understand and bridge multiple perspectives within the land design and development process.

With its integration of service-learning and intentional blending of creative, technical, and financial approaches, this certificate program reflects both the land-grant mission of UGA and the evolving demands of the industry for graduates who are prepared to work collaboratively across disciplines and engage directly with community and economic development projects throughout Georgia.

b. If program accreditation is available, provide an analysis of the ability of the program to satisfy the curricular standards of such specialized accreditation.

Not applicable.

6. Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the Undergraduate Certificate in Land Design and Development, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the fundamental methods and processes involved in land design and development.
2. Explain the key practices and principles related to site design, planning, and development.
3. Describe the essential legal, regulatory, and safety considerations that affect land design and development projects.
4. Identify and evaluate the diverse career paths within the land design and development industry.
5. Apply foundational knowledge and interdisciplinary skills to analyze and solve practical problems related to land design and development.
6. Develop and propose creative, viable solutions for land design and development challenges, supported by appropriate financial and environmental analyses.

7. Assessment and Admissions

Describe how the learning outcomes for the program will be assessed. Describe the process and criteria for how students will be admitted to and retained in the program.

Assessment:

The learning outcomes for the Undergraduate Certificate in Land Design and Development will be assessed through the successful completion of all required coursework, including 9 core credit hours and two additional electives from the approved list. To ensure competency, all courses applied toward the certificate must be completed with a grade of “C” (2.0) or higher. In addition to coursework, the program will gather indirect assessment data through

alumni surveys and employment placement surveys to measure how well the certificate prepares graduates for careers in land design and development and related fields.

Admissions and Retention:

Admission to the certificate is open to any undergraduate student in good academic standing at the University of Georgia.

Documentation of Approval and Notification

Proposal: Undergraduate Certificate in Land Design and Development

College: College of Environment and Design

Department: College of Environment and Design

Proposed Effective Term: Fall 2026

School/College:

- Dean of the College of Environment and Design, Dr. Sonia Hirt, 7/23/2025

Use of Course Notification:

- Department of Insurance, Legal Studies, and Real Estate Head, Dr. James Carson, 10/8/2025
- Department of Financial Planning, Housing, and Consumer Economics Head, Dr. Swarn Chatterjee, 10/8/2025
- Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, Dr. Greg Colson, 10/8/2025
- Associate Dean of the Law School, Andrea Dennis, 10/8/2025

Letters of Support:

- Terry College of Business Interim Dean, Dr. Santanu Chatterjee, 8/1/2025
- College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences Dean, Dr. Nick T. Place, 8/1/2025
- Dean of the Law School, Usha Rodrigues, 8/13/2025
- College of Family and Consumer Sciences Dean, Dr. Anisa Zvonkovic, 8/1/2025