



LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS TECHNICAL COMMITTEE CALIFORNIA ARCHITECTS BOARD

PUBLIC PROTECTION THROUGH EXAMINATION, LICENSURE, AND REGULATION

Arnold Schwarzenegger
GOVERNOR

SUMMARY REPORT

CALIFORNIA ARCHITECTS BOARD LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Education Subcommittee
June 17, 2005
Sacramento, CA

Subcommittee Members Present

Richard Zweifel, Chair
Christine Anderson
Linda Gates
Steve Lang
Alexis Slafer
Karina Verhoeven

Subcommittee Member Absent

Heidi Martin

Staff Present

Doug McCauley, California Architects Board Executive Officer
Mona Maggio, Landscape Architects Technical Committee Program Manager
Don Chang, Legal Counsel
Mary Anderson, Examination Coordinator
Justin Sotelo, Special Projects Analyst

Guests Present

Richard Ciardella, Landscape Architect
Charles Klein, Specialist in Academic Planning, California Community Colleges, Chancellor's Office (CCCCO)
Larry Rohlfses, Assistant Executive Director, California Landscape Contractors Association (CLCA)

A. Welcome and Introductions

Education Subcommittee Chair Richard Zweifel called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m. He expressed his appreciation for the Subcommittee's hard work and accomplishments, to date, in reviewing and evaluating California's eligibility requirements for examination and licensure.

Mr. Zweifel welcomed guests Richard Ciardella, Landscape Architect, and Larry Rohlfses, CLCA Assistant Executive Director, to the meeting.

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Karina Verhoeven announced that she would not be able to attend any future meetings, as she was relocating back to Canada; however, she offered to continue assisting the Subcommittee with research and analysis of data. Members applauded Ms. Verhoeven for her contributions and dedicated work on the Subcommittee and wished her well.

B. Approve the March 4, 2005 Education Subcommittee Summary Report

Alexis Slafer identified an error on page six of the Summary Report (second bullet) which read, "...Modesto Junior College **had** an introductory course..." Ms. Slafer indicated that the sentence should read "...Modesto Junior College **did not have** an introductory course..."

- **Linda Gates moved to approve the March 4, 2005 Education Subcommittee Summary Report with the indicated correction.**
- **Steve Lang seconded the motion.**
- **The motion carried unanimously.**

C. Review and Discuss Examination/Licensure Eligibility Survey Results

Mary Anderson reported that, as a result of the discussion at the March 4, 2005 Subcommittee meeting, staff was directed to obtain specific examination and licensure eligibility requirements from certain Region V member boards (Arizona, Hawaii, Nevada, Oregon and Washington) and other boards (Florida, New Mexico, New York and Texas) whose requirements corresponded to those being considered by the Subcommittee. In an effort to obtain that data, staff created a survey to be distributed to each board. The survey asked questions regarding: 1) the acceptance of related degrees in meeting examination/licensure eligibility requirements; 2) allowing candidates with a degree in landscape architecture to sit for certain sections or all sections of the Landscape Architect Registration Examination (LARE) prior to meeting training/experience requirements; 3) changes in pass rates for candidates who take the multiple-choice sections of the LARE upon receipt of a degree in landscape architecture versus candidates who take the LARE after meeting all eligibility requirements; and 4) examination preparatory materials developed and/or disseminated by the boards to their candidates, exclusive of CLARB's candidate study materials.

Of the nine boards surveyed, only four responded. In an effort to obtain the additional eligibility information, staff reviewed board Web sites and called those boards that did not reply to the survey. Unfortunately, most of the boards were unable to respond to the survey questions due to: 1) administrators not knowing the answers (i.e., "How did the board determine that the [accepted degrees identified] are related to the practice of landscape architecture?" and "How did the board determine that applicants could sit for the multiple-choice sections with education alone?"); and 2) the board not tracking the requested information/data.

However, from the information received, staff was able to determine that: 1) many of the boards accept various related degrees; 2) a few of the boards accept any degree; and 3) most of the boards that accept non-landscape architecture degrees accept architecture and civil engineering degrees.

The data obtained from the California Architects Board revealed that 10% of its candidate population met the education requirement with a related degree.

Ms. Slafer stated that she estimates that 10%-15% of the UCLA extension certificate program students who do not continue in the program are students with degrees in related fields.

Christine Anderson shared her concern about the global acceptance of related degrees. She stated that the study of landscape architecture in related degree programs is a narrow slice of the services that landscape architects perform. She questioned why the LATC should consider accepting related degrees, such as civil engineering (CE), instead of recognizing individuals who are licensed in that profession. She indicated that a candidate who has not qualified for the CE examination may not be minimally competent in his/her own chosen field.

Mr. Ciardella suggested that the Subcommittee review the LARE specifications to determine which degrees provide candidates with the knowledge to pass the examination. Mr. Zweifel amplified the need for candidates to obtain training experience before sitting for the LARE.

After discussion, the Subcommittee agreed that accepting accredited bachelors degrees in architecture and civil engineering would be appropriate. However, before considering the acceptance of other related degrees, the Subcommittee asked staff to research the existence of accreditation boards for the following related degrees previously identified for consideration: Urban Planning, Environmental Planning, Ornamental Horticulture, Landscape Horticulture, Environmental Design and Landscape Design. The Subcommittee further directed staff to send its findings to the Subcommittee members for review. Ms. Gates and Ms. Slafer volunteered to evaluate the information and present their findings and recommendation at the next Subcommittee meeting.

D. Discuss Implementation of Candidate Education/Experience Tracking System

Mary Anderson reported that, at the March 4, 2005 meeting, Christine Anderson presented a summary of the analysis that she and Ms. Verhoeven conducted of the proposed *Candidate Education/Experience Tracking Chart*. Christine Anderson noted that the majority of the candidates followed the traditional path of qualifying for the examination with an accredited degree in landscape architecture and two years of training/experience under a landscape architect. The analysis also showed that, in general, candidates who received their training/experience under a landscape architect were more successful with the examination, particularly with Sections C and E. Christine Anderson stated that because 95 out of 101 candidate files analyzed had qualified for the examination by the traditional path, it was difficult to draw any conclusions for those who followed a less traditional path.

Christine Anderson asked staff to revise the chart to include additional data that she had identified during her analysis.

Staff updated the chart and presented it to the Subcommittee at its June 17, 2005 meeting. The Subcommittee reviewed the chart and asked staff to make the following additional edits: 1) add a cell to Reciprocity Candidates Column to include the type of degree earned and school attended; 2) under the Education column, change BLA to read BLA/BSLA; and 3) add a column for related degrees earned. Staff was directed to confirm with legal counsel that the LATC was authorized to collect the additional information on the LATC's Application for Reciprocity.

The revised *Proposed Candidate Education/Experience Tracking Chart* will be provided for review and approval at the Subcommittee's next meeting.

E. Presentation by Charles Klein, Specialist in Academic Planning, Board of Governors, California Community Colleges, Chancellor's Office on the Approval Process for Associate Degree Programs

Mona Maggio reported that during the first Subcommittee meeting held in October 2004, the Subcommittee discussed: 1) the history behind California accepting associate degrees in landscape architecture; 2) what was being taught in those programs; 3) and what entity has oversight over the accreditation and/or approval of those programs. Staff was directed to obtain curricula from landscape architecture associate degree programs in California to determine if they were comparable, if the courses were appropriate for examination eligibility credit, and to consider an appropriate amount of educational credit for associate degrees in landscape architecture. The information was obtained and assigned to Mr. Lang and Ms. Slafer for their review. Mr. Lang and Ms. Slafer presented their analysis of the associate degree programs to the Subcommittee at its March 4, 2005 meeting.

During the March 4, 2005 meeting, the Subcommittee determined that the curricula is varied, however the Associate Degree in Landscape Architecture is overseen by the Board of Governors, California Community Colleges, Chancellor's office (CCCCO). The Subcommittee recommends that the current one year of educational credit continue to be granted for an Associate Degree in Landscape Architecture, however in the future, the curricula for community colleges may need to be reviewed for consistency.

The Subcommittee directed staff to research and identify what entity is responsible for evaluating associate degree programs. Mary Anderson identified the California Community Colleges, Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) as the governing body for community colleges.

Mary Anderson contacted Charles Klein, Specialist in Academic Planning, CCCCCO, and invited him to speak to the Subcommittee at its June 17, 2005 meeting to provide an overview of the approval process for associate degree programs in California.

Mr. Klein thanked the Subcommittee for the opportunity to address the Subcommittee. He added that prior to being contacted by Mary Anderson, he was unaware that an associate degree in landscape architecture was applicable to licensure.

Mr. Klein indicated that out of 110 community colleges, four (Mira Costa College, Modesto Junior College, San Diego Mesa College, and West Valley College) have associate degree programs in landscape architecture that are transferable to four-year degree programs. Mary Anderson noted that the LATC also recognizes associate degrees in landscape architecture from Southwestern College. Mr. Klein suggested that the LATC consider recognizing Ventura College as well, as it has an occupational degree program (same as Southwestern College). He added that there are 33 certificate programs in landscape design/landscape maintenance offered at community colleges. Mr. Klein suggested that the LATC advise these schools with certificate programs of its role as the licensing/regulatory agency for practice of landscape architecture and how the programs could consider modifying their curricula in order to make them meet the CCCCCO criteria for associate degree programs. Mr. Klein indicated that he would be happy to assist the LATC with distributing information to the colleges.

Mr. Klein stated that California does not adopt curriculum framework or standards for associate degree programs; however, it is the responsibility of the Chancellor's Office to review and approve new degree or certificate programs or any changes to existing programs. The faculty for each program are responsible for reviewing their own curriculum.

He stated that the number of units required for an associate degree in landscape architecture is self-determined by each college.

Mr. Klein shared that additional information on associate degree transfer criteria can be found at www.assist.org.

Mr. Zweifel thanked Mr. Klein for his presentation.

F. Review and Make Recommendations to Amend California Code of Regulations Section 2620, Education and Training Credits

Ms. Maggio stated that in August 2004, the LATC charged the Subcommittee with evaluating California's eligibility requirements for the licensing examination to ensure that applicants have appropriate education and training/work experience prior to taking the examination. Specifically, the Subcommittee was to determine appropriate levels of education and experience as they relate to: 1) public health, safety, and welfare in California, and 2) successfully preparing applicants for the examination.

Since its first meeting on October 8, 2004, the Subcommittee has reviewed and evaluated the eligibility requirements of CLARB, neighboring and larger CLARB member jurisdictions, and other design profession boards. As a result, the Subcommittee is considering possible changes to the requirements under California Code of Regulations (CCR) Section 2620. At the June 17, 2005 meeting, the Subcommittee agreed to make the following recommendations to the LATC at a future date:

1. Review and Make Recommendation Regarding the Current Six-Year Combined Education/Experience Requirement

The Subcommittee agreed to recommend retaining the Six-Year Combined Education/Experience Requirement.

The Subcommittee based this decision on the following: 1) the six-year combined education and experience requirement under Business and Professions Code Section 5650 has been in effect since 1953; 2) a review of the requirements of other states revealed that they have a similar requirement with respect to combined education and experience; 3) the traditional route to licensure in California, and in most other states, has been obtaining an accredited degree in landscape architecture and two years of experience under the direct supervision of a licensed landscape architect; 4) there appears to be no past or present issues with respect to the six-year requirement; and 5) the combination of education and experience appears to provide the greatest protection to the public's health, safety, and welfare.

2. Review and Make Recommendation Regarding the Acceptance of Related Degrees to Meet the Examination and Licensure Eligibility Requirements

The Subcommittee agreed to recommend accepting accredited bachelors degrees in Architecture and Civil Engineering; however, it delayed making a decision on the acceptance of other related degrees. Staff was directed to obtain information on accreditation boards for the related degrees under consideration. This issue will be discussed at the next Education meeting.

The Subcommittee based this decision on the following: 1) the Joint Legislative Sunset Review Committee (JLSRC) previously raised concerns regarding the fact that, prior to 1997, California applicants could receive educational credit for holding any type of bachelors degree with a four-year curriculum; 2) the California Architects Board grants educational credit for designated degrees related to architecture and unrelated degrees; 3) a review of the neighboring and larger landscape architectural licensing jurisdictions (New York, Florida, Texas, Arizona, Hawaii, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, and Washington) also revealed that at least six out of those nine jurisdictions recognize degrees related to landscape architecture; and 4) CLARB currently allows applicants to sit for the licensing examination with any type of bachelors degree, plus three years of diversified experience under the direct supervision of a licensed landscape architect.

Staff compiled and presented the following list of the related degrees accepted/recognized by other licensing jurisdictions and under consideration by the Subcommittee: Architecture; Civil Engineering and/or Engineering; Urban Planning; Environmental Planning; Landscape Horticulture; Ornamental Horticulture; Environmental Design; and Landscape Design.

As discussed under Agenda Item C, the survey results revealed that: 1) many states accept various related degrees; 2) a few states accept any degree; and 3) most states that accept degrees other than landscape architecture accept architecture and civil engineering degrees.

After discussion, the Subcommittee agreed to recommend accepting accredited bachelors degrees in architecture and civil engineering. However, before considering the acceptance of other related degrees, the Subcommittee asked staff to research the existence of accreditation boards for the following related degrees previously identified for consideration: Urban Planning, Environmental Planning, Ornamental Horticulture, Landscape Horticulture, Environmental Design and Landscape Design. The Subcommittee also asked staff if there was an evaluation service that conducts comparisons of related degrees similar to the evaluation service available to candidates who obtain their education at foreign schools. Mary Anderson reported that she spoke with a representative from an approved foreign degree evaluation service to inquire if they perform this type of comparison or knew of any other organization that performed this type of service. The evaluation service indicated that they do not perform this type of comparison and directed staff to the Council for Higher Education who in turn recommended contacting the Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board. The Subcommittee further directed staff to send its findings to the Subcommittee members for review. Ms. Gates and Ms. Slafer volunteered to evaluate the information and present their findings and recommendation at the next Subcommittee meeting.

3. Review and Make Recommendation Regarding Acceptance of Partial Completion of Degree Programs

The Subcommittee agreed to recommend accepting partial completion of accredited Bachelor of Landscape Architecture and Bachelor of Science in Landscape Architecture degrees to meet the education requirement. They agreed that candidates should provide proof of completing 50% or more of the core coursework in a landscape architecture program. They also agreed that candidates should receive up to a maximum of one year of credit.

The Subcommittee based this decision on the following: 1) during the March 4, 2005 meeting, it was noted that the former Board of Landscape Architects previously granted credit for partial completion of degree programs; and 2) the California Architects Board also recognizes partial completion of various degree programs (i.e., architecture degrees and related degrees).

Some Subcommittee members voiced a general interest in granting credit for partial completion of a degree program; however, they indicated that they would need to take a closer look at how credit would be determined. Other members shared their concern that acceptance of partial completion of a program might place less emphasis on obtaining a degree when completed coursework theoretically provides candidates with many of the skills and abilities needed for success on the examination.

Legal Counsel Don Chang suggested that the Subcommittee limit the acceptance of partial completion of degree programs to accredited four-year landscape architecture programs (when candidates have completed at least 50% of the core coursework).

After further discussion, the Subcommittee agreed to recommend accepting partial completion of accredited Bachelor of Landscape Architecture and Bachelor of Science in Landscape Architecture degrees to meet California's educational requirement for the licensing examination. Further, it was recommended that: 1) those candidates be required to provide proof of completing at least 50% of the core coursework in the recognized programs; 2) those candidates receive a maximum of one year of educational credit; and 3) no credit be granted for partial completion of any masters degree program in landscape architecture or any other degree program.

It was determined that the method for determining how credit is granted would still need to be discussed at the next meeting.

4. Review and Make Recommendation Regarding Appropriate Amount of Credit for Each Education and Experience Category

Due to limited time, the Subcommittee was unable to complete its discussion on this agenda item. This agenda item will be discussed and finalized at the next Subcommittee Meeting.

The Subcommittee reviewed the existing and proposed education and experience categories under CCR Section 2620, Education and Training Credits, and made recommendations as to the appropriate amount of credit for each category. Staff was directed to update the *Education and Experience Categories* chart (based on the discussion and recommendations) for the Subcommittee's review at its next meeting.

5. Review and Make Recommendation Regarding Early Eligibility With Accredited Degree

Ms. Maggio reported that at the March 4, 2005 Subcommittee meeting, it was noted that CLARB's current standards allow candidates to take the multiple-choice sections of the licensing examination with either an accredited undergraduate or graduate degree in landscape architecture and no work experience. It had also been noted that a number of landscape architectural licensing jurisdictions allow candidates to sit for the multiple-choice sections of the examination after completing the applicable education requirements (of the nine states examined by the Subcommittee and staff, four states allow candidates to sit for the examination by only meeting the education requirement).

The Subcommittee indicated that they were open to considering this option for California candidates; however, additional information would be required in order to determine if it would be beneficial and/or appropriate. In May 2005, staff had contacted previously identified states to determine: 1) whether they allow candidates to sit for the LARE with education alone and, if so, how long the policy/exception had been in place; 2) what were the determining factors for allowing the exception; and 3) whether there have been any noticeable changes in examination pass rates.

Ms. Maggio also stated that staff's recommendation was to allow candidates with an accredited landscape architecture degree or an approved extension certificate in landscape architecture plus any four year degree to sit for the LARE multiple-choice Sections A, B, and D. Candidates would then be required to meet the experience requirement before sitting for the graphic performance Sections C and E.

Due to limited time, the Subcommittee was unable to continue its discussion on this item; however, staff was directed to obtain the following information from CLARB: 1) the basis for CLARB's decision to allow candidates with accredited undergraduate or graduate degree in landscape architecture to sit for the multiple-choice sections of the LARE without work experience; 2) the date CLARB implemented this policy; 3) whether the decision was tied to the computerization of the LARE multiple-choice sections; 4) a list of states that allow candidates to sit for the multiple-choice sections of the LARE with an accredited degree in landscape architecture and no work experience; 5) a list of states that allow candidates to sit for the multiple-choice sections of the LARE with a degree other than an accredited landscape architecture and/or no degree; and 6) since implementation, based on candidates taking the multiple-choice sections after earning a degree and prior to meeting the training/experience requirements, has CLARB identified any changes in pass rates for the multiple-choice sections?

Staff was then directed to forward the information from CLARB to Christine Anderson and Steve Lang for review. They will present their findings and recommendation at the next Subcommittee meeting.

G. Discuss and Make Recommendation Regarding Implementation of a Time Limit for Landscape Architect Registration Examination Scores

Mary Anderson reported that as part of the Subcommittee's review of the eligibility requirements of CLARB, neighboring and larger member boards and other design profession boards, it was noted that Texas and Washington have implemented a five-year time limit for candidates to complete the examination process and become licensed. Doug McCauley added that the

California Architects Board's (Board) "five-year rolling clock" should become effective January 1, 2006.

Mary Anderson explained that the five-year time limit for Texas, Washington, and the Board limits the amount of time that exam scores are valid. Passing scores for any section of the examination may be carried forward for a period of five years from the date the applicant passed that section of the examination.

After discussion, the Subcommittee decided to not recommend implementing a time limit at this time. However, the Subcommittee did suggest that, for the next two years, staff should monitor the number of attempts candidates take to pass each section of the LARE. This information will be tracked on the newly implemented Candidate Tracking Chart. After the two years, staff should gather data from other CLARB member boards, as well as the Board, and re-evaluate whether implementation of a five-year or other set time period to complete the LARE should be implemented.

The other issue discussed by the Subcommittee was the time limit for inactive applications under CCR section 2620(d)(2), which states: "The Board [LATC] shall retain inactive applications for a five year period. Thereafter, the Board shall purge these records unless otherwise notified by the candidate. A candidate who wishes to reapply to the Board, shall be required to re-obtain the required documents to allow the Board to determine their current eligibility."

Mary Anderson advised the Subcommittee that a small number of California candidates have pursued examination and licensure after their files were in an inactive status. She further added that staff has not purged any candidate files that exceed the five year time limit. The concern being if an inactive candidate file is purged, the candidate's examination score(s) would be destroyed and there would be no record of examination score(s) for candidates continuing the examination process in another jurisdiction or seeking reciprocity. Mary Anderson spoke with Mr. Chang to verify that a candidate file that exceeds the five-year time limit could be purged. Mr. Chang indicated that all documents in a candidates file could be purged with the exception of examination scores. Candidate scores must be maintained by the LATC. This can be done by maintaining a record in either hard copy or electronic file format.

The Subcommittee suggested that staff send a letter to each "inactive file" candidate informing them that the LATC will begin purging the files and will only maintain scores. Due to the volume of files, this could be done in groups. It was recommended that the LATC possibly include an article in the newsletter and add information regarding the retention of inactive files on the Web site.

H. Review and Make Recommendation Regarding Reciprocity Requirements

Ms. Maggio reported that part of the Subcommittee's charge was to evaluate any additional licensure requirements of other jurisdictions that may pertain to the Subcommittee's charge, including requirements for reciprocity.

She provided an overview of the current reciprocity requirements in California, as well as the reciprocity requirements in Nevada, Texas, and Washington. Ms. Maggio noted that Washington recently implemented the following requirements for reciprocal licensure candidates: 1) must hold a landscape architect license; 2) license must be in good standing in another recognized jurisdiction; 3) must have completed the LARE or UNE; 4) must hold a bachelors degree in landscape architecture and three years of practical work experience approved by the Board or

have a non-accredited landscape architecture degree and seven years of practical experience. Nevada's reciprocity requirements are as follows: 1) must be active and registered in good standing, with no disciplinary action ever taken in another state or province of Canada; 2) must have received a minimum passing score of 75% on each section of the national examination; 3) must be actively engaged in full-time practice as a registered landscape architect for three or more years; or achieved a combination of six years of education and experience in landscape architecture; 4) must achieve a minimum score of 75% on the Nevada section of the examination; and 5) must submit four references, two registered landscape architects and two licensed professionals from a related design profession who have direct knowledge of your professional abilities.

After discussion, the Subcommittee felt that to make any changes to the current requirements could potentially present a barrier for candidates wanting to gain licensure in California from other states. Since there have not been any issues or problems identified, the current requirements should remain. Ms. Maggio shared her concerns that individuals are circumventing California's licensure requirements by obtaining a license in a state that has lenient requirements and then obtaining a reciprocal license in California often without any work experience in the state where the license originated.

This item will be discussed further at the next meeting.

I. Review and Update Education Subcommittee Work Plan

The Subcommittee discussed and updated its work plan in accordance with the goals and objectives identified in its charge. Staff will continue to update the work plan with progress notations for the Subcommittee's review at its next meeting.

J. Select Future Meeting Dates

The next meeting was scheduled for December 2, 2005 in Sacramento.

K. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.