

QUALITY ASSESSMENT BY EU PARTNERS (PARTNER P4 Martin-Luther University Halle)

New course: “(LMD253) Fundamentals of Landscape Architecture”

Mongolian University of Life Sciences, School of Agroecology

BSc Course

QUALITY ASSESSMENT
<p>Quality criteria 1: Number of credit units for lectures, practical sessions and self-learning are appropriate to the contents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Evaluation</i> The course is split into two main units: in-class activities and independent work, both of which are further split into smaller activities. Overall, the course has a balanced approach between seminar and lecture units, whereby each week the workload is equally distributed between seminars and lectures. Moreover, students have to opportunity to deepen their knowledge on the theoretical inputs with an independent assignment on the drawing and design of a landscape. The number of credits allocated to the units is correctly designed. <i>Strategies for improvement</i> No major suggestions necessary. The course is well-structured and solidly planned.
<p>Quality criteria 2: Total number of credit units in the course is correct and appropriate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Evaluation</i> The course is intended to provide students with 4.8 ECTS (3 MCTS). According to the syllabus, the course is scheduled to run for 16 weeks. During that period, students will listen to lectures (32 hours) and participate in seminar exercises (32 hours). These in-class activities are complemented with independent work. In particular, the course plans for students to plan and prepare a perspective drawing of different environmental components such as a site with trees and bushes. The workload for these independent drawing activities however is not specified. <i>Strategies for improvement</i> The course on landscape design contains 64 hours of in-class. The total workload of the course is not specified since it is unclear how many hours are allocated for the independent drawing work. Considering the course is intended to provide students with 4.8 ECTS (3 MCTS), the expected workload would be approximately 120 – 144 hours, given that one ECTS is generally valued at 25 – 30 hours. Considering that 64 hours are reserved for in-class activities, it is recommended to complete the information in the syllabus and add the expected hours for the drawing work. If the intended ECTS goal is to be met, the independent work should at least be allocated 60 – 80 hours of workload, so that the intended goal of 4.8 ECTS can be met.
<p>Quality criteria 3: Positioning of the courses in Curricula is appropriate based on the progressive level of difficulty</p>

- *Evaluation*

The course seems to be adequately positioned in the curricula. Considering it is a Bachelor's course, the intended level of the course is adequate considering that many basic concepts such as understanding the methodology of landscape architecture or learning how to draw basic environmental shapes such as rocks or bushes are part of the agenda. Hence, the level of difficulty and positioning of the course is properly stated.

In addition, a course on Black Nature Morte is required for this course, although it is not specified how this recommended course helps to provide knowledge for this course on landscape architecture.

- *Strategies for improvement*

No improvements necessary. The course aim and goals are well documented and its positioning in the Bachelor's course for second year students is appropriate.

Quality criteria 4: Tests are suitable and appropriate to support transferable skills

- *Evaluation*

Students are graded based on their attendance in e-courses (20%), an intermediate progress examination (20%), a skill examination (30%) and a final examination (30%). The number of tests are adequate and allow for a proper judgment of how well students progress through the module.

- *Strategies for improvement*

Attendance in e-courses is weighted rather highly, especially considering how difficult it will be to objectively denote a grade for attendance and participation. It would perhaps be wise to reduce the impact of the attendance and instead increase the skill and final examination.

Moreover, the specific exams and test are not adequately described in the syllabus. It can be assumed that the skill examination refers to the drawings that they prepare in their individual work time, but it is not explicitly mentioned. The final examination as well as the progress examinations is also not detailed enough. It is unclear how long these examinations are or if they take the shape of a test or a report or similar outputs. It would be good to describe these grading mechanisms in greater detail.

Quality criteria 5: TLM and assessment strategy support students in undertaking the course i.e. prerequisites are helpful and relevant, assessments help gauge students understanding

- *Evaluation*

Teaching and learning methods are mixed and include taught classes, in-class discussions, field assignments and individual work in the form of drawings. The intended structure of the course is thus well-designed to gauge student's progress and their understanding. A course on Black Nature Morte is required in order to take this course on landscape design. It is unclear if and in what form the required course will complement the aims of the course. Considering that this is a bachelor's course, students should however be able to follow the concepts taught in this course without extensive prior knowledge

The compulsory reading list contains only one entry, and there is one recommended article as well. While the required and recommended reading materials should prove helpful and useful to the students, it would be wise to add more references in case students want to deepen their understanding of the subject.

The assignments outside of class-activities are not well described and it is unclear what field assignments will take place and what tasks the students will have to carry out.

- *Strategies for improvement*

It would be good to mention how this course builds upon the foundation provided to students in the prerequisite course. The connection between the two courses is obscure and it is unclear how they complement each other. Moreover, it would be good to provide more information on the specific tasks

that students have to carry out, especially the independent activities. Students are expected to provide drawings, but there is no context nor further elaboration. Likewise, field assignments are mentioned but not explained in greater detail. These types of information should be added to the syllabus as soon as possible.

Some interesting references that could perhaps help to deepen the theoretical knowledge are listed below, but their use ultimately depends on the instructors.

- Gazvoda, D. (2002). **Characteristics of Modern Landscape Architecture and its Education.** *Landscape and Urban Planning* 60:2, 117-133.
- Francis, M. (2001). **A Case Study Method for Landscape Architecture.** *Landscape Journal* 20:1, 15-29

Quality criteria 6: Theory/Practice-oriented components are sufficient to cater the learning outcomes and skills development

- *Evaluation*

The theoretical components of the course are described in excellent detail and the skills to be developed are mentioned in detail as well. However, the practical components, particularly the field assignments and drawings are only touched upon and not their specific tasks and learning outcomes are not well documented.

The intended learning outcomes and skills to be developed over the course period are however very much in line of what can be expected of a BSc level course.

- *Strategies for improvement*

Expanding upon the practical components of the course would be a strong recommendation. As of now, the syllabus only lists a general outline and goal, but does not explain what specific tasks are part of the independent activities nor which learning outcomes they pursue.

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