

# Texas A&M University (TAMU) LAND240 History of Landscape Architecture Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide



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## Questions

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1. What is the function of bioswales in landscape design?
  - A. They serve as decorative features without functional purpose
  - B. They provide habitat for large animal species only
  - C. They manage stormwater runoff by filtering pollutants and promoting water retention
  - D. They are used solely for irrigation purposes
2. Who is considered the "father of landscape architecture"?
  - A. Andreas Palladio
  - B. Frederick Law Olmsted
  - C. Thomas Jefferson
  - D. Daniel Burnham
3. What is one of the main tools landscape architects use for planning?
  - A. Mechanical engineering software
  - B. Land surveying instruments
  - C. 3D modeling and design software
  - D. Public speaking skills
4. Which is NOT a design characteristic of the temples of Mentuhotep II at Karnak, Egypt?
  - A. One of the earliest processional axes
  - B. Temples built into a rock face
  - C. Golden triangles atop linear columns
  - D. A high square colonnaded platform with a sycamore lined forecourt
5. What significant contribution did Frederick Law Olmsted make to landscape architecture?
  - A. He exclusively designed residential gardens
  - B. He popularized the concept of public parks in America
  - C. He focused on urban high-rises
  - D. He introduced sustainable designs

6. What city was the most important oracle center in the classical Greek world?
- A. Rome
  - B. Delphi
  - C. Athens
  - D. Miletus
7. Which landscape architect is associated with the concept of “landscape as infrastructure”?
- A. Frederick Law Olmsted
  - B. Kate Orff
  - C. Lawrence Halprin
  - D. Gustafson Guthrie Nichol
8. What concept signifies that within the larger sanctity of nature, some locations are especially sacred?
- A. Spatial Hierophany
  - B. Animism
  - C. Peristyle
  - D. Topos
9. What design approach emphasizes continuity with the existing natural environment?
- A. Biophilic Design
  - B. Modernist Design
  - C. Minimalist Design
  - D. Postmodern Design
10. Which architectural feature is primarily characterized by a roof structure over a walkway supported by columns?
- A. Villa
  - B. Portico
  - C. Geoglyph
  - D. Colonnade

## Answers

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1. C
2. B
3. C
4. C
5. B
6. B
7. B
8. A
9. A
10. B

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## Explanations

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## 1. What is the function of bioswales in landscape design?

- A. They serve as decorative features without functional purpose
- B. They provide habitat for large animal species only
- C. They manage stormwater runoff by filtering pollutants and promoting water retention
- D. They are used solely for irrigation purposes

Bioswales play a crucial role in sustainable landscape design primarily by managing stormwater runoff. Their design often includes gentle slopes, vegetation, and soil layers that work together to filter pollutants from water as it flows through them. This process not only improves water quality by capturing sediments and toxins but also promotes water retention, allowing it to infiltrate into the ground rather than overwhelming storm drains or flowing directly into water bodies. This is essential for reducing the risk of flooding and minimizing the impact of urban development on natural water cycles. In addition to their functional benefits, bioswales contribute to the aesthetic appeal of a landscape. They can enhance the biodiversity of an area by providing habitat for various plant and animal species, but their primary focus is on stormwater management rather than solely serving as decorative elements or solely for irrigation purposes. This makes them an invaluable feature in contemporary landscape architecture.

## 2. Who is considered the "father of landscape architecture"?

- A. Andreas Palladio
- B. Frederick Law Olmsted
- C. Thomas Jefferson
- D. Daniel Burnham

Frederick Law Olmsted is regarded as the "father of landscape architecture" largely due to his pioneering contributions to the field and his influential designs that established foundational principles of landscape architecture. His work in the mid-to-late 19th century emphasized not only the aesthetics of landscapes but also their social and environmental impacts. Olmsted is best known for co-designing Central Park in New York City, which exemplified the integration of natural landscapes into urban settings, promoting public health and recreation. Olmsted's design philosophy advocated for the creation of functional open spaces that catered to community needs, reflecting a deep understanding of human interaction with the environment. He believed in the transformative power of landscape design to improve societal conditions and enhance quality of life, ideas that resonate strongly in contemporary landscape architecture practice. His comprehensive approach and successful realization of large-scale projects positioned him as a leading figure in the field, inspiring future generations to prioritously consider both environmental and social aspects in their designs. This visionary mindset and influential body of work are why he is celebrated as a foundational figure in landscape architecture.

3. What is one of the main tools landscape architects use for planning?

- A. Mechanical engineering software
- B. Land surveying instruments
- C. 3D modeling and design software
- D. Public speaking skills

One of the primary tools landscape architects rely on for planning is 3D modeling and design software. This technology allows landscape architects to create detailed representations of landscapes and environments that can incorporate various elements such as topography, vegetation, and structures. By using 3D modeling, professionals can visualize the project more effectively, allowing them to experiment with different design scenarios, assess spatial relationships, and convey their ideas to clients and stakeholders clearly. The use of 3D modeling software enables enhanced communication, as visual representations often facilitate better understanding than traditional 2D plans. Furthermore, these tools can simulate how designs will look and function over time, which is especially important in landscape architecture, where factors like growth and seasonal change play significant roles in design outcomes. This capability is crucial for ensuring designs are not only aesthetically pleasing but also functional and sustainable in the long term.

4. Which is NOT a design characteristic of the temples of Mentuhotep II at Karnak, Egypt?

- A. One of the earliest processional axes
- B. Temples built into a rock face
- C. Golden triangles atop linear columns
- D. A high square colonnaded platform with a sycamore lined forecourt

The temples of Mentuhotep II at Karnak, a significant architectural achievement of ancient Egyptian civilization, are characterized by several notable design elements that reflect their cultural and religious importance. One distinctive feature is the use of a high square colonnaded platform with a sycamore lined forecourt. This design not only served a functional purpose for processional activities but also created a visually impressive entrance that emphasized the grandeur of the temple complex. Additionally, one of the early examples of a processional axis is found in these temples, which guided worshippers through a ceremonial path toward the holy spaces. Such axial design is essential in ancient Egyptian architecture as it often leads to the sanctum, reinforcing the spiritual journey of the worshippers. However, the claim regarding "golden triangles atop linear columns" does not apply to Mentuhotep II's temples. This particular design characteristic is more commonly associated with temples and architectural styles that emerged at a later date or in different contexts, rather than the structures from this specific era. The temples at Karnak utilized other decorative and structural techniques that were innovative for their time but did not include this specific feature of golden triangles on columns. Thus, option C stands out as not being representative of the architectural characteristics of Mentuhotep II's temples.

5. What significant contribution did Frederick Law Olmsted make to landscape architecture?

A. He exclusively designed residential gardens

B. He popularized the concept of public parks in America

C. He focused on urban high-rises

D. He introduced sustainable designs

Frederick Law Olmsted's significant contribution to landscape architecture is that he popularized the concept of public parks in America. He is best known for his design of urban parks that emphasized the importance of green spaces for public health, recreation, and social harmony. His most notable projects include Central Park in New York City, which he co-designed with Calvert Vaux, as well as other parks that aimed to create an oasis of nature within urban environments. Olmsted understood that public parks served as vital spaces for community interaction, leisure, and escape from the industrialized hustle of the cities. His vision helped instill the idea that parks were essential for urban settings, thereby laying the groundwork for the park systems we see in cities across the United States today. This notion helped to transform public attitudes towards shared green spaces and ultimately influenced urban planning and landscape architecture significantly. Other options are not aligned with Olmsted's primary contributions; he did not focus solely on residential designs, urban high-rises were not part of his work, and while sustainable practices are important today, Olmsted's work was primarily about the social and aesthetic value of public parks. His influence continues to resonate with landscape architecture, emphasizing the importance of design in enhancing quality

6. What city was the most important oracle center in the classical Greek world?

A. Rome

B. Delphi

C. Athens

D. Miletus

Delphi was the most important oracle center in the classical Greek world, renowned for its association with the god Apollo. The site housed the Oracle of Delphi, where priestesses known as Pythia delivered prophecies and guidance to individuals and city-states seeking divine insight. The significance of Delphi stemmed not only from its religious importance but also from its role in facilitating communication among Greek city-states, serving as a neutral ground for political negotiations and cultural exchanges. Delphi's geographical location was symbolically and physically pivotal, situated on the slopes of Mount Parnassus, which was believed to be the center of the earth in ancient Greek mythology. The Delphic oracle was widely consulted, even influencing major decisions such as the foundation of colonies and military strategies. This established Delphi as a central hub of spiritual and political activity, effectively making it the preeminent oracle of the period.

7. Which landscape architect is associated with the concept of “landscape as infrastructure”?

- A. Frederick Law Olmsted
- B. Kate Orff
- C. Lawrence Halprin
- D. Gustafson Guthrie Nichol

The concept of “landscape as infrastructure” is closely associated with Kate Orff, who is recognized for her innovative approach to landscape architecture that integrates ecological and social aspects within urban environments. Orff’s work emphasizes how landscapes can function not just as aesthetic spaces but as essential infrastructure that supports ecological systems, stormwater management, and community engagement. Her projects often incorporate the idea that landscapes can contribute to urban resilience and sustainability, acting as vital components of the infrastructure that support urban life. This perspective challenges traditional views that separate landscape from the functional roles it can play within urban settings. In contrast, while Frederick Law Olmsted is known for pioneering the field of landscape architecture and creating iconic parks focused on natural beauty and public health, his work doesn’t specifically frame landscape as infrastructure. Similarly, Lawrence Halprin is celebrated for his expressive designs and public spaces that prioritize human experience rather than viewing landscape primarily as infrastructure. Gustafson Guthrie Nichol is recognized for their work in artful landscapes and public spaces but does not primarily focus on the infrastructure aspect that Orff emphasizes.

8. What concept signifies that within the larger sanctity of nature, some locations are especially sacred?

- A. Spatial Hierophany
- B. Animism
- C. Peristyle
- D. Topos

The concept that signifies that within the larger sanctity of nature, some locations are especially sacred is known as Spatial Hierophany. This term describes the phenomenon where certain places become imbued with spiritual significance due to their distinctive characteristics, history, or cultural associations. These locations are often regarded as thresholds — spaces where the sacred and the profane meet, allowing for a deeper connection between humanity and the divine or transcendent aspects of nature. Spatial Hierophany emphasizes the recognition of special places within the broader context of natural landscapes. This perspective is rooted in various cultural beliefs and practices that honor the connection between specific sites and their spiritual or historical meanings. By acknowledging these key locations, individuals and societies can attribute value, reverence, and purpose to particular natural features, enhancing the cultural landscape. The other options reflect different concepts. Animism pertains to the belief that objects, places, and creatures possess a spiritual essence, but it does not specifically address the notion of certain locations being particularly sacred within the vastness of the natural world. A Peristyle refers to a row of columns surrounding a space, especially in classical architecture, and lacks the spiritual connotation tied to sacred landscapes. Topos refers to a specific place or location but does not inherently carry the

9. What design approach emphasizes continuity with the existing natural environment?

- A. Biophilic Design
- B. Modernist Design
- C. Minimalist Design
- D. Postmodern Design

Biophilic Design is a design approach that emphasizes continuity with the existing natural environment by incorporating natural elements and processes into architectural and landscape design. This philosophy acknowledges the innate connection humans have with nature and strives to enhance this relationship through design. By integrating aspects such as vegetation, natural light, water features, and organic materials, the built environment becomes more harmonious with its surroundings. This approach promotes not only aesthetic value but also psychological well-being and environmental sustainability. In contrast, Modernist Design often focuses on functionalism and the rejection of ornamentation, which can sometimes lead to a disconnect from the natural world. Minimalist Design prioritizes simplicity and reduction, which may overlook the richness of natural ecosystems. Postmodern Design, although eclectic and context-sensitive, may not prioritize the continuity with the natural environment in the way that Biophilic Design explicitly does. Thus, Biophilic Design stands out as the most relevant approach when considering a strong emphasis on merging design with the existing natural landscape.

10. Which architectural feature is primarily characterized by a roof structure over a walkway supported by columns?

- A. Villa
- B. Portico
- C. Geoglyph
- D. Colonnade

A portico is an architectural feature defined by its roof structure that extends over a walkway and is supported by columns. This design element serves both functional and aesthetic purposes, providing shelter from the elements while also creating a visually appealing entrance to a building. Porticos have historical significance and can often be seen in classical architecture, enhancing the grandeur of structures such as temples and civic buildings. In contrast, while a villa refers to a type of country house, and a geoglyph describes large designs created on the ground, neither directly involves a roofed walkway supported by columns. A colonnade consists of a series of columns arranged in a row, often supporting a roof or entablature, but it does not necessarily imply a distinctive roof structure over a walkway like a portico does. Thus, the defining characteristics of the portico make it the correct answer in this context.