



Q: Are there graduate dorms or off-campus dorms available?

A: there is on-campus housing as well as off-campus. The on campus is more expensive but also more convenient. Most of our students live off-campus.

Q: Could you speak to Weitzman's community engagement in the greater Philly area?

A: UPenn is super huge in community engagement within the philly area! as an MCP student, we are constantly studying different areas of Philly and interacting with the community in various ways. for example, for one of my courses we have to understand a philly neighborhood so i was able to get to know residents. and i also volunteer with a local nonprofit focused on housing. the sky is the limit and there are many resources at Penn to help connect you with the community! also check out Penn praxis

Q: MLA What distinguishes UPenn's program from its competitors?

A: I did not apply to the Berkeley or Harvard programs, but did review them as well have had others in our program discuss. The biggest difference I have found is that our department chair is extremely available and will do anything to help you out and respond quickly to any criticisms or issue we as a class might bring up. I will also say that Penn's program, while it is rigorous and can be competitive, the students all are collaborative and build each other up as opposed to some conversations I have had from other programs where the competitiveness has gotten in the way of their work and experience. I will say if you have specific interests you are trying to pursue, finding professors and coursework that match those is key to having a fulfilling time, especially with the amount of time devoted to grad school.

Q: Do you have any tips for the essay?

A: For the essay/letter I would say focus on your passions and how that will influence your interests in school be that research, papers, community work, etc. Really give a clear impression of your journey, skills, and interests. It's the perfect opportunity for you to talk about you.

Q: For an MLA student: What did it mean to you landscape architecture before you started the program? Has your perception changed?

A: when I started landscape architecture, I had parks and plazas in mind and the general design of green space in cities. Since being in the program I have come to see landscape as more than that. Now I see it as green infrastructure to handle flooding, sea level rise, food concerns, and a contributor to larger environmental systems. Landscape occurs and can be designed at so many scales and impact a wide range of environmental concerns. And it doesn't just have to be about plants! Landscape can incorporate and address energy, building standards, and lifestyles in the way it's designed

Q: What is student life like? Can you speak about clubs, activities or other things that happen outside of study/class time?

A: Student life at Penn is pretty diverse. There are a lot of things you can get involved with. There are many student organizations that you can be a part of (Women in Design, Inclusion in Design, Design in Latin America, etc.) Outside of class time is definitely what you make of it. Many students usually join things their second semester here due to trying to get adjusted. I am involved in two organizations here at Penn and it has connected me with people across different disciplines and it lets you find out what the other programs are doing.

Q: I plan to apply the Master of Urban Planning and would like to pursue a dual degree in Social Work. Will I need to apply to these programs separately or later in my studies? The dual degree does not appear as an option in the application. Thanks!

A: you would need to apply to each separately. Once you're admitted to both, you can work out your curriculum with the two Chairs.

Q: I was wondering how would you describe the studio culture within Weitzman? Also, can you speak a little bit about interdisciplinary between graduate students?

A: at Weitzman, MARCH students have their own desk in a larger studio space, and most students are always working in studio. It is a very collaborative environment, and there are many opportunities to take classes in other fields (landscape, real estate, etc.) -- there's also options for dual degrees and certificate programs!

Q: I'm interested in the Time Based Media Certificate-- wondering if there's any funding available to students in that program, and if the cost of tuition is the same as master's degree Students

A: For the TBIM certificate you CAN apply if you are NOT currently a Penn student, however there is no financial aid available for stand-alone certificate programs. The tuition for the certificate would be the same as our master's tuition- it is charged per CU, which is around \$7,000 per CU. So, if the certificate mandates 2 CU's (just an example) then the cert would cost \$14,000. Again, these numbers are just examples, one CU (including fee) is just over \$7,000 . If you are already a Penn student and decide to pursue the certificate it would NOT cost you any additional money. As a Penn student you would simply use your electives to take the coursework for the certificate.

Q: what kind of scholarships are available for MFA in fine art is there possibility for full funding and/or tuition waiver?

A: all master's applicants are considered for scholarships, though very few are offered full tuition. Our scholarships generally range from \$5,000-\$40,000, and for MFA, the determination is usually most focused on your portfolio. To clarify, the scholarships are for each year of your program.

Q: Are MCP students able to obtain fellowships and research assistantships?

A: we offer scholarships to master's degree students and also research and teaching assistantships

Q: Hello, I am looking at the MFA program and was wondering if you could clarify what you are looking for me to demonstrate specifically in my portfolio. i.e.: the process versus finished pieces

A: The faculty admissions committee wants to see your best work, so generally this is finished pieces. But if process is a large part of your practice than perhaps you should include that. The decision is yours.

Q: What are some tips for approaching the application portfolio?

A: you want to put your very best work in. We're not interested in the progress that you've made but want to see your skills and creativity.

Q: what opportunities exist outside of class to focus on transportation in the Sustainable Transportation and Infrastructure Planning?

A: there are a ton of opportunities with transportation. there are students who have internships with SEPTA (our public transit system), there is a transit club, and the city always taps UPenn for transportation studies/help.

Q: I'm also curious about the joint MLA/MFA, have you had many students do that? How do they manage that class load? If anyone has done that, I would love to get their contact info so I could ask them some questions. Thanks!

A: we have 2 students in the dual MFA/MLA program. You should contact Ken Lum to see if he can get you in touch with the students: kenlum@design.upenn.edu

Q: I'm interested in the PhD program in City and Regional Planning. Are there any current PhD students that I can contact?

A: you should write to Kate Daniel katf@design.upenn.edu, she is the Coordinator in City Planning and can see if she can give you the name and contact info of one of our PhD students.

Q: MFA I want to study design in grad school, but I am a studio art student and I do not have a design portfolio, can I still apply, or this won't work for me.

A: Yes, you can absolutely apply! Many of our MFA students are studio artists

Q: I am about to apply for March Program, but I am a studio art major for now. Are there any suggestions for portfolio?

A: that's great you're looking at architecture. Your portfolio is a demonstration of your work and the skills you've obtained throughout your studies in undergrad. Just show your best work and really try to tell a story with it! I'm sure you'll do great!

Q: Hi there, I'm applying to the MCP program and have a few questions: 1) What are the opportunities in this program to pursue coursework or internships internationally? 2) Can you speak to what distinguishes the Penn MCP from other MUP/MCP programs? 3) What programming is put in place to support cohesion between students outside of class? 4) Would you say the MCP focuses more from a design or policy lens? Thanks!

A: 1) there are opportunities across the university to travel internationally, we also have international studios, and you can do an international internship. 2) professors REALLY care and they want to see you

succeed, various disciplines, multiple studios, this program is def for practitioners 3) there are many student clubs, we have multiple social media accounts, and you will almost always be with your cohort of peers 4) we are a mix of both, just depends on your concentration...we also have varying degrees of design/graphics skills as well

Q: MLA - I am from Canada and am wondering if Weitzman puts a cap on how many international students that are accepted into each program?

A: No, we do not

Q: MCP - how often have you had students do a dual MBA/MCP program?

A: We have one or two each year generally

Q: MLA -Are there any exchange programs?

A: There aren't any exchange programs for MLA. There are interdisciplinary travel studios typically in your final year. There is also externship program for winter and spring break which helps students get short internships at architecture and landscape firms which are all over the US.

Q: I am interested in applying for PhD in Urban Planning. How many students do you take in a year?

A: we have about 3 to 5 new PhD students in City Planning per year.

Q: MLA - how many students typically apply every year and how many are accepted to the 3 year program? And how many 2 year vs 3 year students are there in each class typically?

A: we have about 300 applicants to the MLA program per year and have about 25 entering students.

Q: MLA-if I wasn't admitted to the program in the first place, will I have a chance to transfer to UPenn and how? If there's a place to direct to it will be even better! Thanks!

A: we do not allow transfers at the graduate level. You could still apply, but you would still complete the full program. The only accommodation is that you would not have to re-take courses that you've already taken if the faculty feel equivalent content was covered in your prior coursework, but you just replace waived courses with an elective, it wouldn't shorten the length of the program.

Q: MARCH- What makes a strong portfolio?

A: your portfolio is a demonstration of your work and a chance for you to show the review board the skills you've obtained. Just tell the best story with an interesting layout and you will be fine! It is always good to have someone else review it so it could be helpful to get some peer reviews as well

Q: MArch- Is it possible to get in touch with a current student that entered the program without a background in architecture

A: you can contact students from the emails listed under <https://www.design.upenn.edu/meet-our-students>

Q: PhD, City and Regional Planning- Are there any students I can contact?

A: please contact Kate Daniel at katf@design.upenn.edu, she is the Coordinator of the Department and can put you in touch with a PhD student.

Q: do you have room for electives in your schedule as a dual degree student?

A: there is some room for electives I believe about 2-3 credits worth. That is then split between your two degrees. If you can waive out of some of the earlier fundamental classes, then you can have more electives. I would speak with coordinators early if that is your intent upon being accepted

Q: I am majoring in philosophy right now and want to do MLA program. Do you have tips for making my portfolios strong for a person without design background?

A: you will need to put some creative visual work into your portfolio. Any fine arts, design, etc. that you have. The portfolio is a very important component of your application.

Q: is there a possibility for someone to come to the art program as full bright visiting/resident artist

A: we have had Fulbright scholars as students in our programs. But where you ultimately go to study as a Fulbright Scholar is heavily determined by which Fulbright program it is - each country has different rules for their Fulbright programs.

Q: MArch - How large is the program? How many students are accepted per year and is there a breakdown of background and non-background students? Thank you

A: We look to bring in a class of around 65 each year. The class is usually 25% non-background and 75% with a background

Q: How is the studio culture in MLA? @Carolina, can you tell us a little about your experience as a study

A: I have found studio culture, especially if you work with your classmates in creating a good group dynamic is exceptional here. You become pretty close with your classmates and higher up students are great at giving advice and sharing their expertise. Is there anything in particular you are interested in knowing more about, regarding the culture?

A2: studio culture is super friendly! It's a great environment to learn from others and collaborate. These are people I hang out with outside of class and love talking to. There are so many unique backgrounds as well which really helps in teaching and working on the unique assignments we are given.

Q: PHD, City and Regional Planning- Your website states that PhD students would be automatically considered for full funding. Is there anything else from my side I need to send as I would be an international student?

A: you should check on the application that you wish to be considered for financial aid.

Q: Do you all encourage applying even if we think we're not good enough to get in?

A: I didn't think I'd get in and I did! I second what Carolina said!

Q: MSHP, could you elaborate on scholarship and financial aid determination?

A: the MSHP program will consider you on merit and need. They will look at your test scores, GPA, personal statement, and letters of recommendation for the merit side, and FAFSA info for need.
Zoe Goldman: MLA - How much is the GRE score weighted in an applicant's chance of getting in? Because i have spent my past 4 years in a creative faculty, i am struggling a bit with the standardized testing aspect of the application.

Q: MFA - How many students are accepted per year? Thank you

A: Usually we accept 15 students per year

Q: mla - how does UPenn prepare you to practice as a professional?

A: I came in with a good bit of professional experience before, but many of my classmates had different backgrounds or little experience. The workshop courses do a great job introducing key aspects of professional work and there are a number of resources both inside the school and university wide that can help build your technical skills. From a conceptual standpoint, aesthetics, drawing and modeling skills, you will be well prepared to enter most firms. Plus, internship placement is very high here so the experience you get working over the summer really helps.

Q: MArch - How large is a typical first year studio section? Thank you

A: we have 6 sections this year with about 12 people per section. So, you get a lot of face time with professors :)

Q: do most MFA students have an undergraduate degree in fine art or is it okay to be cross disciplinary? My degree was in political science, but it heavily influences my artwork

A: we have MFA students from all different backgrounds!! in fact, one of our current MFa student ambassadors comes from a background in business

Q: march- what are the first year studios like?

A: the first year studios are basically your core studios. The first year is used for getting the students on the same page in terms of modeling software, architectural vocabulary, and just kind of best practices especially for those who don't have a design background. It's the Penn fundamentals and your both sites for your first year are here in Philadelphia. Your 501 studio works closely with the Penn Museum and 502 is working in a neighborhood in NW Philadelphia

Q: Is there a minimum GRE requirement for admission? How heavily will scores be weighted?

A: We do not have cut-off scores, but we suggest a minimum of 160 Verbal, 148 Quantitative, and 4.5 for Analytical Writing.

Q: MArch/MLA - what does Weitzman do for students' wellness and mental health?

A: There are occasionally wellness days which include yoga, massage, open discussion. There are also happy hours almost every Friday which encourage people to take a break and talk with others in the design school they may not have class with. The University has a Counseling and Wellness center that you are free to use as needed. Honestly, it's up to you to work on balance. I have found if you are direct and clear with your professors and make plans that don't include school work 24/7 and do include studio friends going out to have fun you'll do well.

Q: MLA - Are there a lot of opportunities to TA? How much could that help offset the cost of tuition?

A: Yes, there are! Each department handles TA-ships differently so you would need to reach out to MLA directly at landarch@design.upenn.edu for more info.

Q: what is considered a strong GPA...?

A: we suggested a 3.3 or higher, but it really depends on the strength of the other materials as well because it is a holistic review.

Q: are there any on-campus job opportunities for international students?

A: there are on campus opportunities for international students, many students conduct research with professors and others even stay on to work with different research centers on Penn's campus over the summer

Q: MFA - How many students are accepted per year? Thank you

A: we look to bring in a class of around 15 MFA students each year

Q: MUSA-MCP- if you are applying for dual program, is it possible to be accepted into only one?

A: yes, your applications are reviewed separately by different faculty admissions committees for each program, so you could be admitted to just one of the programs to which you apply.

Q: MArch- what is the acceptance rate for non architectural backgrounds?

A: about 1/3 of our entering MArch class does not have an architecture background.

Q: M. ARCH- going along with Elizabeth's question; the school I got my undergraduate education at is more technical than some portfolios I see, how would U Penn view this? I have done quite a bit of artwork and independent studies; would you include this in the portfolio? Thank you!

A: I think showing diversity in your portfolio is always a plus. Think of it as a repertoire of your experiences in undergrad. Technical work is always good to include, but also feel free to share your

artwork and more design-oriented material. It is a design field, and professors are interested in seeing how you think about design!

Q: What is the average time to complete a PhD at UPenn and what is the pool size of applicants? I want to get an idea of the acceptance rate for PhD program.

A: I would say it's about 5 years to complete the PhD.

Q: Still curious if anyone could give me some insight on what would be expected in a portfolio for someone applying to the MLA who hasn't studied design or planning – Thanks

A: generally, we would suggest any work that is visual in nature, especially work which shows 3D spatial understanding. People often will include freehand drawings, construction projects, paintings, photography. It really depends what visual art experience you have.

Q: and how many students typically apply for MCP a year, and how many are in an entering class?

A: about 350 apply to the mCP program and we like to see about 65 entering students.

Q: How large is the applicant pool?

A: about 350 to 400 apply to MArch, it varies year to year.

Q: MLA - What's your favorite course so far and why?

A: I really like the Workshop classes. These classes take you out into the field to see firsthand working landscapes. You'll learn to identify plants, contour signatures, technical details in structure. It'll help you understand just how much work your designs require and how the results may turn out. It's a really wonderful grounding experience!

A2: Wow that's hard to answer, my favorite studios have been our fall introductory studio and 601 regional studios. There are so many great electives too that integrate other disciplines like implementation of urban design or terrains of wetness which uses printmaking as a medium

Q: MCP - how easy would it be to take electives across schools? For instance, if I was interested in certain business classes would that be doable?

A: very easy! you need 19 credits to graduate, and 15 must be planning but you have 4 others that you can choose from. also, some courses are cross enrolled which give you wiggle room. def possible! as for business electives, yes you can take them at Wharton however many courses only reserve a limited number of seats to cross enrollers. so, def doable!

Q: MCP - echoing Marielle's question, also interested in opportunities to take electives in business classes/Wharton and to understand how many students typically pursue MCP/MBA dual degree, and if there is anything we should consider specifically for our application(s) if aiming to apply to that dual degree.

A: you can take classes at Wharton if you would like. Many students take classes at Wharton but the chances of getting in do not increase if you are already in the planning program at Penn. We currently have two students doing the dual degree with Wharton.

Q: march- how many spots are there in the program?

A: there are about 70 slots in MArch each year.

Q: What software are necessary for MLA? Anything that you recommend learning?

A: you'll use Rhino, Grasshopper, GIS, and the Adobe suite (Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign) and some video editing tools. If you know these it'll help but you will also be taught this software throughout the program so no worries if you're new or a little rusty!

Q: How many applications are received every year for PhD City and Regional Planning? What is the acceptance rate?

A: about 65 applicants to PhD CPLN. We admit 3 to 5 new students per year.

Q: how many applicants do you typically have for the MFA program, and how many are accepted?

A: a bit over 100 apply each year for 15 spots

Q: MLA - Can I include projects from my current job at a landscape architecture firm? These would include planting plans, construction details, and grading plans - to show a more technical side of my knowledge that may not be present in my work from my undergraduate design degree.

A: Yes absolutely! My recommendation would be to try and convey both a broad range of technical and conceptual skills in your portfolio so I wouldn't exclusively show just technical skills. You should also ensure you have permission to use that work from your firm. I would also say that creative work that isn't directly associated to LA is also great too. I had photography, sketching, and painting samples in my portfolio along with my professional work. Consider creating a narrative and using that as your outline to show yourself off! @Aaron this also might answer your question!

Q: Is the march rhino and grasshopper heavy?

A: In general, yes. Rhino is used for all major modeling but depending on what studio you're in can influence how much grasshopper you use. There is a required course you take your first year here that will introduce you to grasshopper and how you can implement it into your studio projects, but generally it depends on your professor. Other modeling software will trickle into the design curriculum over you're the course of your time here.

Q: Ph.D. Program, People who are interested in Ph.D. needs to contact a professor before application?

A: I strongly recommend it. Which PhD program are you interested in?

Q: Is the MFA considered a post-professional degree?

A: No, a master's in fine art is generally the terminal degree in that field

Q: what do the application reviewers look for when reading letters of recommendation?

A: That the reviewer can speak to your abilities as a prospective candidate

Q: For MFA portfolios, can we submit both photos and videos? (20photos+5videos) Or we only can choose one format

A: you can submit BOTH images and videos. please read over our how to apply page under the portfolio section as it gives detailed information on how to submit such a portfolio:

<https://www.design.upenn.edu/graduate-admissions/how-to-apply>

Q: For the MSHP, how many applicants do you have per year, how many are accepted, and how large is each incoming class? Thank you!

Joan Weston: G Laster, they want to see your strengths, how you interact with others, what type of learner you are, etc.

A: we usually have about 50 applicants for 15-20 spots. It's a fairly self-selective program/field.

Q: MLA - Are there a lot of opportunities to TA? How much could that help offset the cost of tuition?

A: yes, there are opportunities for TAs. They are usually offered to second year students and beyond. The process is by an application process at the end of the year for the following year positions and are based on the professor's needs, how well the student has done in the class they would TA, and the needs of the department. Typically, I would say, it does help for added revenue during the semester, but they are paid monthly during the semester you TA, so Penn doesn't do tuition remission or waiver for their teaching assistantships.

Q: If we've been working professionally for >5 years we can plan to include two professional recommendation letters, correct?

A: this is correct, however the faculty admissions committee do like to see two academic references, so perhaps include two professional and two academics (we will accept 4 letters)

Q: M. Arch - How would you describe the networking/internship/job opportunities at U Penn? Can you tell me about any alumni experiences?

A: Penn has amazing networking opportunities. Every year we have a career fair where we have various firms from various locations coming in to look at resumes and work samples. We also started doing externship programs where you can use your winter and spring breaks to work at firms around the area and usually those aid in leading to a summer internship (not always a guarantee). Our faculty also plays an important role in networking. The majority of faculty are practicing architects and can link you to job opportunities or even the opportunity to work for them at their firm.

Q: Who can we contact for further discussion w.r.t. PhD in City and Regional Planning?

A: you should contact Kate Daniel at katf@design.upenn.edu to see if she can find a student who would be willing to correspond with you.

Q: what does U Penn look for from applicants for MLA program, and does it have good financial aid for international students?

A: for the MLA application, the portfolio is the most important material for admission and scholarship determination. All master's applicants are considered for the same scholarships, regardless of whether you are a domestic or international applicant. The scholarships usually range from \$5,000-\$40,000 per year and are guaranteed to renew each year as long as you are enrolled full-time and maintain good academic standing.

Q: MCP - Does the MCP program culminate in a capstone and/or thesis? What is the flexibility in doing cross-concentration coursework if we're interested in more than one concentration area?

A: 1) every student must complete studio or thesis in their second year. but each concentration has its specific requirements for a capstone project. for example, I'm a CED concentration and i have a final practicum. urban designers have a capstone studio. 2) yes, you can take courses in other concentrations. often times they fulfill multiple course requirements so it's up to you on how you want to use them

Q: Does the decision committee take things like extenuating circumstances into consideration, especially towards GPA?

A: If a GPA is lower than our suggested minimum, they will look at your GPA against your GRE score. We also suggest including extenuating circumstances in your personal statement.

Q: I have a master's degree that I completed part time and due to that didn't form close relationships with the faculty. Is it ok to have my two academic references be from undergrad?

A: yes, you can use undergrad recommenders.

Q: MLA-what would you say being the most important quality being a landscape architect?

A: are you asking about the profession in general or what makes a good applicant here for Penn?
- I think both. As a good applicant, for sure there is creativity, but I come from a non-design background, is there any difference between applicants with design background? As well as a profession in general.
Thank you!

Q: march-What do you love most about the program?

A: I love the environment the most. Its very discussion based and you're free (for the most part) to express your own ideas and define yourself as a designer. I also love all of the different organizations available to join and the lecturers the program brings in to speak with us.

Q: How many applicants are typically in MUSA, and how many students are accepted? Is it a disadvantage for an applicant to not have strong GIS or data analysis experience?

A: we have 65 applicants and about 15 to 20 new students per year. It is more difficult to take the courses if you do not have a GIS background but there are surely students that do it. When I was in an intro class, at least four students did not have an analytic/GIS background

Q: I am making a career change and new to planning. I've been out of school for about 6 years. Would recommendation letters from employers suffice or should I reach out to a professor from undergrad?

A: if you can get at least one from undergrad, that would be great. You can submit up to 4 letters of rec.

Q: MCP - what are some of the things recent grads are doing now in their careers?

A: Penn planning students go to a lot of different firms. We have many students work with large engineering firms like WSP and AECOM, transportation consulting firms like Fehr & Peers and Nelson Nygaard, real estate developers, city governments, state governments, hospitals etc. this is the survey for alumni from the school in 2018 :

https://www.vpul.upenn.edu/careerservices/files/CAREER_PLANS_REPORT.pdf

Q: After taking the MLA degree, is it possible to work abroad since the degree/license might not work there?

A: We have faculty and staff who work internationally or have done projects outside of the U.S. You won't be licensed after you graduate, that is a separate process through ASLA. With that being said, it really is dependent on what firm you are trying to work for, how long, if they consider your degree (which most areas will) as sufficient for practice. If it's something you are interested in doing when you are here, there are plenty of people the department could get you in touch with. There are a number of students who have taken time off to work international in Oslo at Snohetta, Vogt in Berlin, etc.

Q: what is the suggested minimum for gpa and gre?

A: we suggest a minimum GPA of 3.0 and gre of 160 Verbal, 148 Quantitative, and 4.5 for Analytical Writing

Q: PhD, CPLN - Could you provide me with a list of the faculty who are willing to take up students for PhD?

A: i would suggest that you contact Genie Birch, elbirch@design.upenn.edu, the Chair of the Graduate Group and explain your interests to her. She can then recommend specific faculty to you.

Q: MArch - if you haven't taken physics yet, where would you recommend one take it? I am in Hong Kong at the moment and it's a bit difficult to find a course at a university

A: many of our students will take an online course to fulfill this requirement. If you are uncertain on whether or not the course will fulfill the requirement you can email the course description archprer@design.upenn.edu. the most popular online physics course that is pre-approved is through Straighterline: <https://www.straighterline.com/online-college-courses/sciences/general-physics-i/>

Q: And if one needs to have word with the professor for PhD City and Regional planning, Prof. Eugenie L. Birch would be the person to contact to. Right?

A: Correct.

Q: MSD-RAS & MSD-AAD - How many students are taking these programs right now??

A: there are about 40 to 50 in AAD, but RAS is new so no numbers yet, but we hope to have about 12 students in that program.

Q: Would you say it's challenging or a disadvantage for MCP students if we haven't worked with GIS or other technical programs for several years (since undergrad) or at all?

A: not at all! depending on your concentration, you're required to take a course in GIS. and you can always deepen your knowledge as you'd like. def online learning portals to learn other tech skills, but most importantly, you will learn a ton from your peers!

Q: What is the suggested minimum gpa and gre for PhD applicants in City and Regional Planning?

A: we don't have a cutoff, but we like to see a GPA of 3.3, gre of 160V, 148Q and 4.5 Analytical writing

Q: march- what kind of student-faculty culture is present?

A: each professor is different and approaches the studio in a different way. It's nice that the studios are smaller (around 11 to 12 students) so it gives you the chance to have more one-on-one discussions with your professor and it's nice because the studio can become more intimate and your professor can really get to know you. The studios your first year are 4 hours so it gives you plenty of time to also know your professor and give you the confidence to take risks and in return be genuinely critiqued. It's an open floor studio set up so you can also see what the other studios are working on and hear other critiques.

Q: MLA-what is the key you are looking for in the personal statement? Is there a need to demonstrate understanding of landscape architecture? for non-design background applicant is it still important to link connection to this field?

A: Your personal statement is just that, personal. It's the opportunity for you to discuss why you are pursuing a masters in landscape architecture, what's interesting about the profession, why Penn is the school for you (i.e. if faculty or the department has particular focuses you are interested in pursuing), and for you to convince the selection committee that you would be a great addition to the incoming class.

Q: the essay prompt on the application asks for as much specificity as possible for future area of study. how critical is this aspect? how specific should we get?

A: you WILL be applying to graduate school, so the faculty are going to assume that you have somewhat of a focus. You should describe what your interest in studying your field here at the Weitzman School of Design.

Q: MLA – Who and/or what projects are your biggest touchstones or that are major touchstones in your studies?

A: if I understand your question correctly, you are curious about specific milestones within the program. If you are pursuing the three year program, the first year is about developing an understanding of landscape architecture and fundamental tools and concepts about the profession. You also work at smaller scales, like the path, and the park, in general. The second year is about considering regional implications of design especially how it relates to planning, policy, and other systems landscape architects engage with. These are more regionally based and urban design studios. The third and final year is where your opportunities open up with elective studios where you can choose what scales and topics you want to work to round out your education. You also have a lot of opportunities for electives the final year. Theory, workshop, and media course are intermixed into the curriculum to build your technical and conceptual skills and are directly correspond to the studio content of each semester

Q: PhD, CPLN - Do I need to mention the professors am interested to work with in the Statement of Purpose?

A: it is a good idea!

Q: MCP - The program offers six concentrations. Will some concentrations be more competitive?

A: no, some concentrations are not more competitive than others. I would choose the one that you are most passionate or interested in.

Q: march- what gpa/gre do you prefer from your applicants? Also, how many projects do you recommend including in the application portfolio?

A: we prefer 3.3 GPA and GREs of 160V, 148Q, and 4.5 A.W. These are guidelines, not cutoffs. The portfolio is the most important part of your MArch application. I would say AT LEAST 5 projects.

A2: you shouldn't think of "filling up" the portfolio, but rather create a document with your best work. So, it isn't about the number of projects but more about the quality of the work. You could do between 4-6 projects as long as they display your best work.

Q: Since the MCP non-UD concentration application doesn't require a digital portfolio, what would you say is the most important part of the application? Is there anything you'd suggest we highlight about our professional work as a stand-in for the type of information a portfolio would provide?

A: i would say all of the components are important, but the best way to showcase you is through your personal statement. make sure that reflects who you are and your skills!

Q: MCP- Since I am transitioning into the field, is there anything specific I should highlight in my personal statements? I am currently an art teacher but have a background in architecture

A: i too was a transitioner! i would say tell your story in your personal statement. you should be as authentic as possible, and just narrate how you got to urban planning. it's really a field that prides a diversity of thinkers and backgrounds.

Q: are there students over 35 in your mfa

A: Yes!

Q: March- Do I have to define my role within a group project on my portfolio? If yes, how would I do so?

A: yes, you should put a little bit of text next to the project explaining your role. The point of your portfolio is to demonstrate your skills, so you wouldn't want to be taking credit for something you didn't do. You can specify in your table of contents "in collaboration with..." and then on your project spread you can annotate the different roles

Q: MCP - Since I work full-time, I haven't been able to visit the campus for open houses. Will there be any offered next spring or is it possible to visit/meet with current students or admissions representatives on weekends? Also, is there anything we should specifically anticipate/prep for the video interview?

A: yes, will have an open house in the spring! stay tuned for the date. and nope, you cannot prepare! they will ask you a question and you will have a few seconds to answer in the most authentic way.

Q: MLA - Are there resources you would recommend for getting some ideas of good portfolio layouts?

A: Issu is a good place to start. Google. Look around at your colleagues' portfolios. Ultimately make the portfolio your own. Even look at print materials layouts books, magazines, posters... consider graphic layouts and what shows or explains your work best

A2: - I will also say that process drawings and illustrations that show how you worked through projects or works are very compelling because they show a level of competence. We are constantly told to ensure our process work is included in portfolios

Q: I developed a plug-in to operate robot through Rhino grasshopper. Will it help me apply these programs?? Link : <https://www.food4rhino.com/app/rfdrobotic-fabrication-design>

A: I would imagine so. You could contact the Directors, Ali Rahim (AAD) at alir@design.upenn.edu or Robert Stuart-Smith at rsmith@design.upenn.edu.

Q: MLA- For portfolio: If we have projects that express strong conceptual thinking but are not our best technical work should we scrap them for a work that shows more technical competence like an observational drawing?

A: no! Drawings and work that showcase all types of thinking and skill levels should be incorporated.

Q: is the interview more of a background/behavioral interview, or more like a case study/issue topic interview? If you can answer :)

A: i cannot say bc the chair comes up with the questions but if i remember, they were more background/personal

Q: People who wants to enter a Ph.D. program need a research experience or school prepare research based people

A: you probably should have some kind of research experience, this would be helpful, and they will want to see a writing sample.

Q: March- How does the process of letter of recommendations work? Do professors typically write a different letter for each school you've requested to or do they send out a blanket letter?

A: it really depends on the professor. It's always helpful if it's tailored specifically to the school that you're applying to.

Q: march- what is the work-life balance like at Weitzman?

A: it really depends on your ability to manage your time, but generally speaking the first semester is quite intense. You get a better sense of how to organize your time further on. I'm in my first semester, so we are definitely crammed, but I still make time to explore the city or pursue my hobbies!

A2: it is what you make it. Most often the first semester is mainly focusing on school and then as you go through, they become more involved in different organizations. Personally, I am a second year MARCH, I'm the president of a student organization, I'm a member of student council, and a student ambassador. I love being involved with all of these things, but it can make the work-life balance complicated sometimes. You'll get the hang of managing your time and you'll learn all of the ways you work best. We also offer different ways for you to escape the work world with yoga and happy hour!

A3: It is what you make it. I make time to go to the gym, volunteer at a PAWS (a local animal shelter) once a week, go to lectures and events, have a once a week "break" to catch up on house chores, juggle one to two jobs, apply to internship/externships, sometimes join competitions/volunteer work.... Ultimately, it's about scheduling and making time for what you care about. Not every week will be glamorous and some weeks you won't have time for anything but school/sleep/eating. You just keep planning and tweaking your schedule to work for you.

Q: What's your favorite thing about Philly?

A1: the food!

A2: the open spaces and parks!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

A3: though I'm not a student, my favorite thing about Philly is that there are so many different neighborhoods which each have their own atmosphere, attitude, things to do, etc. And you can get around very easily. I personally live right on one of the West Philly trolley lines and can get downtown in 15 minutes.

Q: That's a wonderful explanation on the milestones, and it is very helpful in understanding the progression through the program. You and Joan should save that snippet. I was more leaning toward people and projects from LA or ancillary fields that serve as your inspiration or that you might explore through classes, e.g. William Whyte, Kongjian Yu, the 606/High Line, etc.

A: thanks, there are a number of fields that the MLA draws inspiration from, Fine Arts, Planning, Pol Sci, Environmental Sciences, History, etc. The theory courses in particular use outside resources such as these. Depending on what interests you are pulling in to your studio work, you can and should consider other fields as inspiration. LA+ is our professional publication that is intended to be interdisciplinary

and pulls experts across so many fields. You will also explore case studies in many studios thoroughly which help bring in other designers work and their theses/conceptual basis

Q: Dual degree- I am applying for the M. Arch and City Planning program, should I do two different portfolios?

A: this is up to you. you can submit two different portfolios or the same portfolio to each application

Q: MLA - Why did you choose UPenn over the other schools you got into (if any)?

A: it felt right, i loved my chair, the professors were personal, and i knew i would walk away with a toolkit of practical skills

A2: UPenn gave me the opportunity to study both degrees in tandem. Some of the other schools I applied to had a more divided degree track or an odd apply/reapply process in order to study both tracks. I also felt like Penn had the best balance between design and technical. My undergrad was plenty abstract, and I appreciated the balance Penn has.

Q: do you encourage appendices to the march portfolio? Such as photography, etc.

A: as long as you keep it to 20 pages...

Q: MCP- what is your least favorite thing about the program and how do you work with/around it

A: my least favorite thing is the lack of common spaces for planners. Architects and Landscape architects have studios where they can all interact and get closer while planners do not unless they are taking a studio course. Fortunately, we have happy hour frequently at Weitzman

A2: least favorite is the general feeling of first year "overwhelmingness" of always being with your peers (ex class, group work, etc.). everyone is so excited to mingle, and you feel conflicted about not wanting to miss out on things, but you def have to find a balance. the overwhelming feeling dies down, but def establish boundaries and develop a work/life balance. self-care is important!

Q: is there a student journal? for MLA?

A: LA+ is a professional magazine the department produces which students assist in producing graphics and layouts for. However, you'd have no input on the articles. CLINE is the best example of a student MLA journal. It's a fun short piece format. Babble Mag is a student publication more for architecture but I'm sure you could apply to it and contribute.

Q: is the portfolio max 20 spreads or 20 pages?

A: it's 20 pages or 10 spreads