

Competencies Assessment

This assessment of competencies includes seven years of teaching LAEP 3120 Studio, Land Planning for Residential Development, from 2011 to 2017. Students in LAEP 3120 work in the development of six competency groups:

- Natural Systems
- Cultural Systems
- Design and Planning Theory
- Site Design and Engineering
- Communication
- Technologies

The assessment of competency achievements was done by a group of external reviewers who had access to the final presentation documents and determined the level of competency achieved for each project and the overall achievement of that class. Their scores were aggregated in an average score to create the charts in this report.

Seven-Year Summary by Competency Category

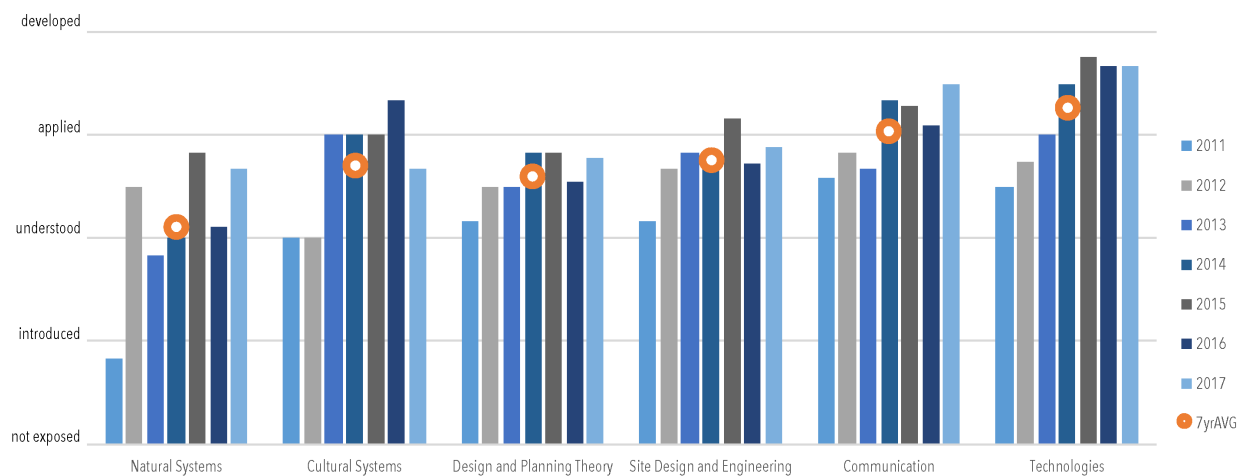


Chart 1 shows how the score for each competency group has change over the years. Each one of these competency groups is formed by specific competencies described in more detailed charts (see Figure 3). The circle in each group indicates the average score for the seven-year period. In general, students show higher achievements in every competency group in more recent years. The last couple of years indicate slight variations but within range of the higher level achieved over the years. In the

first two years, competencies were mostly at the understanding level. For the last years a majority of competencies scored more closely to the application level.

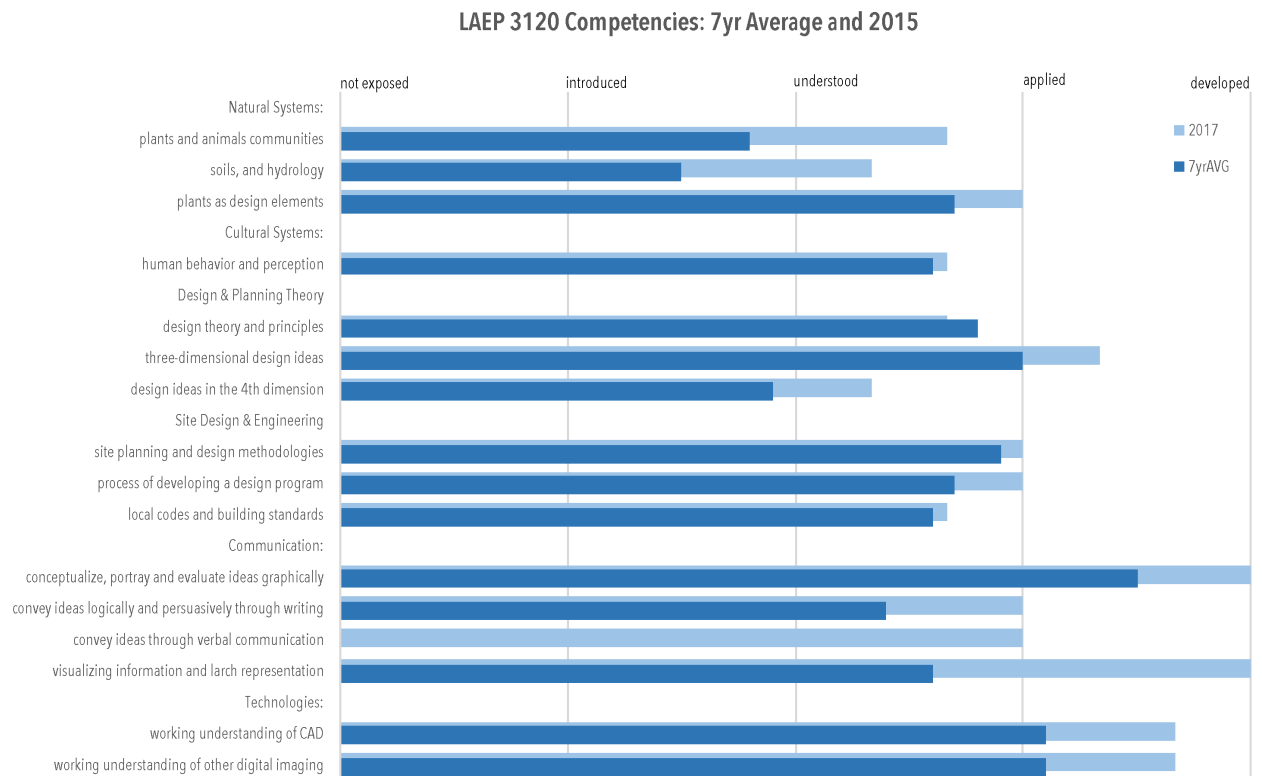


Chart 2 compares individual seven-year average scores with the 2017 scores (in lighter color). With one exception, the 2017 scores show how each individual competency is at level or higher than the seven-year average. Specific strategies are suggested to continue improving student learning:

- For Natural systems competencies: Make explicit in project descriptions the need to demonstrate specific consideration for plant communities as well as hydrologic and soil conditions adequate to the site and proposed changes. More use of plants as design elements need to be explicitly required in projects assigned to advance this competency to the application level.
- Cultural Systems Include course material and examples to make a clear connection between design proposals and the possible effects on human behavior (advance this competency closer to application level)
- Design and Planning Theory For this competency group, the projects need to require graphic and written descriptions of design approach and emphasize process and concept development with sound theoretical background. This should move this competency group beyond the application level. Additional discussion and reading materials should help students understand better the implications of time and change in design decisions

- Site Design and Engineering Projects need to continue requiring clear application of site planning and design principles and understanding of local codes.
- Communication This category needs to improve the method of documenting how students develop their verbal, written and visual communication. Each year includes public presentations and they need to be documented in a better way for future assessments. In addition, more examples and exposure will increase students understanding different means to convey ideas through visual and verbal ways.
- Technologies Continue supporting students use of technology in the studio.



Chart 3 shows individual charts by competency group. Each chart displays individual scores for each competency for each year. The line graph in each chart indicates the average score for each competency group for each year.

Assessment scores show that most of the student competencies rank between the understanding and the application level. This means the BLA students have developed, from previous studios, enough competencies at the understanding level that allow them to move forward and advance their competencies to higher levels. This improvement is more evident in the last years of the assessment. The challenge for this course is to maintain the levels achieved in 2014 and 2015. The challenge for the Senior level studios is to make sure the students are presented with opportunities to achieve competencies from application to fully developed levels.