

National Architectural Accrediting Board, Inc.

August 1, 2014

Dr. Renu Khator  
President  
Office of the President  
University of Houston  
212 E. Cullen Building  
Houston, TX 77204-2018

Dear President Khator:

At the July 2014 meeting of the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB), the directors reviewed the Visiting Team Report (VTR) for the University of Houston, Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture.

As a result, the professional architecture program **Bachelor of Architecture** was formally granted an eight-year term of accreditation.

This new, maximum term of accreditation was approved by the NAAB in March 2013 and put into effect for all decisions made after July 1, 2013.

The accreditation term is effective January 1, 2014. The program is scheduled for its next accreditation visit in 2022.

Continuing accreditation is subject to two reporting requirements.

First, all programs must submit an Annual Statistical Report (see Section 10 of the NAAB *Procedures for Accreditation*, 2012 Edition, **Amended**). This report captures statistical information on the institution and the program.

Second, any program that receives an eight-year term of accreditation is required to submit an *Interim Progress Report* two years after a visit and again five years after the visit. This requirement is described in Section 11 of the 2012 NAAB *Procedures*. The next statistical report is due November 30, 2014; the first interim progress report is due November 2016.

Finally, under the terms of the 2012 *Procedures for Accreditation*, programs are required to make the Architecture Program Report, the VTR, and related documents available to the public. Please see Section 3, Paragraph 8 (page 22), for additional information.

The visiting team has asked me to express its appreciation for your gracious hospitality.

Very truly yours,

  
Shannon B. Kraus, FAIA, NCARB, MBA, FACHA  
President-elect

cc: Patricia Belton Oliver, FAIA, Dean ✓  
C. William Bevins, FAIA, Visiting Team Chair

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**University of Houston  
Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture**

## **Visiting Team Report**

**Bachelor of Architecture (160 undergraduate credit hours)**

### **Master of Architecture**

**Track I (undergraduate degree + 97 graduate credit hours)**

**Track II (pre-professional degree + 60 graduate credit hours)**

**The National Architectural Accrediting Board  
2 April 2014**

*The National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB), established in 1940, is the sole agency authorized to accredit U.S. professional degree programs in architecture. Because most state registration boards in the United States require any applicant for licensure to have graduated from an NAAB-accredited program, obtaining such a degree is an essential aspect of preparing for the professional practice of architecture.*

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## I. Summary of Team Findings

### 1. Team Comments & Visit Summary

The Team appreciates the contributions made by the Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture administration, faculty and staff to our accreditation visit experience. The team room roadmap organization was thoughtfully prepared with graphic exhibits, project models, and course binders arranged with order and clarity, enabling the Team to effectively review information without the burden of searching. The visit was not only effective, but enjoyable for the Team as well.

The Team found the leadership of the College of Architecture to be passionate about architectural education and the reputation the college holds within the greater Houston area. There are strong connections between the program, its alumni and local practitioners as evidenced by the number of distinguished practicing architects and educators that serve the college as visiting lecturers, critics and advisors on its various leadership committees. Having a larger contingent of adjunct faculty from the Houston architectural community serves to reinforce the relationship between the college and the Houston community.

The Team was particularly impressed with the student body and its leadership. Students were articulate, engaging, and respectful – respectful of the Team but also of each other. The student meeting was a reminder of how refreshing mutual respect is, and can be. Differing opinions were expressed on various issues, but each individual was allowed to express themselves with confidence that their opinions were important and valued to the betterment of the whole. Once engaged students were eager to participate in the discussions.

The Team found the importance of modeling as a tool for investigation and presentation to be evident throughout both the B Arch and M Arch programs. The College of Architecture is very proud of its long heritage in the art of “making” as a critical element in the design process. Students are exposed to modeling early in the curriculum, developing sensitivity to art of model making that over time is simply inherent to their work process and design solutions.

Other Team observations:

- The College of Architecture has a relatively new Dean who understands the history of the college but is also committed to exploring potential for new sensibilities and opportunities in perpetuating and advancing the school’s mission, relevance, and recognition moving forward on the strengths of a strong history only. The senior administrative staff appears united behind the Dean’s vision; however, efforts to change are not always easily accomplished.
- The B Arch initiated significant curriculum changes as a result of the college’s last NAAB accreditation visit. While the changes have been implemented, the full effect is still being digested by the faculty and students.
- Based upon bullet points above the Team considers the programs at the college to be in a state of transition; far along, but still on the path.
- The college has a large adjunct faculty from the Houston area, many of whom are University of Houston graduates, resulting in the tendency is to teach “the way I was taught.” During discussions, the Dean recognized the importance of infusing diversity into the teaching cohort but also acknowledged the challenges.
- The University of Houston is solidly behind the College of Architecture. The Team found the Senior Vice Chancellor to be genuinely interested in the college, its standing within the architectural community in the Houston area, and the important role the college’s graduates will play in shaping the future built environment locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally. She understood the unique problems of pedagogy in architectural education and expressed the desire that other colleges within the University of Houston

academic system would model their approach to problem solving in as creative a manner as the architecture faculty.

- The physical facilities at the College of Architecture are among the best that any member of the Team had experienced, offering students the opportunity to openly interact around a four-story atrium in the Hines building, as well as do hands-on welding in their spacious freestanding Keeland Design Exploration Center. While the students did not recognize the importance of their facilities, the Team certainly did!

The educational environment at the Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture is well-established with a long and distinguished history; however, the Team felt the college was in a period of transition. While a new Dean with a new vision, combined with significant changes in the B Arch curriculum, does not appear to have impacted the quality of the education, the school is nonetheless in a period of challenge. The college has a strong foundation and the Team was confident the challenges were not impacting the educational outcomes expected by the NAAB.

The strengths of the Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture are its student body, administrative leadership and faculty. Students are thoughtfully educated, possessing impressive design and communication skills; both necessary credentials to meet the architectural challenges in contemporary society.

**2. Conditions Not Met**

B.3.Sustainability – B Arch

B.4.Site Design – B Arch

B.7.Financial Considerations – B Arch, M Arch

C.1.Collaboration – B Arch

**3. Causes of Concern**

**a) Site Accessibility:**

While the Team found that the program had made great strides within the physical building in resolving the Accessibility “Not Met” criterion from their 2008 accreditation visit, evidence of the ability to resolve site accessibility remains weak. The majority of studio projects were situated on flat sites, essentially devoid of topographical considerations. The Team had great difficulty determining if students were able to resolve the difficulties of ramping and other accessibility issues associated with site design. During discussions students acknowledged they had little experience dealing with site accessibility concerns. This applies to both the B. Arch and M. Arch programs.

**b) Applied Research:**

Research skills were evident in student work; however, the level of understanding of the information was not evident. With immediate access to information on the web, students easily cut and paste information, pictures, and graphs that are appropriate to their research but do not show evidence they understand how the information correlates to their specific tasks or informs their design decisions. The Team is also concerned that information accessed from the web was not given appropriate credit for the source making it difficult for the Team to determine original student research and design from data pulled from reference sources.

**c) Requirements of IDP:**

There was little evidence that students were broadly aware of the requirements of IDP and even less evidence within the faculty. The requirements of IDP have changed significantly in recent years. When questioned, only the leadership of the various student organizations seemed to be aware of these changes. All students need to be made aware of IDP, its significance to licensing, and how they can begin in school to earn their credits.

- d) **Studio Culture Policy:**  
When questioned, students responded with vague knowledge of their Studio Culture Policy. Students are made aware of the Studio Culture Policy at the beginning of each year and this appears to be the extent of their knowledge and/or involvement with the policy. Faculty had even less knowledge of the Studio Culture Policy history, or the content their specific policy. The intent of the Studio Culture Policy was that it would be a living document, modified by the student body and faculty as appropriate to the learning environment with the college.
- e) **Program Recognition:**  
Students expressed frustration that they had little opportunity to participate in design competitions and/or other types of occasions that would give appropriate credit to the level of student work that they feel is deserved. The Team found it refreshing that the students were proud of their architectural education and thought it equal to other programs, especially within the State of Texas. The faculty and program administration are encouraged to embrace the students' enthusiasm and make every effort to elevate the College of Architecture at the University of Houston. When mentioned to the Senior Vice Chancellor during the exit interview she indicated the university administration was solidly behind the student's desire and would support their endeavors as appropriate.

#### 4. Progress Since the Previous Site Visit (2008)

**2004 Criterion 13.14, Accessibility:** *Ability to design both site and building to accommodate individuals with varying physical abilities*

**Previous Team Report (2008):** Even though the programming course shows exposure to ADA regulations, this criterion is not met at the level of ability as demonstrated in the design work.

**2014 Team Assessment:** In reviewing the Previous 2008 Team Report there is no specificity in identifying whether Criterion 13.14, Accessibility was found to be deficient in the B Arch or M Arch, or both. The 2014 Visiting Team reviewed both programs for deficiencies and found that Criterion 13.14, Accessibility, is now met in the B. Arch and M. Arch programs.

**2004 Criterion 13.20, Life Safety:** *Understanding of the basic principles of life-safety systems with an emphasis on egress*

**Previous Team Report (2008):** Undergraduate Architectural Programming and Building Regulations (Arch 4344) covers life safety systems with an emphasis on building egress including code requirements for fire-rated elements of the design. However, students' understanding of egress is not born out in their studio projects in Arch 5501 and Arch 4500 where egress doors at grade do not swing in the direction of the path of egress.

In the masters graduate program proper egress is not demonstrated in a majority of the studio projects in Architecture Design Studio III (Arch 6603) and Design Studio V (Arch 7600). Many egress stairs when they arrive at the ground level do not have doors that swing out in the direction of travel and some even exit through occupied spaces.

**2014 Team Assessment:** The Team found Criterion 13.20, Life Safety, is now met in the B. Arch and M. Arch programs.

**2004 Criterion 13.26, Technical Documentation:** *Ability to make technically precise drawings and write outline specifications for a proposed design*

**Previous Team Report (2008):** Students have the ability to draw technical sections and other technical drawings with proper callouts and notes. However, the Team was unable to find any documentation of outline specifications for coursework (4501, 4344) as defined by the Construction Specifications Institute (CSI) Divisions. The outline specification requirement is defined in the project description, but we were unable to find the work done by students at the undergraduate or graduate levels (6601, 6602, 6360).

**2014 Team Assessment:** The Team found Criterion 13.26, Technical Documentation, is now met in the B. Arch and M. Arch programs.



## II. Compliance with the Conditions for Accreditation

### Part One (I): INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT AND COMMITMENT TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

#### Part One (I): Section 1. Identity and Self-Assessment

##### **[X] The programs have fulfilled this requirement for narrative and evidence**

**2014 Team Assessment:** The College of Architecture's APR, prepared as a precursor to this 2014 accreditation visit, described in detail the history and mission of the University of Houston. Founded eighty-six years ago, the University of Houston today is a major public research and teaching institution, serving more than 39,800 students annually. U of H has nearly 300 undergraduate, graduate, and professional degree programs in 12 colleges. The university was recognized in 2010 as a Carnegie-designated Tier One public research university, one of four universities in the state of Texas so recognized.

The Team enjoyed rich conversations with the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs in which she reinforced the university's role within the greater Houston urban area. U of H regards itself as the vehicle that can identify and respond to the economic, social, and cultural challenges affecting the quality of life within the city of Houston, the state of Texas and the world through its education, research and service.

A degree program in architecture was first established at the University of Houston in 1945 as a small department within the College of Engineering. In 1954 the Bachelor of Architecture program was accredited by the NAAB and in 1955 the architecture program was elevated to college status. The Master of Architecture program was accredited in 1978.

*"Making is not simply an action or a craft, but a form of critical thinking"* is the program mission of the Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture and it is at the core of every student's studio work. The college enjoys a long and rich tradition of faculty and students that embrace this mission, producing studio projects that are thoughtfully developed, carefully crafted and finely exhibited.

The College of Architecture is a highly regarded member of the U of H academic family and considered a critical component as the university endeavors to meet the challenges of local, regional and global vision.

#### **1.1.2 Learning Culture and Social Equity:**

- *Learning Culture: The program must demonstrate that it provides a positive and respectful learning environment that encourages the fundamental values of optimism, respect, sharing, engagement, and innovation between and among the members of its faculty, student body, administration, and staff in all learning environments both traditional and non-traditional.*

*Further, the program must demonstrate that it encourages students and faculty to appreciate these values as guiding principles of professional conduct throughout their careers, and it addresses health-related issues, such as time management.*

*Finally, the program must document, through narrative and artifacts, its efforts to ensure that all members of the learning community: faculty, staff, and students are aware of these objectives and are advised as to the expectations for ensuring they are met in all elements of the learning culture.*

- *Social Equity: The accredited degree program must provide faculty, students, and staff—irrespective of race, ethnicity, creed, national origin, gender, age, physical ability, or sexual orientation—with a culturally rich educational environment in which each person is equitably able to learn, teach, and work. This includes provisions for students with mobility or learning*

*disabilities. The program must have a clear policy on diversity that is communicated to current and prospective faculty, students, and staff and that is reflected in the distribution of the program's human, physical, and financial resources. Finally, the program must demonstrate that it has a plan in place to maintain or increase the diversity of its faculty, staff, and students when compared with diversity of the institution during the term of the next two accreditation cycles.*

**[X] The programs have demonstrated that they provide a positive and respectful learning environment.**

**[X] The programs have demonstrated that they provide a culturally rich environment in which in each person is equitably able to learn, teach, and work.**

**2014 Team Assessment:** To ascertain the effectiveness of the college's learning culture policies, students conduct annual student surveys that address a breadth of issues, ranging from the amount of homework required for courses to the perceived treatment of students in the studios/classrooms. Course evaluations are collected each semester for every course. The evaluations also provide insight into teaching practices and whether course expectations are in line with the students' ability to accomplish the work.

All searches for faculty or staff contain a required University of Houston affirmative action statement. College search policies also require that search committees consist of faculty and students that represent a fair distribution of gender, ethnicity, and rank.

The Office of the Provost posts all policies regarding fair hiring practices as well as equitable treatment of students with disabilities. The Faculty Handbook, the Student Handbook, and the Staff Handbook all publish policies pertaining to equitable treatment, governance, honesty and grievance.

The university recently instituted a system-wide policy requiring provisions for students with disabilities to be included on course syllabi.

The college provides and maintains a College of Architecture Faculty Handbook which is regularly updated (last revision 2012.). The Faculty Handbook contains the By-laws for the college that dictates committee structures and other governance issues. The Team was able to observe first-hand how the college facilities equitably accommodated the disabled students enrolled in the program.

The college's Studio Culture policy is distributed to students at the beginning of every academic year. The policy outlines the guiding principles that govern the learning environment and academic life within college; however, students were vague in their knowledge/understanding of the policy or its importance.

See **Causes of Concern** specifically for the Studio Culture Policy.

***1.1.3 Response to the Five Perspectives:*** *Programs must demonstrate through narrative and artifacts, how they respond to the following perspectives on architecture education. Each program is expected to address these perspectives consistently within the context of its history, mission, and culture and to further identify as part of its long-range planning activities how these perspectives will continue to be addressed in the future.*

- A. Architectural Education and the Academic Community.** That the faculty, staff, and students in the accredited degree program make unique contributions to the institution in the areas of scholarship, community engagement, service, and teaching.<sup>1</sup> In addition, the program must describe its commitment to the holistic, practical and liberal arts-based education of architects

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<sup>1</sup> See Boyer, Ernest L. *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*. Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. 1990.

and to providing opportunities for all members of the learning community to engage in the development of new knowledge.

**[X] The programs are responsive to this perspective.**

**2014 Team Assessment:** The University of Houston has developed a set of strategic initiatives that inform the trajectory of the College of Architecture. The initiatives fall into four broad categories of arts, energy, health, and student skill. The college has worked to weave the strategic objectives into their offerings in scholarship, community engagement, service and teaching.

Addressing Institutional Scholarship. Over the past four years the College of Architecture has been proactive in elevating its participation with the Honors College. Student SAT scores of college students have been trending upwards and the population of students participating in Honors College activities has increased. Evidence of success in participation is represented by College of Architecture students earning the "Best Thesis Award", the Undergraduate Research Award", and the "Provost's Undergraduate Research Scholarship."

Community Engagement, This has been one of the college's longstanding strengths and continues to expand in scope. The Community Design Resource Center has numerous partnerships which significantly contribute to the public debate on the role of architecture and good design catalyzing community change. These partnerships provide evidence in meeting mission objectives which are to "serve the public interest through design, research, education, and practice focused on enhancing the livability of Houston's communities." Consistent with this work is the continued advancement of community engagement through the Graduate Design Build Program, currently in its 25<sup>th</sup> year.

The College recently completed a Memorandum of Understanding with Texas A & M Sea Grant to form the Urban CORPS. The Urban CORPS is intended to become the larger umbrella under which CDRC and other community-based efforts would live. Partnering with Sea Grant allows the college and university to mimic the model established for the Land Grant Universities by introducing into the urban context the same field operations to use Professors in Practice to work with urban communities to determine the nature of the research to be accomplished.

The Team found **Architectural Education and the Academic Community** at the College of Architecture to be exceptional and deemed this Condition to be **"Met with Distinction."**

- B. Architectural Education and Students.** That students enrolled in the accredited degree program are prepared: to live and work in a global world where diversity, distinctiveness, self-worth, and dignity are nurtured and respected; to emerge as leaders in the academic setting and the profession; to understand the breadth of professional opportunities; to make thoughtful, deliberate, informed choices and; to develop the habit of lifelong learning.

**[X] The programs are responsive to this perspective.**

**2014 Team Assessment:** Architecture students are involved in leadership at many levels within the college, ranging from the representative level among their various student and professional organizations to participating on several college administrative committees. Student professional organizations include AIAS, Alpha Rho Chi and the Student Council. Administratively they are represented on the Steering Committee, Student Grievance Committee, Undergraduate Committee and the Graduate Committee. Participation in the student organizations and on the various administrative committee's with the college help to prepare students to live and work as leaders within their social/professional environments.

In addition to leadership opportunities, students are fortunate to attend one of the most diverse universities in the United States, a natural reflection of the diversity within the city of Houston.

- C. Architectural Education and the Regulatory Environment.** That students enrolled in the accredited degree program are provided with: a sound preparation for the transition to internship and licensure within the context of international, national, and state regulatory environments; an understanding of the role of the registration board for the jurisdiction in which it is located, and; prior to the earliest point of eligibility, the information needed to enroll in the Intern Development Program (IDP).

**[X] The programs are responsive to this perspective.**

**2014 Team Assessment:** Students begin exposure to the context of licensure in their first semester in both the B Arch and M Arch programs. Licensure is then revisited many times in the curriculum, but is specifically covered in ARCH 5360/6360, Practice of Architecture. The College of Architecture believes:

“Participation in professional practice is encouraged for all faculty. As a professional program preparing students to enter a licensed profession, the faculty has a responsibility to maintain currency in the profession.....”

Within the context of this philosophy, students benefit in their knowledge of what it takes to become an architect. During student meetings with the Team an overwhelming majority expressed a desire to be practicing architects and were aware of the transition steps necessary to achieve their goal of licensure. Many were employed as summer interns by local Houston architectural firms, reinforcing their exposure to the regulatory environment of the architect.

Additionally, the College of Architecture has a very large component of adjunct faculty from the Houston architectural community, affording students mentoring relationships and an opportunity for open dialog with practicing architects.

- D. Architectural Education and the Profession.** That students enrolled in the accredited degree program are prepared: to practice in a global economy; to recognize the impact of design on the environment; to understand the diverse and collaborative roles assumed by architects in practice; to understand the diverse and collaborative roles and responsibilities of related disciplines; to respect client expectations; to advocate for design-based solutions that respond to the multiple needs of a diversity of clients and diverse populations, as well as the needs of communities and; to contribute to the growth and development of the profession.

**[X] The programs are responsive to this perspective.**

**2014 Team Assessment:** Student work, both graphic and narrative, provides evidence of understanding these precepts. The local architecture community interacts with the College of Architecture in several ways; as adjunct faculty, visiting critics and employers of U of H students. Students show leadership and entrepreneurial skills through their participation in university and public sector enterprises. The diversity of the student population and allied academic programs provide daily opportunities for collaboration and preparation for professional practice.

- E. Architectural Education and the Public Good.** That students enrolled in the accredited degree program are prepared: to be active, engaged citizens; to be responsive to the needs of a changing world; to acquire the knowledge needed to address pressing environmental, social, and economic challenges through design, conservation and responsible professional practice; to understand the ethical implications of their decisions; to reconcile differences between the architect's obligation to his/her client and the public; and to nurture a climate of civic engagement, including a commitment to professional and public service and leadership.

**[X] The programs are responsive to this perspective.**

**2014 Team Assessment:** Students enrolled in the College of Architecture have many opportunities to be active, engaged citizens within the various schools' administrative/committee structure as well as the community focused offerings within the school curriculum. The Community Design Resource Center (CDRC) is one of several programs available where students work with faculty to initiate and foster partnerships to address development and design in low-to-moderate income communities within the greater Houston area.

Working with community, neighborhood and non-profit groups around Houston, the Center's mission is to serve the public interest through design, research, education, and practice focused on enhancing the livability of Houston's communities. Over the last eight years the CDRC has partnered with 28 community-based and non-profit organizations to complete 22 design projects. These partnerships have significantly contributed to the public debate on the role of architecture and good design in catalyzing community change.

The Graduate Design-Build Studio is another example of community focused program where students design and construct site-specific solutions to climate influenced building problems for regional non-profit organizations, Graduate students have the opportunity to see their ideas evolve from initial conception to completed construction, demonstrating at full scale the implication of the students' aspirations while measuring the quality of the design thinking against the rigorous standards of the built reality.

In addition to the CDRC and Graduate Design-Build Studio, many studio projects in both the undergraduate and graduate programs concentrate on projects that serve the community. During the fall of 2011, two ARCH 7600 graduate studios worked closely with community groups in the Alief, Golfcrest/Bellfort/Reveille, Greenspoint, and Mid-West Houston super-neighborhoods to produce strategic plans as part of the Collaborative Communities Design Initiatives.

Outside of the classroom, students participate in "Freedom by Design" sponsored by the school's AIAS chapter. Freedom by Design regularly takes on projects that provides design and constructions services to physically challenged individuals.

***1.1.4 Long-Range Planning:** An accredited degree program must demonstrate that it has identified multi-year objectives for continuous improvement within the context of its mission and culture, the mission and culture of the institution, and, where appropriate, the five perspectives. In addition, the program must demonstrate that data is collected routinely and from multiple sources to inform its future planning and strategic decision making.*

**[X] The programs processes meet the standards as set by the NAAB.**

**2014 Team Assessment:** Since the arrival of the new Dean in 2010 the college has been engaged in a continual review and re-evaluation of its curricula and curricular structures. In the summer of 2010 a "Curriculum Task Force" was formed to review existing curriculum and to make recommendations on how the school could better integrate its technology sequence into design studio projects at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Final recommendations from the Task Force were submitted to the Undergraduate Committee for approval and implemented in 2011.

The College of Architecture has a Strategic Planning Committee that concentrates on long-term curricular development while their Undergraduate and Graduate Committees examine issues related to their curriculum and overall program effectiveness. Additionally the college has a Steering Committee that addresses issues of governance and oversees the College By-laws. The college is committed to ensuring that its planning process includes consideration of the NAAB's five perspectives in all its new initiatives and any program changes in direction.

To ensure a process of continual institutional effectiveness, the University Office of Institutional Research and Institutional Effectiveness requires that IE (Institutional Effectiveness) plans reflect the desired student learning outcomes for each academic program, and the annual IE planning process provides an opportunity to document that data has been collected along with the findings from data analysis. IE documentation also includes any curricular changes or program decisions have been made in response to the data findings.

***1.1.5 Self-Assessment Procedures:*** *The program must demonstrate that it regularly assesses the following:*

- *How the program is progressing towards its mission.*
- *Progress against its defined multi-year objectives (see above) since the objectives were identified and since the last visit.*
- *Strengths, challenges and opportunities faced by the program while developing learning opportunities in support of its mission and culture, the mission and culture of the institution, and the five perspectives.*
- *Self-assessment procedures shall include, but are not limited to:*
  - *Solicitation of faculty, students', and graduates' views on the teaching, learning and achievement opportunities provided by the curriculum.*
  - *Individual course evaluations.*
  - *Review and assessment of the focus and pedagogy of the program.*
  - *Institutional self-assessment, as determined by the institution.*

*The program must also demonstrate that results of self-assessments are regularly used to advise and encourage changes and adjustments to promote student success as well as the continued maturation and development of the program.*

**[X] The programs processes meet the standards as set by the NAAB.**

**2014 Team Assessment:** Each year the Dean prepares an annual report for the college identifying updates on goals set by the Dean and the various faculty committees, as well as providing a snapshot of the college's overall progress. The annual report is shared with faculty, students, and friends of the college.

The Student Council organizes a student survey annually. The survey is broad in its inquiry, covering a breadth of issues from course offerings/effectiveness to student services and student life. Utilizing the student survey offered immediately after recent curricular and structural changes allowed the college to gain insight from the students' perspective of the impacts of the changes.

Town hall meetings are organized by the Student Council each month. The Dean, Assistant Dean and Associate Dean meet with students to hear their concerns and answers questions.

The University requires each college to maintain an Institutional Effectiveness Plan for each degree program within the colleges. The College develops its plans through the Associate Dean, for undergraduate programs, and the Co-Directors for the graduate programs. Directors of programs are asked to prepare plans for the individual degrees. The plans are reviewed and refined in the Undergraduate Committee and the Graduate Committee, respectively. The plans are submitted to the University, where they are reviewed by a committee that makes recommendations for improvements before implementation.

#### **Undergraduate Self-Assessment**

In addition to University of Houston's required Institutional Effectiveness plans, the undergraduate program continually reviews the curriculum, primarily through their Undergraduate Committee. The committee evaluates all of the college's undergraduate programs, discussing options and pathways for improvement. Ad hoc committees are formed to investigate issues, and making changes to curricula as necessary. The Undergraduate Committee currently has an ad hoc committee reviewing

the success and weakness of the latest undergraduate curriculum changes in the architecture program.

**Graduate Self-Assessment**

Master Projects, required as the “capstone” project for every graduate student seeking a professional degree, have been designated as a key area for self-assessment as part of continuous improvement efforts in the graduate program. External evaluators review every single Master Project for the following criteria: Concept, Design, Graphics, Relevance to Discipline, and Technical Proficiency. After review Master Projects are given a rating of Excellent, Acceptable, Unacceptable, and Not Applicable.

## PART ONE (I): SECTION 2 – RESOURCES

### I.2.1 Human Resources & Human Resource Development:

- *Faculty & Staff:*
  - *An accredited degree program must have appropriate human resources to support student learning and achievement. This includes full and part-time instructional faculty, administrative leadership, and technical, administrative, and other support staff. Programs are required to document personnel policies which may include but are not limited to faculty and staff position descriptions<sup>2</sup>.*
  - *Accredited programs must document the policies they have in place to further Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action (EEO/AA) and other diversity initiatives.*
  - *An accredited degree program must demonstrate that it balances the workloads of all faculty and staff to support a tutorial exchange between the student and teacher that promotes student achievement.*
  - *An accredited degree program must demonstrate that an IDP Education Coordinator has been appointed within each accredited degree program, trained in the issues of IDP, and has regular communication with students and is fulfilling the requirements as outlined in the IDP Education Coordinator position description and regularly attends IDP Coordinator training and development programs.*
  - *An accredited degree program must demonstrate it is able to provide opportunities for all faculty and staff to pursue professional development that contributes to program improvement.*
  - *Accredited programs must document the criteria used for determining rank, reappointment, tenure and promotion as well as eligibility requirements for professional development resources.*

#### **[X] Human Resources (Faculty & Staff) are adequate for the programs**

**2014 Team Assessment:** The Human Resources available to the College of Architecture are adequate for the programs offered. Merit increases have increased already robust junior faculty salaries to levels well above the national averages for Assistant and Associate professors, although the average Full Professor salaries in the college are slightly below the national average. Upcoming voluntary retirements will alleviate the current salary compression and the initiation of an evaluation process for adjunct instructors will provide a mechanism for raising salaries through merit increases. Salary ranges for administrators seem low. Staff members' salaries seem similar to those at other public universities.

The College views faculty diversity as requisite to building a strong design school and is committed to improving the ethnic and gender diversity of its faculty. Aggressive, focused faculty hires have resulted in increasing the number of minority tenure track/tenured faculty members existing in the college, as well as more female faculty members. The seven new tenure track appointments made across the last six years have included three women, two of whom are minority faculty members. In addition there has been one male minority hire as well.

Faculty search procedures adhere to the Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action goals espoused by the University of Houston, and recent searches have had good results in bringing women and ethnic minorities onto the faculty. Faculty are supported for conference travel for paper presentations and service commitments, and paid Faculty Development leave is available to one faculty member per year. College staff members are also supported for conference travel and continuing education.

The college has published policies regarding promotion and tenure contained within the University of Houston Faculty Handbook and the Promotion and Tenure Guidelines issued by the Provost's Office. Additionally, the College's Faculty Handbook was revised in 2012 to include PTR policies specific to the college.

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<sup>2</sup> A list of the policies and other documents to be made available in the Team room during an accreditation visit is in Appendix 3.



- **Students:**
  - *An accredited program must document its student admissions policies and procedures. This documentation may include, but is not limited to application forms and instructions, admissions requirements, admissions decisions procedures, financial aid and scholarships procedures, and student diversity initiatives. These procedures should include first-time freshman, as well as transfers within and outside of the university.*
  - *An accredited degree program must demonstrate its commitment to student achievement both inside and outside the classroom through individual and collective learning opportunities.*

**[X] Human Resources (Students) are adequate for the programs**

**2014 Team Assessment:** Admission to the undergraduate program in the College of Architecture is a two-step process, the first being that students must be admitted to the University of Houston. University acceptance is based on SAT or ACT scores combined with class standing for high school applicants, or GPA for students transferring 15 or more hours. High school students also may be admitted based on a sliding scale of GPA on core courses and scores. High school students in the top 10 percent of their class are automatically admissible to the University. When students are accepted into the University their files are sent to the College of Architecture for review.

The College reviews files from high school applicants, transfer applicants without course work in architecture, transfer applicants with course work in architecture, and current UH students wishing to change their major to architecture. The College uses all the information it has available to choose those applicants who exhibit the best chance for success in architecture. Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to submit any supplementary information they believe would help explain their application directly to the College of Architecture. Such information may include, but is not limited to, examples of creative work, statement of intent letters, and letters of reference.

The College of Architecture does not consider gender, ethnicity, or age when reviewing applicants. Most applicants come from the Houston area, but many are from other states and countries. Demographics from the past few years indicate approximately 70 percent of applicants entered the College of Architecture from the Houston area; 20 percent entered from the state of Texas outside the Houston area; 7 percent were from states other than Texas; and 3 percent were international.

**1.2.2 Administrative Structure & Governance:**

- **Administrative Structure:** An accredited degree program must demonstrate it has a measure of administrative autonomy that is sufficient to affirm the program's ability to conform to the conditions for accreditation. Accredited programs are required to maintain an organizational chart describing the administrative structure of the program and position descriptions describing the responsibilities of the administrative staff.

**[X] Administrative Structure is adequate for the programs**

**2014 Team Assessment:** The Team found that the B Arch and M Arch programs are sufficiently staffed with faculty and administrative staff to appropriately administer the programs consistent with NAAB requirements. The administrative staff structure was clearly illustrated via an organizational chart included in the APR. The Dean, Associate Dean, and Assistant Dean provide effective administration over the directors, advising department, and faculty. In addition committees such as the Steering Committee, Student Grievance Committee, Faculty Grievance Committee, Peer Review Committee, Undergraduate Committee, and Graduate Committee provide useful information and deal with current situations/events.

During the entrance meeting with the Senior Vice Chancellor it was clearly explained that the University of Houston values the College of Architecture and is committed to its accreditation success, allowing the college autonomy to make changes as necessary within University guidelines to affirm that the B Arch and M Arch programs conform to the NAAB Conditions for Accreditation.

- **Governance:** The program must demonstrate that all faculty, staff, and students have equitable opportunities to participate in program and institutional governance.

**[X] Governance opportunities are adequate for the programs**

**2014 Team Assessment:** In addition to the administrative structure committees there is a Student Council that represents the students in all majors within the college, including the Industrial Design and Interior Architecture programs. The Council provides structure among students and collaborates with other student organizations within the college to provide institutional governance. The Team found sufficient evidence that all faculty, staff, and students are afforded equitable opportunities to participate in program and institutional governance.

***1.2.3 Physical Resources:*** *The program must demonstrate that it provides physical resources that promote student learning and achievement in a professional degree program in architecture. This includes, but is not limited to the following:*

- *Space to support and encourage studio-based learning*
- *Space to support and encourage didactic and interactive learning.*
- *Space to support and encourage the full range of faculty roles and responsibilities including preparation for teaching, research, mentoring, and student advising.*

**[X] Physical Resources are adequate for the programs**

**2014 Team Assessment:** Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture

The College of Architecture is located in a Philip Johnson (Johnson Burgee Architects) designed building, loosely crafted after the Ledoux's House of Education in the City of Chaux. Completed in 1986, the college's 28 year old signature home provides a generous accommodation for the programs it offers. The building has generous open studio space surrounding an expansive 4 story atrium, generous natural lighting, a lecture theater, library, gallery, computer lab, administrative office spaces, faculty offices, and numerous classroom spaces.

The Johnson Burgee building brought public life into the college, serving as the site for numerous events from symposia to exhibits, lecture programs, social occasions, and the college's graduation awards ceremony. Over time the building has been remodeled to reflect the various special needs of the college; however, the interior spaces remain effective in supporting the studio-based learning, meeting the needs of the students, faculty, and administration.

Burdette Keeland, Jr. Design Exploration Center

In addition to the Johnson designed facility, the College of Architecture enjoys the use of the Keeland Design Center where the Graduate Design/Build Studio and the latest equipment to accommodate digital fabrication projects for architecture, industrial design, interior architecture and space architecture students is housed. Located just a short walk adjacent to the architecture building, the facility provides traditional "shop" equipment and tools. The Center's digital fabrication equipment area allows students to produce objects and prototypes designed and generated on computers using 3-D software. CNC machines and rapid prototyping equipment encourage exploration of new methods for manufacturing.

Material Research Collaborative

The Materials Research Collaborative (MRC) at the College of Architecture serves as a materials resource for material discovery, innovation, instruction, and research for the 700 students at the Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture and area professionals. The MRC has developed a web-based database that catalogs the physical materials in its collection. On-going work of the MRC includes uncovering new and innovative materials, cataloging the physical samples, and researching and inputting data regarding the specific extrinsic and intrinsic properties of these materials. The MRC is also engaged in specific material research projects such as a database of local materials and carbon analysis of an office building currently under construction.

William R. Jenkins Architecture and Art Library

The William R. Jenkins Architecture and Art Library is located on the first floor of the College of Architecture building and houses a collection of approximately 125,000 books, journals, DVDs, and other research material. The collection also includes the Kenneth Franzheim II Rare Books Room, which contains treasures published in the 17<sup>th</sup> through 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.



(Four-story atrium with open studio areas on each side – students /faculty/alumni preparing for reception)

Collectively, the Team found the **Physical Resources** at the College of Architecture to be exceptional and deemed this Condition to be “**Met with Distinction.**”

***1.2.4 Financial Resources:** An accredited degree program must demonstrate that it has access to appropriate institutional and financial resources to support student learning and achievement.*

**[X] Financial Resources are adequate for the programs**

**2014 Team Assessment:** The College has a long range goal of increasing the number of graduate students to 100 while at the same time reducing the same number of undergraduates so that there is a stable overall student population.

While the College states that there are no planned changes in funding- whether increases or decreases, the College has embarked on a major fundraising drive. General consensus is that the college will have a need in the future to obtain funding from outside sources, anticipating a reduction State funding which could occur at any time in today’s financial environment.

***1.2.5 Information Resources:*** *The accredited program must demonstrate that all students, faculty, and staff have convenient access to literature, information, visual, and digital resources that support professional education in the field of architecture.*

*Further, the accredited program must demonstrate that all students, faculty, and staff have access to architecture librarians and visual resources professionals who provide information services that teach and develop research and evaluative skills, and critical thinking skills necessary for professional practice and lifelong learning.*

**[X] Information Resources are adequate for the programs**

**2014 Team Assessment:** The William R. Jenkins Architecture and Art Library is conveniently located for faculty, students and staff on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the College of Architecture and houses a collection of approximately 125,000 books, journals, DVDs, and other architecturally related research material. Hours are appropriate for all users. Access is available for all relevant data bases. Staffing of the library is adequate with all staff having personal knowledge of the University of Houston Architecture and Art programs. Collection development is curriculum-driven and the budget for library resources is sufficient to meet the demands of all program curricula.

Additionally, the library houses an extensive Kenneth Franzheim II rare book collection, containing book treasures published in the 17<sup>th</sup> through the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The library collection is anticipated to exceed current space capacity within the next few years, however, they have a contingency plan to consign older journals to the main library and expand into that vacated space.

The Team found the **Information Resources** at the College of Architecture to be exceptional and deemed this Condition to be "**Met with Distinction.**"

**PART I: SECTION 3 –REPORTS**

**1.3.1 Statistical Reports<sup>3</sup>.** Programs are required to provide statistical data in support of activities and policies that support social equity in the professional degree and program as well as other data points that demonstrate student success and faculty development.

- *Program student characteristics.*
  - *Demographics (race/ethnicity & gender) of all students enrolled in the accredited degree program(s).*
    - *Demographics compared to those recorded at the time of the previous visit.*
    - *Demographics compared to those of the student population for the institution overall.*
  - *Qualifications of students admitted in the fiscal year prior to the visit.*
    - *Qualifications of students admitted in the fiscal year prior to the upcoming visit compared to those admitted in the fiscal year prior to the last visit.*
  - *Time to graduation.*
    - *Percentage of matriculating students who complete the accredited degree program within the "normal time to completion" for each academic year since the previous visit.*
    - *Percentage that complete the accredited degree program within 150% of the normal time to completion for each academic year since the previous visit.*
- *Program faculty characteristics*
  - *Demographics (race/ethnicity & gender) for all full-time instructional faculty.*
    - *Demographics compared to those recorded at the time of the previous visit.*
    - *Demographics compared to those of the full-time instructional faculty at the institution overall.*
  - *Number of faculty promoted each year since last visit.*
    - *Compare to number of faculty promoted each year across the institution during the same period.*
  - *Number of faculty receiving tenure each year since last visit.*
    - *Compare to number of faculty receiving tenure at the institution during the same period.*
  - *Number of faculty maintaining licenses from U.S. jurisdictions each year since the last visit, and where they are licensed.*

**[X] Statistical reports were provided and provide the appropriate information**

**2014 Team Assessment:** The statistical reports required by this criterion were not included in the program APR in their entirety; however, the missing reports were identified during our Team review and provided as requested. The Team found the student and faculty demographic information to be as required by the criterion.

**1.3.2. Annual Reports:** The program is required to submit annual reports in the format required by Section 10 of the 2009 NAAB Procedures. Beginning in 2008, these reports are submitted electronically to the NAAB. Beginning in the fall of 2010, the NAAB will provide to the visiting Team all annual reports submitted since 2008. The NAAB will also provide the NAAB Responses to the annual reports.

*The program must certify that all statistical data it submits to NAAB has been verified by the institution and is consistent with institutional reports to national and regional agencies, including the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System of the National Center for Education Statistics.*

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<sup>3</sup> In all cases, these statistics should be reported in the same format as they are reported in the Annual Report Submission system.

*The program is required to provide all annual reports, including statistics and narratives that were submitted prior to 2008. The program is also required to provide all NAAB Responses to annual reports transmitted prior to 2008. In the event a program underwent a Focused Evaluation, the Focused Evaluation Program Report and Focused Evaluation Team Report, including appendices and addenda should also be included.*

**[X] Annual Reports and NAAB Responses were provided and provide the appropriate information**

**2014 Team Assessment:** Annual Reports and NAAB Responses to deficiency progress, as required by the 2009 Conditions and Procedures for Accreditation were not included in the program APR; however, the information was provided in the Team Room information. After review the Team deemed the Annual Reports and NAAB Responses acceptable.

*1.3.3 Faculty Credentials: The program must demonstrate that the instructional faculty are adequately prepared to provide an architecture education within the mission, history and context of the institution.*

*In addition, the program must provide evidence through a faculty exhibit<sup>4</sup> that the faculty, taken as a whole, reflects the range of knowledge and experience necessary to promote student achievement as described in Part Two. This exhibit should include highlights of faculty professional development and achievement since the last accreditation visit.*

**[X] Faculty credentials were provided and demonstrate the range of knowledge and experience necessary to promote student achievement.**

**2014 Team Assessment:** Faculty credentials were provided on-line prior to the visit and were available in loose leaf binder format for the visiting Team's review in the Team Room. Faculty diversity has a reasonable male-female mix as well as good blends of ethnic diversity with a vast majority having advanced degrees in architecture. They were proud of their program's heritage and expressed a willingness to meet whatever challenges that come to advance the reputation of the school within the university and the Houston geographical area. While the Team feels this criterion is met there are reservations regarding the overall number of adjunct faculty as well as the number of FTE faculty with University of Houston credentials.

See **Causes of Concern.**

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<sup>4</sup> The faculty exhibit should be set up near or in the Team room. To the extent the exhibit is incorporated into the Team room, it should not be presented in a manner that interferes with the Team's ability to view and evaluate student work.

**PART ONE (I): SECTION 4 – POLICY REVIEW**

*The information required in the three sections described above is to be addressed in the APR. In addition, the program shall provide a number of documents for review by the visiting Team. Rather than be appended to the APR, they are to be provided in the Team room during the visit. The list is available in Appendix 3.*

**[X] The policy documents in the Team room met the requirements of Appendix 3**

**2014 Team Assessment:** All information to be included in the APR, as well as available in the Team Room, was provided for the Team's review as required by the NAAB.

## **PART TWO (II): EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES AND CURRICULUM**

### **PART TWO (II): SECTION 1 – STUDENT PERFORMANCE -- EDUCATIONAL REALMS & STUDENT PERFORMANCE CRITERIA**

**II.1.1 Student Performance Criteria:** The SPC are organized into realms to more easily understand the relationships between individual criteria.

#### **Realm A: Critical Thinking and Representation:**

Architects must have the ability to build abstract relationships and understand the impact of ideas based on research and analysis of multiple theoretical, social, political, economic, cultural and environmental contexts. This ability includes facility with the wider range of media used to think about architecture including writing, investigative skills, speaking, drawing and model making. Students' learning aspirations include:

- Being broadly educated.
- Valuing lifelong inquisitiveness.
- Communicating graphically in a range of media.
- Recognizing the assessment of evidence.
- Comprehending people, place, and context.
- Recognizing the disparate needs of client, community, and society.

#### **A.1. Communication Skills: *Ability to read, write, speak and listen effectively.***

##### **B. Arch [X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** A.1. Communication Skills is met in the B Arch program. The Team found evidence of reading and writing skills in student courses ARCH 1359 – Design since 1945 and ARCH 2350 – Survey of Architectural History I.

##### **M. Arch [X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** A.1. Communication Skills is met in the M Arch program. The Team found evidence of reading and writing skills in ARCH 6359 – Modern Architecture and Urbanism and ARCH 6393 – Master's Project Preparation, Programming and Research. The Team found no significant difference in the speaking and listening skills between the graduate and undergraduate students. Both segments of the student body were articulate and openly communicative with the Team and each other.

#### **A. 2. Design Thinking Skills: *Ability to raise clear and precise questions, use abstract ideas to interpret information, consider diverse points of view, reach well-reasoned conclusions, and test alternative outcomes against relevant criteria and standards.***

##### **B. Arch [X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** A.2. Design Thinking Skills is met in the B Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 3500 – Architecture Design Studio V and ARCH 4510 – Architecture Design Studio X (Comprehensive Design Studio). This ability was especially evident in the Comprehensive Studio student studio work.



**M. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** A.2. Design Thinking Skills is met in the M Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 6603 – Architecture Design Studio III and ARCH 6604 – Architecture Design Studio IV.

**A. 3. Visual Communication Skills: *Ability to use appropriate representational media, such as traditional graphic and digital technology skills, to convey essential formal elements at each stage of the programming and design process.***

**B. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** A.3. Visual Communication Skills is met in the B Arch program. The Team found evidence that the ability to communicate ideas via different media is instilled in the architectural pedagogy at a very high level beginning at the first year, first semester and continuing throughout the B Arch program. Evidence was especially evident in the design studio work of ARCH 2500 – Architecture Design Studio III, ARCH 3500 – Architecture Design Studio V, and ARCH 4510 – Architecture Design Studio X (Comprehensive Design Studio).

**M. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** A.3. Visual Communication Skills is met in the M Arch program. As noted in the B Arch assessment, the ability to visually communicate design ideas is a critical element of the graduate and undergraduate architecture programs at U of H and is evident at all levels of the student work. The Team found exemplary evidence of visual communication skills in ARCH 6603 – Architecture Design Studio III.

The Team found the student abilities in **A.3. Visual Communication Skills** to be exceptional in both the **B. Arch** and **M. Arch** programs and considers this criterion to be “**Met with Distinction**” in both programs.

**A.4. Technical Documentation: *Ability to make technically clear drawings, write outline specifications, and prepare models illustrating and identifying the assembly of materials, systems, and components appropriate for a building design.***

**B. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** A.4. Technical Documentation is met in the B Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 4510 – Architecture Design Studio X (Comprehensive Design Studio).

**M. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** A.4. Technical Documentation is met in the M Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 6604 – Architecture Design Studio IV.

**A.5. Investigative Skills: *Ability to gather, assess, record, apply, and comparatively evaluate relevant information within architectural coursework and design processes.***

**B. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** A.5. Investigative Skills is met in the B Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 2327 – Technology 1, ARCH 2428 – Technology 2, and ARCH 4510 – Architecture Design Studio X (Comprehensive Design Studio).

**M. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** A.5. Investigative Skills is met in the M Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 6393 – Master’s Project Preparation, Programming and Research and ARCH 6604 – Architecture Design Studio IV.

**A. 6. Fundamental Design Skills: *Ability to effectively use basic architectural and environmental principles in design.***

**B. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** A.6. Fundamental Design Skills is met in the B Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 2501 – Architecture Design Studio IV and ARCH 3500 – Architecture Design Studio V.

**M. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** A.6. Fundamental Design Skills is met in the M Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 6603 – Architecture Design Studio III.

**A. 7. Use of Precedents: *Ability to examine and comprehend the fundamental principles present in relevant precedents and to make choices regarding the incorporation of such principles into architecture and urban design projects.***

**B. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** A.7. Use of Precedents is met in the B Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 3428 – technology 4, AARCG 3500 – Architecture Design Studio V, and ARCH 4510 – Architecture Design Studio X (Comprehensive Design Studio).

**M. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** A.7. Use of Precedents is met in the M Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 6393 – Master’s Project Preparation, Programming and Research and ARCH 6603 – Architecture Design Studio III.

**A. 8. Ordering Systems Skills: *Understanding of the fundamentals of both natural and formal ordering systems and the capacity of each to inform two- and three-dimensional design.***

**B. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** A.8. Ordering Systems Skills is met in the B Arch Program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 1501 Design Studio II and ARCH 4510 – Architecture Design Studio X (Comprehensive Design Studio).

**M. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** A.8. Ordering Systems Skills is met in the M Arch Program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 6604 – Architecture Design Studio IV.

**A. 9. Historical Traditions and Global Culture: *Understanding of parallel and divergent canons and traditions of architecture, landscape and urban design including examples of indigenous, vernacular, local, regional, national settings from the Eastern, Western, Northern, and Southern hemispheres in terms of their climatic, ecological, technological, socioeconomic, public health, and cultural factors.***

**B. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** A.9. Historical Traditions and Global Culture is met in the B Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 4373 – Urban Environments.

**M. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** A.9. Historical Traditions and Global Culture is met in the M Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 6359 – Modern Architecture and Urbanism and ARCH 6604 – Architecture Design Studio IV.

**A. 10. Cultural Diversity: *Understanding of the diverse needs, values, behavioral norms, physical abilities, and social and spatial patterns that characterize different cultures and individuals and the implication of this diversity on the societal roles and responsibilities of architects.***

**B. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** A.10. Cultural Diversity is met in the B Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 1359 Design Since 1959 and ARCH 4373 – Urban Environments.

**M. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** A.10. Culture Diversity is met in the M Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 6359 – Modern Architecture and Urbanism and ARCH 6376 – Urban Determinants.

**A.11. Applied Research: *Understanding the role of applied research in determining function, form, and systems and their impact on human conditions and behavior.***

**B. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** A.11. Applied Research is met in the B Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 2327 – Technology 1, ARCH 2428 – Technology 2, and ARCH 5427 – Technology 7.

**M. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** A.11. Applied Research is met in the M Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 6348 – Technology 3 and ARCH 6393 – Master’s Project Preparation, Programming and Research.

While the Team found that student’s investigation of concepts and material properties clearly informed their design and execution in a way that demonstrated an understanding of the role of applied research, inherent in the student work was a lack of properly identifying the source of information used in reports, papers, etc. This made it difficult for the Team to differentiate student work from information simply pulled from web site sources.

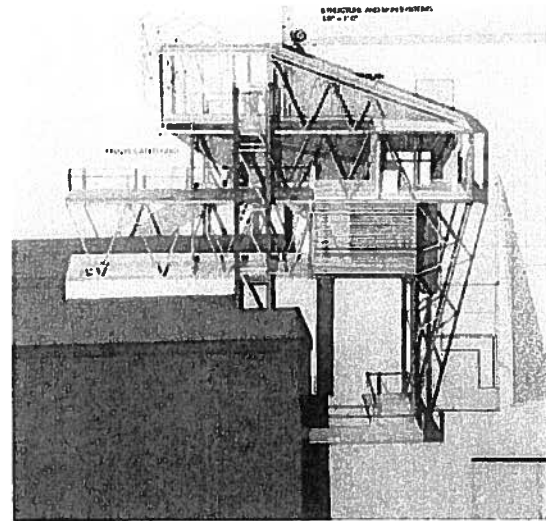
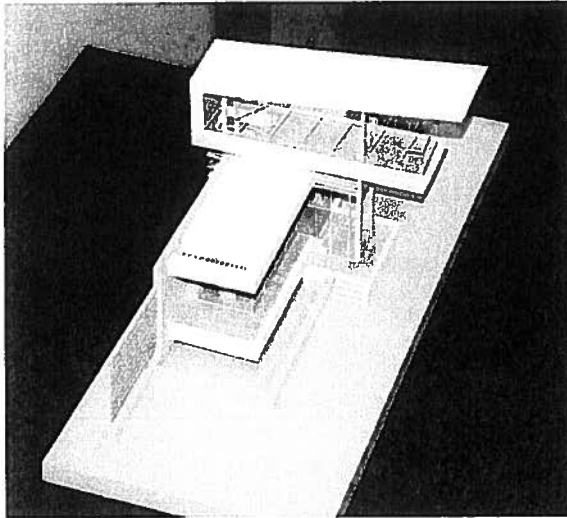
See **Causes of Concern**.

**Realm A. General Team Commentary:** Criterion in Realm A identifies the skills needed to apply research based information and ideas to the architect’s capacity for design thinking; to think abstractly and to communicate both objective content and abstract ideas in a clear manner.

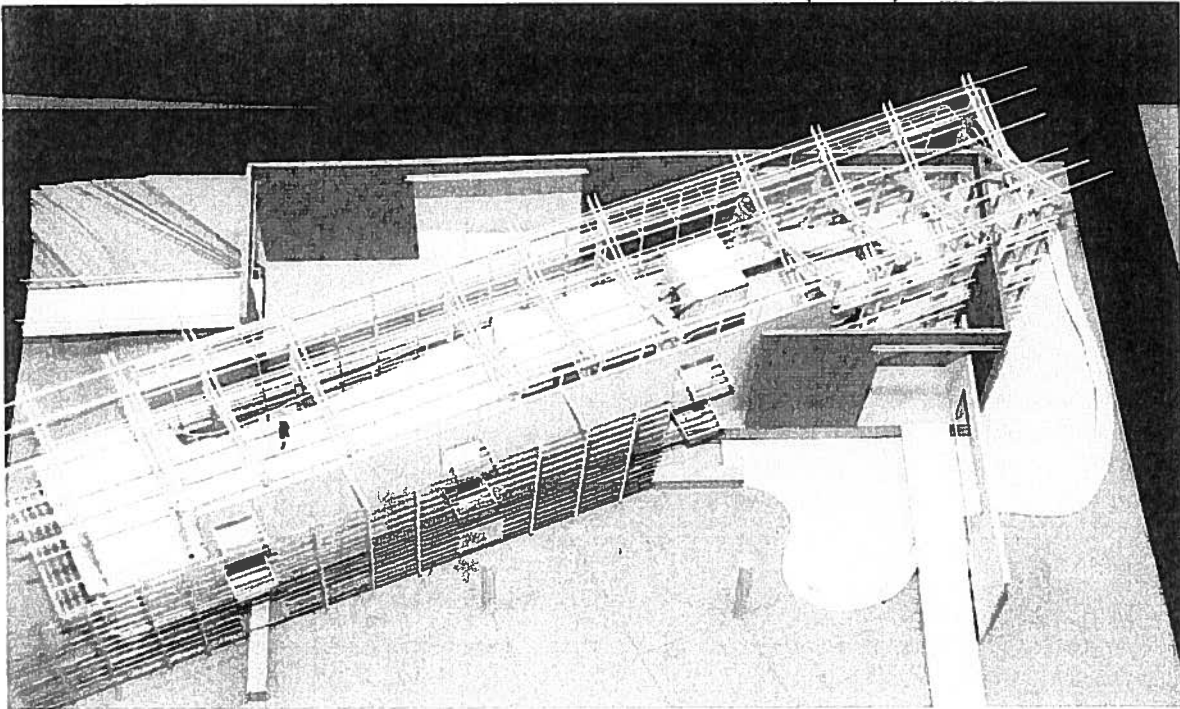
Students at the Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture, in both the B Arch and M Arch programs, are able to apply research information to their design studio projects as well as their classroom assignments. The B Arch program is organized into 4 levels; Foundation, Intermediate, Comprehensive Design and Professional. This ability was evident at all levels, especially at the Comprehensive Design level.

Visual Communication skills begin development early in the curriculum, with precedent study, analysis and the architect’s traditional skill set of drawing and modeling. The art of communication design ideas is understood as a critical dialogue for the design process, as well as a manner of documenting and presenting architectural solutions effectively. Students are taught from the beginning of both programs the art of modeling in the traditional manner, i.e. white Strathmore board, balsa wood, and cardboard.

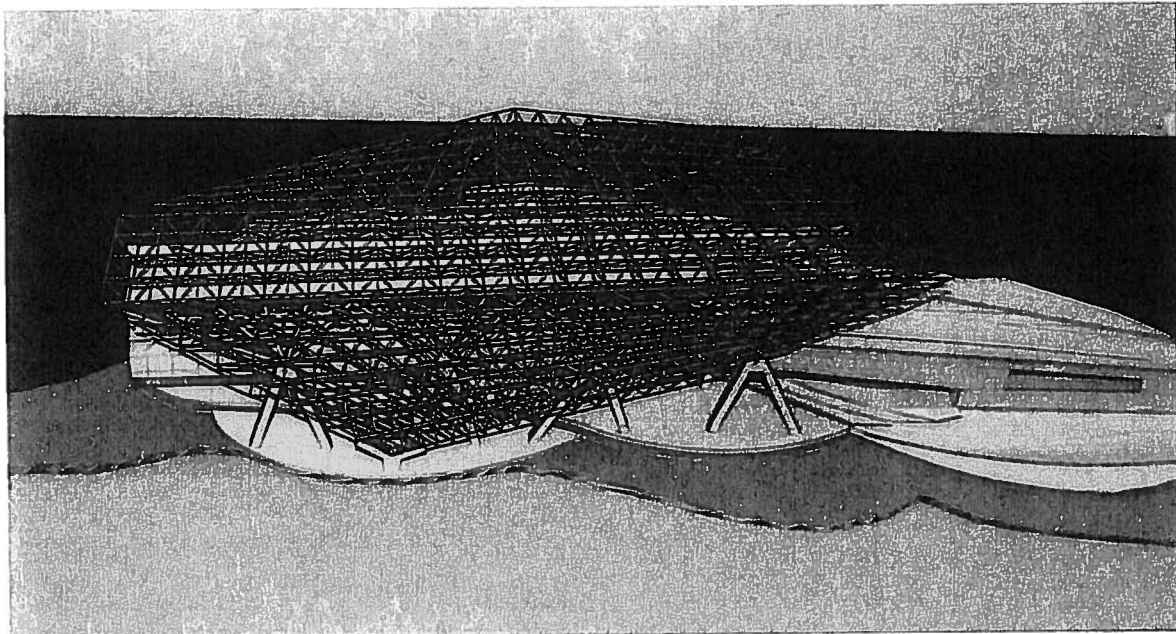
Use of the school’s laser cutter does not come until the upper years in the B Arch, with graduate students having full access. The Team was impressed with the articulate mode of thinking where 3-D modeling was an integral component of the design process, resulting in solutions described in high level digital graphics and meticulously crafted models. The following examples of studio solutions are representative of student work in both the B Arch and M Arch programs and depict the level of quality that is inherent in the architecture program at U of H:



Student studio models – hand cut materials (B Arch)



Studio model – hand cut materials (B Arch)



Studio model – laser cut (B Arch)

The Team found the student abilities in **A.3. Visual Communication Skills** to be exceptional in both the **B. Arch** and **M. Arch** programs and considers this criterion to be “**Met with Distinction**” in both programs.

**Realm B: Integrated Building Practices, Technical Skills and Knowledge:** Architects are called upon to comprehend the technical aspects of design, systems and materials, and be able to apply that comprehension to their services. Additionally they must appreciate their role in the implementation of design decisions, and their impact of such decisions on the environment. Students learning aspirations include:

- Creating building designs with well-integrated systems.
- Comprehending constructability.
- Incorporating life safety systems.
- Integrating accessibility.
- Applying principles of sustainable design.

**B. 1. Pre-Design: *Ability* to prepare a comprehensive program for an architectural project, such as preparing an assessment of client and user needs, an inventory of space and equipment requirements, an analysis of site conditions (including existing buildings), a review of the relevant laws and standards and assessment of their implications for the project, and a definition of site selection and design assessment criteria.**

**B. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** B.1. Pre-Design is met in the B Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 3428 – Technology 4.

**M. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** B.1. Pre-Design is met in the M Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 6393 – Master’s Project Preparation and ARCH 6603 – Architecture Design Studio III.

**B. 2. Accessibility: *Ability* to design sites, facilities, and systems to provide independent and integrated use by individuals with physical (including mobility), sensory, and cognitive disabilities.**

**B. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** B.2. Accessibility is met in the B Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 4510 – Architecture Design Studio X (Comprehensive Design).

**M. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** B.2. Accessibility is met in the M Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 6603 – Master’s Project Preparation, Programming and Research and ARCH 6604 – Architecture Design Studio IV.

While the Team found evidence of barrier free design ability in classroom exercises and studio projects with the context of the building footprint, the Team found no evidence in the studio design projects that students were able to resolve site accessibility issues. The consensus of the Team was that students were exposed to studio projects that were on relatively flat sites and that the myriad of issues associated with sites of varying topography was lacking in both the B Arch and M Arch programs.

See Causes of Concern

- B. 3. Sustainability: *Ability to design projects that optimize, conserve, or reuse natural and built resources, provide healthful environments for occupants/users, and reduce the environmental impacts of building construction and operations on future generations through means such as carbon-neutral design, bioclimatic design, and energy efficiency.***

**B. Arch**  
**[X] Not Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** B.3. Sustainability is **Not Met** in the **B. Arch** program. The Team could find no evidence in classroom exercises or studio projects that reflect the student's ability to design projects utilizing sustainable principals

**M. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** B.3. Sustainability is met in the M Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 6349 – Technology 4 and ARCH 6604 – Architecture Design Studio IV.

- B. 4. Site Design: *Ability to respond to site characteristics such as soil, topography, vegetation, and watershed in the development of a project design.***

**B. Arch**  
**[X] Not Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** B.4. Site Design is **Not Met** in the **B. Arch** program. The Team could find no evidence in classroom exercises or studio projects that reflect the student's ability to respond to projects situated on sites with varying site conditions. . As noted in the Team's comments under criterion B.2. Accessibility, students were not exposed to site diversification and were consequently lacking in their skills to resolve the myriad of issues associated with sites of varying topography.

**M. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** B.4. Site Design is met in the M Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 6604 – Architecture Design Studio IV.

- B. 5. Life Safety: *Ability to apply the basic principles of life-safety systems with an emphasis on egress.***

**B. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** B.5. Life Safety is met in the B Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 3428 – Technology 4 and ARCH 4510 – Architecture Design Studio X (Comprehensive Design).

**M. Arch**  
**[X] Met**



**2014 Team Assessment:** B.5. Life Safety is met in the M Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 6349 – Technology 4 and ARCH 6604 – Architecture Design Studio IV.

**B. 6. Comprehensive Design: *Ability to produce a comprehensive architectural project that demonstrates each student's capacity to make design decisions across scales while integrating the following SPC:***

- |  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| <b>A.2. Design Thinking Skills</b>                   | <b>B.2. Accessibility</b>         |
| <b>A.4. Technical Documentation</b>                  | <b>B.3. Sustainability</b>        |
| <b>A.5. Investigative Skills</b>                     | <b>B.4. Site Design</b>           |
| <b>A.8. Ordering Systems</b>                         | <b>B.7. Environmental Systems</b> |
| <b>A.9. Historical Traditions and Global Culture</b> | <b>B.9. Structural Systems</b>    |
| <b>B.5. Life Safety</b>                              |                                   |

**B. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** B.6. Comprehensive Design is met in the B Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 4510 – Architecture Design Studio X (Comprehensive Design).

**M. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** B.6. Comprehensive Design is met in the M Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 6604 – Architecture Design Studio IV. The Team found the student's ability to produce a comprehensive architectural project integrating the myriad of design components to be fully developed, well thought through, and of exceptional quality in design. As noted earlier in this report the students at U of H are very proficient at their graphic and modeling skills, as was especially evident in the Comprehensive Design exhibits.

The Team found the student abilities in **B.6. Comprehensive Design** to be exceptional in both the **B. Arch** and **M. Arch** programs and considers this criterion to be "**Met with Distinction**" in both programs.

**B. 7 Financial Considerations: *Understanding of the fundamentals of building costs, such as acquisition costs, project financing and funding, financial feasibility, operational costs, and construction estimating with an emphasis on life-cycle cost accounting.***

**B. Arch**  
**[X] Not Met**

**2014 Team Assessment: B.7. Financial Considerations is Not Met** in the **B. Arch** program. The Team could find no evidence in course studies or the student studio projects that reflected an understanding of the fundamentals of building costs, such as acquisition costs, project financing and funding, financial feasibility, operational costs, and construction estimating with an emphasis on life-

cycle cost accounting. The course syllabus for ARCH 4360 – Technology 6 includes relevant content and faculty provided lectures associated with content when requested; however, the Team could find no work product or examination content providing evidence of student understanding.

**M. Arch**  
**[X] Not Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** **B.7. Financial Considerations is Not Met** in the **M. Arch** program. The Team could find no evidence in course studies or the student studio projects that reflected an understanding of the fundamentals of building costs, such as acquisition costs, project financing and funding, financial feasibility, operational costs, and construction estimating with an emphasis on life-cycle cost accounting. Consultation with faculty confirmed that the required Financial Considerations content and criteria was not explicitly addressed in any other course that ARCH 6360 – Practice of Architecture for all tracks within the M Arch program. There is strong evidence of financial issues within the Track I Design-Build Studio curriculum; however, the Design-Build Studio is only required for Track I students.

**B. 8. Environmental Systems: *Understanding the principles of environmental systems' design such as embodied energy, active and passive heating and cooling, indoor air quality, solar orientation, daylighting and artificial illumination, and acoustics; including the use of appropriate performance assessment tools.***

**B. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** B.8. Environmental Systems is met in the B Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 3428 – Technology 4 and ARCH 4510 – Architecture Design Studio X (Comprehensive Design).

**M. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** B.8. Environmental Systems is met in the M Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 6348 – Technology 3 and ARCH 6604 – Architecture Design Studio IV.

**B. 9. Structural Systems: *Understanding of the basic principles of structural behavior in withstanding gravity and lateral forces and the evolution, range, and appropriate application of contemporary structural systems.***

**B. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** B.9. Structural Systems is met in the B Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 2327 – Technology 1, ARCH 2428 – Technology 2, and ARCH 4510 – Architecture Design Studio X (Comprehensive Design).

**M. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** B.9. Structural Systems is met in the M Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 6348 – Technology 3 and ARCH 6604 – Architecture Design Studio IV.

- B. 10. Building Envelope Systems: *Understanding* of the basic principles involved in the appropriate application of building envelope systems and associated assemblies relative to fundamental performance, aesthetics, moisture transfer, durability, and energy and material resources.**

**B. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** B.10. Building Envelope Systems is met in the B Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 3427 – Technology 3 and ARCH 4510 – Architecture Design Studio X (Comprehensive Design).

**M. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** B.10. Building Envelope Systems is met in the M Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 6349 Technology 4 and ARCH 6604 – Architecture Design Studio IV.

- B. 11. Building Service Systems Integration: *Understanding* of the basic principles and appropriate application and performance of building service systems such as plumbing, electrical, vertical transportation, security, and fire protection systems**

**B. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** B.11. Building Service Systems is met in the B Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 3428 – Technology 4 and ARCH 5427 – Technology 5.

**M. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** B.11. Building Service Systems is met in the M Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 6348 – Technology 3, ARCH 6349 – Technology 4, and ARCH 6604 – Architecture Design Studio IV.

- B. 12. Building Materials and Assemblies Integration: *Understanding* of the basic principles utilized in the appropriate selection of construction materials, products, components, and assemblies, based on their inherent characteristics and performance, including their environmental impact and reuse.**

**B. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** B.12. Building Materials and Assemblies is met in the B Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 3501 – Architecture Design Studio VI.

**M. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** B.12. Building Materials and Assemblies is met in the M Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 6349 – Technology 4.

**Realm B: Integrated Building Practices, Technical Skills and Knowledge:** Realm B requires students to comprehend the technical aspects of design, systems and materials, and be able to apply that comprehension to their studio project solutions. Students must also demonstrate both understanding and ability skill levels that reveal a comprehension of financial issues, building systems, and the myriad of environmental, material, technical, and regulatory issues impacting building design.

The following SPC criteria were found to be “Not Met”:

**B Arch:** B.3. Sustainability

B.4. Site Design

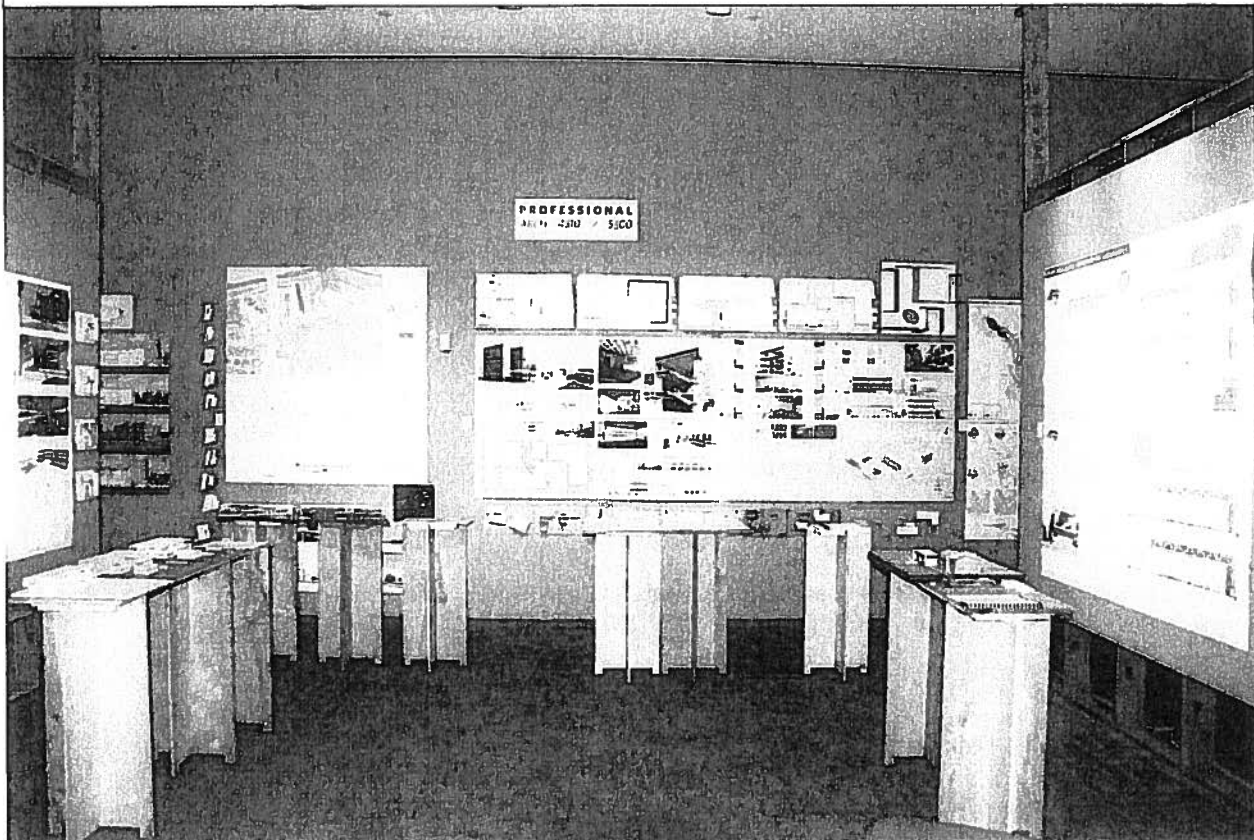
B.7. Financial Considerations

**M Arch:** B.7. Financial Considerations

The Team generally felt that the subject matter of these SPC criteria was present in certain lecture coursework/exercises/ student work, the required level of ability and understanding was lacking and not to the skill levels required.

That being said, the Team was impressed with the overall quality of the work exhibited for Realm B. In particular the Team felt the student projects exhibited for ARCH 4510 – Architecture Design Studio X (Comprehensive Design) was exemplary in both the design and presentation quality. The projects demonstrate design solutions that could, with very little effort, be converted into real –life building projects. This level of ability was also expressed in the M Arch program in ARCH 6604 – Architecture Design Studio IV.

The Team found the student abilities in **B.6. Comprehensive Design** to be exceptional in both the **B. Arch** and **M. Arch** programs and considers this criterion to be “Met with Distinction” in both programs.



Examples of Comprehensive Design Studio exhibits

**Realm C: Leadership and Practice:**

Architects need to manage, advocate, and act legally, ethically and critically for the good of the client, society and the public. This includes collaboration, business, and leadership skills. Student learning aspirations include:

- Knowing societal and professional responsibilities
- Comprehending the business of building.
- Collaborating and negotiating with clients and consultants in the design process.
- Discerning the diverse roles of architects and those in related disciplines.
- Integrating community service into the practice of architecture.

**C. 1. Collaboration: *Ability* to work in collaboration with others and in multi-disciplinary Teams to successfully complete design projects.**

**B. Arch**

**[X] Not Met**

**2014 Team Assessment: C.1. Collaboration is Not Met** in the **B. Arch** program. The Team could find no evidence in course studies or the student studio projects that indicated students were required to work together as a team to successfully complete a studio design project. Students indicated that they gave and received assistance from their colleagues on an informal basis; however, there was no evidence that collaboration was a structured component of the B Arch curriculum.

**M. Arch**

**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment: C.1. Collaboration is Met** in the **M Arch** program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 6602 – Architecture Design/Build Workshop and ARCH 6603 – Architecture Design Studio III.

ARCH 6602 is a required course for Level 1 (4+3.5) graduate students – students coming into the M Arch program with a degree from a field other than architecture. ARCH 6603 is a required course for Level 2 (4+2) graduate students – students with a pre-professional degree in architecture. Both courses required students to work together collectively to solve a studio design problem in a manner that the team felt was exemplary.

The Team found the student abilities in **C.1. Collaboration** to be exceptional in the **M. Arch** program and considers this criterion to be "**Met with Distinction.**"

**C. 2. Human Behavior: *Understanding* of the relationship between human behavior, the natural environment and the design of the built environment.**

**B. Arch**

**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment: C.2. Human Behavior is met** in the B Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 1200 – Introduction to Architecture, Industrial Design, and Interior Architecture, ARCH 4373 – Urban Environments, and ARCH 4427 – Technology 5.

**M. Arch**

**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment: C.2. Human Behavior is met** in the M Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 6376 – Urban Determinants.

**C. 3**            **Client Role in Architecture: *Understanding* of the responsibility of the architect to elicit, understand, and reconcile the needs of the client, owner, user groups, and the public and community domains.**

**B. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** C.3. Client Role in Architecture is met in the B Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 5360 – Professional Practice.

**M. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** C.3. Client Role in Architecture is met in the M Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 6393 – Master’s Project Preparation, Programming and Research.

**C. 4.**            **Project Management: *Understanding* of the methods for competing for commissions, selecting consultants and assembling Teams, and recommending project delivery methods**

**B. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** C.4. Project Management is met in the B Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 5360 – Professional Practice.

**M. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** C.10. Building Envelope Systems is met in the M Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 6360- Practice of Architecture.

**C. 5.**            **Practice Management: *Understanding* of the basic principles of architectural practice management such as financial management and business planning, time management, risk management, mediation and arbitration, and recognizing trends that affect practice.**

**B. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** C.5. Project Management is met in the B Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 5360 – Professional Practice.

**M. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** C.5. Project Management is met in the M Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 6360- Practice of Architecture.

**C. 6.**            **Leadership: *Understanding* of the techniques and skills architects use to work collaboratively in the building design and construction process and on environmental, social, and aesthetic issues in their communities.**

**B. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** C.6. Leadership is met in the B Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 5360 – Professional Practice.

**M. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** C.6. Leadership is met in the M Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 6376- Urban Determinants.

- C. 7.           Legal Responsibilities: *Understanding of the architect’s responsibility to the public and the client as determined by registration law, building codes and regulations, professional service contracts, zoning and subdivision ordinances, environmental regulation, and historic preservation and accessibility laws.***

**B. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** C.7. Legal Responsibilities is met in the B Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 5360 – Professional Practice.

**M. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** C.7. Legal Responsibilities is met in the M Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 6360- Practice of Architecture and ARCH 6376 – Urban Determinants.

- C. 8.           Ethics and Professional Judgment: *Understanding of the ethical issues involved in the formation of professional judgment regarding social, political and cultural issues, and responsibility in architectural design and practice.***

**B. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** C.8. Ethics and Professional Judgment is met in the B Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 5360 – Professional Practice.

**M. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** C.8. Ethics and Professional Judgment is met in the M Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 6360- Practice of Architecture.

- C. 9.           Community and Social Responsibility: *Understanding of the architect’s responsibility to work in the public interest, to respect historic resources, and to improve the quality of life for local and global neighbors.***

**B. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** C.9. Community and Social Responsibility is met in the B Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 5360 – Professional Practice.

**M. Arch**  
**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** C.9. Community and Social Responsibility is met in the M Arch program. The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 6360- Practice of Architecture and ARCH 6376 – Urban Determinants.

**Realm C: Leadership and Practice:** Realm C focuses on the understanding of the practice of architecture and the architect's role within that practice. The architect is expected to lead, manage multiple entities (the client, the project, the office, the consultants, her/himself) and advocate for the client – all in a manner that is ethically, legally, and critically good for the client. Their practice should also protect the health, safety, and welfare of the individuals that use and enjoy their buildings. Students are expected to understand these multiple roles that include societal and professional responsibilities, business management practices/relationships with clients and consultants, as well as community service.

The Professional Practice sequence in the B Arch program is a well-coordinated series of classroom lectures/exercises utilizing guest lecturers and scenario based circumstances that require the students to listen, contemplate, and ultimately understand the architect's role in projects, the use of contracts and best practices guidelines. The Professional Practice course work builds a sound foundation from which students can grow into responsible professionals, representing themselves, their clients, and the community.

The Team found the same for the Leadership and Practice sequence in the M Arch program where students are exposed to the legal aspects of architecture in the Practice of Architecture and Urban Determinants course curriculum.



## **PART TWO (II): SECTION 2 – CURRICULAR FRAMEWORK**

**II.2.1 Regional Accreditation:** *The institution offering the accredited degree program must be or be part of, an institution accredited by one of the following regional institutional accrediting agencies for higher education: the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS); the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSACS); the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC); the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCACS); the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU); and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC).*

**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** The University of Houston is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools – Commission on Colleges. It received notice that it is permitted to award the Bachelor of Architecture and Master of Architecture degree, approval letter dated October 6, 2009.

**II.2.2 Professional Degrees and Curriculum:** *The NAAB accredits the following professional degree programs: the Bachelor of Architecture (B. Arch.), the Master of Architecture (M. Arch.), and the Doctor of Architecture (D. Arch.). The curricular requirements for awarding these degrees must include professional studies, general studies, and electives. Schools offering the degrees B. Arch., M. Arch., and/or D. Arch. are strongly encouraged to use these degree titles exclusively with NAAB-accredited professional degree programs.*

**[X] Met**

### **2014 Team Assessment:**

The University of Houston awards the Bachelor of Architecture and Master of Architecture degrees consistent with the degree title requirements of the NAAB.

The Bachelor of Architecture consists of 160 semester credit hours as follows:

- 103 professional courses in architecture
- 21 elective courses (15 general electives and 6 Approved Integrative Course credits)
- 36 general studies credits (9 university Core Curriculum credits)

The Master of Architecture, Track I, consists of the undergraduate degree + 97 graduate credit hours.

The Master of Architecture, Track II, consists of the pre-professional degree +60 graduate credit hours.

### **II.2.3 Curriculum Review and Development**

*The program must describe the process by which the curriculum for the NAAB-accredited degree program is evaluated and how modifications (e.g., changes or additions) are identified, developed, approved, and implemented. Further, the NAAB expects that programs are evaluating curricula with a view toward the advancement of the discipline and toward ensuring that students are exposed to current issues in practice. Therefore, the program must demonstrate that licensed architects are included in the curriculum review and development process.*

**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment: Undergraduate Program:** Since the last accreditation visit, an extensive revision of the B Arch curriculum has been accomplished. Specifically, studio projects are now used as the basis for parts of technical courses, portfolio reviews were relocated within the curricular stream, and the curriculum was opened up in the last three semesters of the Professional Level to allow students to pursue more individual studio interests.

This curriculum review was developed by a Curriculum Task Force, who proposed changes to the faculty at large. All faculty members were encouraged to attend several discussion sessions where ideas were cataloged for review by the Task Force. After several iterations, the changes were proposed to the Undergraduate Committee, where they were adopted. The Undergraduate Committee continues to monitor the results and discuss adjustments needed.

The Undergraduate Committee is responsible for reviewing the curriculum and proposing changes. All course changes are reviewed first by this committee, and then must be approved at the university level Undergraduate Committee. The College Undergraduate Committee is chaired by the Associate Dean and is composed of: Coordinators of Foundation Level, Intermediate Level, Comprehensive Design, and Professional Level; Directors of Industrial Design and Interior Architecture; History and Theory Coordinator, Technology Coordinator, and a student representative. The Dean and Assistant are non-voting members. The Associate Dean, Intermediate Level Coordinator, Comprehensive Design Coordinator, Professional Level Coordinator, and Technology Coordinator are all registered architects. During the Team meeting with the faculty the process was described and verified by the faculty in attendance, providing explanations for the specific changes as well as the goals that had initiated them. The faculty emphasized that the Curriculum Task Force had been set up by the Dean, and was continuing to make refinements as the changes are brought on-line.

**Graduate Program:** The graduate curriculum is reviewed every year by the Graduate Committee—a standing committee whose membership is stipulated by the College By-laws. Among other responsibilities, the Graduate Committee is responsible for graduate curriculum assessment, review, and development, as well as participating in long-range planning and self-assessment for the graduate programs. The Co-Directors of Graduate Studies represent the Graduate Committee in the College's Long-Range Planning Task Force and report those efforts to the Graduate Committee.

The Co-Directors of Graduate Studies also coordinate continuous improvement efforts in three areas:

1. Annual external (and blind) evaluation of every graduating Master Project;
2. Monitoring of Architectural Registration Exam (ARE) Passing Rates; and
3. Monitoring of NAAB Performance Criteria.

The results of all these efforts are considered in the graduate curriculum review process. Working in close collaboration with the instructors of all the Graduate Design Studios, Graduate Professional Core Courses and Graduate Seminars, the Co-Directors of Graduate Studies supervise the refinement and implementation of curricular changes. Licensed Architects are involved in every step of the process, including membership in the above-mentioned committees and among the graduate instructors at every level.

The Graduate Committee is responsible for reviewing curriculum and proposing changes. It is also responsible for the development of curriculum for new programs. All course changes are reviewed first by this committee and then presented to the larger faculty body. All degree programs go through the standard approval processes at the Provost, The Graduate and Professional Studies Council, Faculty Senate, Board of Regents and Coordinating Board of the State of Texas.

The Team verified the process during meetings with the Co-Directors of the Graduate Studies. The Team was presented with the results of the blind-reviewed external evaluations of the Masters Projects, and with the records of ARE passing rates.

**PART TWO (II): SECTION 3 – EVALUATION OF PREPARATORY/PRE-PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION**

*Because of the expectation that all graduates meet the SPC (see Section 1 above), the program must demonstrate that it is thorough in the evaluation of the preparatory or pre-professional education of individuals admitted to the NAAB-accredited degree program.*

*In the event a program relies on the preparatory/pre-professional educational experience to ensure that students have met certain SPC, the program must demonstrate it has established standards for ensuring these SPC are met and for determining whether any gaps exist. Likewise, the program must demonstrate it has determined how any gaps will be addressed during each student's progress through the accredited degree program. This assessment should be documented in a student's admission and advising files.*

**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** There is a protocol in place for the review of transfer student coursework and associated credit units. Students may present coursework and/or work product completed at other universities attended that is proposed as equivalent to the curriculum at U of H. A proposal for consideration is developed by students and reviewed by the graduate faculty and graduate directors. In the event that the faculty and directors feel that SPC and course criteria have already been satisfied through work at another university, they will waive a student's responsibility for completing an equivalent course. The school requires that the students fulfill the credit units assigned to the equivalent course by enrolling in an elective that supports other coursework in the students associated focus area. The Graduate Directors work with students to identify elective courses that will support the curriculum pedagogy and maintain the integrity of the degree programs offered at U of H.

## **PART TWO (II): SECTION 4 – PUBLIC INFORMATION**

### ***II.4.1 Statement on NAAB-Accredited Degrees***

*In order to promote an understanding of the accredited professional degree by prospective students, parents, and the public, all schools offering an accredited degree program or any candidacy program must include in catalogs and promotional media the exact language found in the 2009 NAAB Conditions for Accreditation, Appendix 5.*

**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** The University of Houston provides access to the NAAB statement on accreditation through the Course Catalog, available online. The College of Architecture has a well-developed website and publishes all required information in the prescribed NAAB text.

### ***II.4.2 Access to NAAB Conditions and Procedures***

*In order to assist parents, students, and others as they seek to develop an understanding of the body of knowledge and skills that constitute a professional education in architecture, the school must make the following documents available to all students, parents and faculty:*

*The 2009 NAAB Conditions for Accreditation*

*The NAAB Procedures for Accreditation (edition currently in effect)*

**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** Information and links to the NAAB website for access to current accreditation documents and the NAAB Student Performance Criteria are accessible from the College of Architecture's website: <http://www.arch.UofH.edu/index.php/About/accreditation>.

### ***II.4.3 Access to Career Development Information***

*In order to assist students, parents, and others as they seek to develop an understanding of the larger context for architecture education and the career pathways available to graduates of accredited degree programs, the program must make the following resources available to all students, parents, staff, and faculty:*

*[www.ARCHCareers.org](http://www.ARCHCareers.org)*

*The NCARB Handbook for Interns and Architects*

*Toward an Evolution of Studio Culture*

*The Emerging Professional's Companion*

*[www.NCARB.org](http://www.NCARB.org)*

*[www.aia.org](http://www.aia.org)*

*[www.aiaa.org](http://www.aiaa.org)*

*[www.acsa-arch.org](http://www.acsa-arch.org)*

**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** Access to Career Development Information is met via the School of Architecture's website: <http://www.arch.UofH.edu/index.php/About/accreditation>. With a long history of ties to the Houston area architectural community, as well as drawing a significant number of adjunct faculty from the Houston area, the College recognizes the importance of accurately informing students, parents, and others as they seek to develop an understanding of the larger context for architecture education and the career pathways available to graduates of accredited degree programs. The college also has an appointed IDP coordinator who advises and counsels students looking to learn about and attain IDP learning units from both their work experiences as well as their education coursework.

#### **II.4.4 Public Access to APRs and VTRs**

*In order to promote transparency in the process of accreditation in architecture education, the program is required to make the following documents available to the public:*

*All Annual Reports, including the narrative*

*All NAAB responses to the Annual Report*

*The final decision letter from the NAAB*

*The most recent APR*

*The final edition of the most recent Visiting Team Report, including attachments and addenda*

*These documents must be housed together and accessible to all. Programs are encouraged to make these documents available electronically from their websites.*

**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** Public Access to APR's and VTR's is enabled via hard copy in the College of Architecture library as well as the college website: <http://www.arch.U of H.edu/index.php/About/accreditation>.

#### **II.4.5 ARE Pass Rates**

*Annually, the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards publishes pass rates for each section of the Architect Registration Examination by institution. This information is considered to be useful to parents and prospective students as part of their planning for higher/post-secondary education.*

*Therefore, programs are required to make this information available to current and prospective students and their parents either by publishing the annual results or by linking their website to the results.*

**[X] Met**

**2014 Team Assessment:** ARE Pass Rates are available to parents and prospective students on the College of Architecture's website: <http://www.arch.U of H.edu/index.php/About/accreditation>.

**III. Appendices:**

**1. Program Information**

[Taken from the *Architecture Program Report*, responses to Part One: Section 1 Identity and Self-Assessment]

**A. History and Mission of the Institution (I.1.1)**

Reference University of Houston, *APR*, pp. 2-4

**B. History and Mission of the Program (I.1.1)**

Reference University of Houston, *APR*, pp. 4-11

**C. Long-Range Planning (I.1.4)**

Reference University of Houston, *APR*, pp. 16-18

**D. Self-Assessment (I.1.5)**

Reference University of Houston, *APR*, pp. 18-23

**2. Conditions Met with Distinction**

**1. Architecture Education and the Academic Community**

**2. Information Resources**

**3. Visual Communication Skills**

B. Arch: The Team found evidence that the ability to communicate ideas via different media was instilled at the architectural pedagogy at a very high level beginning at the first year, first semester and continuing throughout the B Arch program. Evidence was especially evident in the design studio work of ARCH 2500 – Architecture Design Studio III, ARCH 3500 – Architecture Design Studio V, and ARCH 4510 – Architecture Design Studio X (Comprehensive Design Studio).

M. Arch: As noted in the B Arch assessment, the ability to visually communicate design ideas is a critical element of the graduate and undergraduate architecture programs at U of H and is evident at all levels of the student work. The Team found exemplary evidence of visual communication skills in ARCH 6603 – Architecture Design Studio III.

**4. Comprehensive Design**

B. Arch: The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 4510 – Architecture Design Studio X (Comprehensive Design).

M. Arch: The Team found evidence the criterion is met in ARCH 6604 – Architecture Design Studio IV.

The Team found the student's ability to produce a comprehensive architectural project integrating the myriad of design components to be fully developed, well thought through, and of exceptional quality in design in both the B Arch and M Arch programs. As noted earlier in this report the students at U of H are very proficient at their graphic communication and modeling skills. This was especially evident in the Comprehensive Design Studio exhibits.

**5. Collaboration**

M. Arch: Design/Build Workshop and ARCH 6603 – Architecture Design Studio III. ARCH 6602 is a required course for Level 1 (4+3.5) graduate students – students coming into the M Arch program with a degree from a field other than architecture. ARCH 6603 is a required course for Level 2 (4+2) graduate students – students with a pre-professional degree in architecture. Both courses required students to work together collectively to solve a studio design problem in a manner that the team felt was exemplary.

**3. The Visiting Team**

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