

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

**INTERIOR DESIGN PROGRAM ACCREDITATION REPORT**  
**AT IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY**

**Action Requested:** Receive the accreditation report for the Bachelor of Fine Arts Program in Interior Design in the Department of Interior Design in the College of Design at Iowa State University.

**Executive Summary:** The Interior Design Program (1) prepared a progress report that addressed the weaknesses in the standards identified by the visiting team in 2009; and (2) had an on-site visit by peer evaluators. The program received continued accreditation for the remainder of the six-year term awarded in 2009; the maximum period possible is eight years. During the 2009 site visit, eight out of the 12 standards were only in partial compliance; weaknesses in student learning were identified in a number of Educational Program Standards. Therefore, an interim visit was required in Fall 2012 to monitor progress toward improvement in those areas. This report addresses the Board of Regents Strategic Plan priority to provide “educational excellence and impact” as well as Goal #8 – “Iowa’s public universities and special schools shall be increasingly efficient and productive.”

**Background:**

- ◇ **Description of Program.** The Bachelor of Fine Arts Program in Interior Design is a four-year program that emphasizes the student’s application of design processes to creatively solve problems of the interior environment based on knowledge of human safety, functional utility, physical, psychological, and contextual fit. It consists of one year in the College’s pre-professional Core Design Program, followed by three years in the professional degree program. Graduates are competent in visual communication (sketching, drafting and computer aided design), design problem solving, space planning, lighting and color specification for interiors, finish and furniture selection, detailing interior construction, and application of human factors.
- ◇ **Purpose of Accreditation.** An accredited educational program is recognized by its peers as having met state and national standards for its development and evaluation. To employers, graduate schools, and licensure, certification, and registration boards, graduation from an accredited program signifies adequate preparation for entry into the profession. In fact, many of these groups require graduation from an accredited program as a minimum qualification. Accreditation is also intended to protect the interests of students, benefit the public, and improve the quality of teaching, learning, research, and professional practice.
- ◇ **Accrediting Agency.** The accrediting body is the Council for Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA).
- ◇ **Review Process.** The progress report by the Interior Design contained the responses to the professional standards required by the accrediting body – mission, goals, and curriculum; interior design – critical thinking, professional values, and processes; interior design – core design and technical knowledge; and program administration. Each standard is defined by more specific student learning/program expectations. In particular, the progress report addressed the weaknesses in student learning contained in the standards that were not in compliance during the 2009 visit.

- ◇ On-Site Team Report. In November 2012, the interim visiting team determined that the Interior Design Program evidenced significant progress toward improving areas of weakness identified in the 2009 accreditation report.
- ◇ Standards In Partial Compliance Addressed in Progress Report.
  - ⇒ “Courses are not appropriately sequenced, course content does not increase in difficulty, and significant concepts are not interrelated and reinforced in the curriculum. Construction documents lacked detail and were incomplete, and students did not incorporate wayfinding methods in their work. Studio projects demonstrate variety in type but are limited in size and scope.”
  - ⇒ “Learning experiences do not address a global perspective and approach to thinking and problem solving. The number of faculty members and instructional personnel is not sufficient to implement current program objectives and only one of the six faculty members responsible for studio supervision has passed the complete NCIDQ<sup>1</sup> exam.”
  - ⇒ “Student work did not demonstrate understanding of the history of art, architecture, interiors, and furnishings.”
- ◇ Sample Changes Implemented by Institution.
  - ⇒ *The curriculum was revised to demonstrate variety and complexity in type, size, and scope.*
  - ⇒ *The curriculum now reflects a global practice perspective.*
  - ⇒ *Students must now take two semesters of Art and/or Architectural History in addition to the two History of Interior Design semester required by the curriculum.*
  - ⇒ *Five new faculty members were added since the last visit which has decreased section sizes to better serve students in the studio.*
  - ⇒ *Four faculty members have passed the NCIDQ; a fifth is on the verge of completing the requirements.*
- ◇ Items Identified by Interim Site Team. (Institutional responses are included in italics.)
  - ⇒ “In the ArtID 352 class which deals with interior systems and their integration, there was no evidence that students were learning about radiant flooring, and/or sub-floor systems.”  
*The course syllabus and schedule will reflect their inclusion in Spring 2014.*
  - ⇒ “In the ArtID 461 Professional Practices class there was no indication that students had been taught the ins and outs of professional registration and that specific subject did not appear on their exams, either, which did not provide for review team with any way to assess the learning outcomes.”  
*A lecture PowerPoint by a faculty member was inadvertently not included in the review materials for the site team. The course syllabus and exams for Spring 2013 reflected this required emphasis.*

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<sup>1</sup> National Council for Interior Design Qualification.

- ◇ Accreditation Status. In April 2013, the Council for Interior Design Accreditation awarded continued accreditation to the Bachelor of Fine Arts Program in Interior Design in the College of Human Sciences at Iowa State University for the remainder of the six-year term originally effective in August 2009. The Accreditation Commission commended the program for evidencing significant progress toward improving areas of weakness identified in the 2009 Accreditation Report. The program should be revisited in Fall 2015 to seek re-accreditation.