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ARCHITECTURE PROGRAMS ACCREDITATION REPORT
AT IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

Action Requested: Receive the accreditation report from the Architecture Programs in the College of Design at Iowa State University.

Executive Summary: The Architecture Programs include the Bachelor of Architecture Program and the Master of Architecture Program. Both programs (1) underwent a self-study that addressed the conditions defined by the accrediting body; and (2) had an on-site visit by peer evaluators. The programs were accredited for the maximum period of six years with the stipulation that a focused evaluation be scheduled in two years to look at the Professional Degrees and Curriculum criterion and the progress that has been made in this area. The focused evaluation is scheduled for 2009. Annual reports must include a response to each condition identified as not met in the Visiting Team Report, a response to each of the causes of concern in the Visiting Team Report, and a brief summary of changes that have been made or may be made in the programs. This report addresses the Board's Strategic Plan objective (1.1) to "offer high-quality programs through ongoing program improvement for undergraduate, graduate, professional, and non-degree students and special school students."

Background:

- ◆ **Description.** The *Bachelor of Architecture Program* consists of one year in the pre-professional Core Design program, followed by four years in the professional B.Arch. degree program. This program has been in existence in some fashion at ISU since 1914. The *Master of Architecture Program* began as a Master of Science in architectural engineering in 1917 and changed to its current designation in 1965. The M.Arch. I professional degree program is designed for students with undergraduate degrees in disciplines other than architecture as well as for students who hold four-year baccalaureate degree in architecture or non-accredited professional degrees in architecture.
- ◆ **Purpose of Accreditation.** An accredited educational program is recognized by its peers as having met national standards for its development and evaluation. In order to qualify as a licensed, registered architect, an individual must have graduated from an accredited program.
- ◆ **Accrediting Agency.** The accrediting body is the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB).
- ◆ **Review Process.** The self-studies prepared by the Architecture Programs contained the responses to the 13 conditions required by the accrediting body – program response to the NAAB perspectives; program self-assessment procedures; public information; social equity; studio culture; human resources; human resource development; physical resources; information resources; financial resources; administrative structure; professional degrees and curriculum; and student performance criteria.
- ◆ **On-Site Team Report.** In March 2007, the visiting team determined that the Architecture Programs met the requirements for accredited status, with the stipulation that a focused evaluation be scheduled in two years to look at the Professional Degrees and Curriculum criterion and the progress that has been made in this area.

◇ Sample Strengths Identified by the Visiting Team.

- ☑ “The department has worked extremely hard to redesign the graduate program since the last visit. The effort put forth by the faculty to integrate technical issues with design approaches is exemplary.”
- ☑ “The design-build classes treat the college environment as a laboratory and are effectively transforming the environment to be more hospitable and didactic.”
- ☑ “The team recognizes the momentum toward interdisciplinary collaboration within the college and across campus and is encouraged by the prospect for greater involvement in the future.”
- ☑ “The higher administration is committed to the success of the department and the college. They are very well informed about the issues the school addresses and are knowledgeable of the vision set by the faculty and chair of the department.”
- ☑ “The college and its department have demonstrated resourcefulness in responding to ongoing budgetary challenges since the last visit. This resourcefulness will bode well for the future changes in the proposed budgetary structure.”

◇ Progress since the Previous Site Visit.

- ☑ “The graduate program is focusing on urban sites at the expense of exploring a rich variety of site typologies.” *The program has addressed this issue but there are still concerns in the design development of large sites including contour manipulation site drainage, parking layout, and site circulation.*
- ☑ “There was no convincing evidence of the technical documentation criterion being met at the graduate level.” *This criterion is not met. There is substantial reliance on an elective to provide the detailed knowledge development in technical documentation.*
- ☑ “The program preparation criterion is not covered in undergraduate or graduate level course work.” *This criterion remains not met for both the undergraduate and graduate programs. The full range of program issues is not addressed.*

◇ Conditions of Accreditation Not Met Identified by the Visiting Team.

- ☑ “The team was unable to find adequate traditional examples in the undergraduate program of academic writing using documented multiple source research, the analysis of facts, the development of a rhetorical argument, bibliographic information, and the proper citation of sources in papers available for review.”
- ☑ “The graduate program needs a broader historical view of the western architectural canons and traditions in architecture that includes periods before the 19th century. While a summer reading list is provided to matriculating students, this activity is not considered to be performance at the level of understanding.”
- ☑ “Neither the undergraduate nor the graduate programs address the non-western traditions to the level of understanding. Several students selected non-western research topics for papers but this is not consistently accomplished by all students. There are several excellent electives in this area; however, electives cannot be used to satisfy the student performance criteria.”

- ☑ “There is extensive and inventive evidence of program analysis, but no evidence of assessment of actual client and users needs, detailed inventory of space and equipment size requirements beyond gross square footage notations or consistent design assessment criteria implementation.”
- ☑ “The program has addressed the issue of site conditions through analysis but there is no evidence in the design of large site contexts, site drainage, parking layout, and site circulation for required course work. Site conditions are addressed in the options studios but not in required studios, so it is possible a student may not be exposed to these important criteria.”
- ☑ “The team was unable to find evidence of construction cost estimating that include life-cycle cost in student work.”
- ☑ “Evidence of the technical documentation criterion is found in the course work for Materials and Methods. The course effectively teaches students technical documentation through a combination of generating verbal and graphic documents and “red lining” each other’s work. This process mirrors practice and effectively demonstrates a student’s knowledge and ability. The team expresses a concern that the exclusive use of light wood frame structures inhibits the full potential of this course. The graduate program does not exhibit the thoroughness of various building systems, the full range of scales or all the forms of representation that are typical of technical documents. There is significant reliance on an elective course to inform the technical documentation knowledge but this course is not taken by all students.”
- ☑ “Architectural Design V does not meet the requirements for comprehensive design. There was ample evidence that the course, when taken in concert with the elective Integrated Design Workshop, met the expectations for comprehensive design. However, electives may not be used to fulfill NAAB student performance criteria. The team found Advanced Architectural Design III in the graduate program meets expectations even though there were inconsistencies among projects. The team found no explicit rubric for evaluation that is shared with students and describes all the variables that need to be considered when comprehensive design is combined in one studio course.”

◆ Causes of Concern Identified by the Visiting Team.

- ☑ “With the increasing reliance on part-time lecturers to teach many of the required courses, there is an increased need to have a well documented curriculum with explicit learning objectives and anticipated outcomes for each course. Without this structure, it is clear that consistent and anticipated student learning is not achieved. New faculty must be aware of the interrelationships between the courses in the curriculum and explicitly informed on expectations and evaluative norms.”
- ☑ “The use of elective courses to satisfy NAAB student performance criteria conflicts with the *Conditions for Accreditation*. Care should be taken to insure that all faculty and students are aware of the student performance criteria and their relationship to the curriculum.”
- ☑ “The undergraduate program has undergone considerable changes in recent years with the implementation of a college-wide core defined as ‘a common set of studio and lecture classes...intended to prepare students for application to any of the college’s professional degree curricula.’ Careful assessment needs to be done concerning the impact this program has on upper level studio course content.”

- ◇ Accreditation Status. In July 2007, the National Architectural Accrediting Board awarded accreditation to the Architectural Programs at ISU for the maximum period of six years with the stipulation that a focused evaluation be scheduled in two years to look at the Professional Degrees and Curriculum criterion and the progress that has been made in this area. The focused evaluation is scheduled for 2009. Annual reports must include a response to each condition identified as not met in the Visiting Team Report, a response to each of the causes of concern in the Visiting Team Report, and a brief summary of changes that have been made or may be made in the programs.

Details about the accreditation report are available in the Board Office.