UTSA - University of Texas at San Antonio
College of Architecture (Dean: Dr. John Murphy)
Department of Architecture (Department Chair: Dr. Vincent B. Canizaro)

Date of last accreditation/candidacy visit: February 28 to March 3, 2010

2011 Annual Report Narrative

Part II (Narrative Report) is the narrative report in which a program responds to the most recent Visiting Team Report (VTR). The narrative must address Section 1.4 Conditions Not Met and Section 1.5 Causes of Concern of the VTR. Part II also includes a description of changes to the program that may be of interest to subsequent visiting teams or to the NAAB.

From the Visiting Team Report dated March 3, 2010, approved by NAAB July 2010

Conditions/Criteria Not Met

1.3 Architecture Education and Registration
The accredited degree program must demonstrate that it provides students with a sound preparation for the transition to internship and licensure. The school may choose to explain in the APR the accredited degree program’s relationship with the state registration boards, the exposure of students to internship requirements including knowledge of the national Intern Development Program (IDP) and continuing education beyond graduation, the students’ understanding of their responsibility for professional conduct, and the proportion of graduates who have sought and achieved licensure since the previous visit.

VTR comments
There is a lack of awareness among students of the Intern Development Program and the licensing process. With the new ability of students to receive IDP credit early in their education it is important that this information be given to undergraduate students before they take the profession practice course in graduate school. The lack of a designated IDP coordinator exacerbates this issue. There is also no evidence of communication links to the State Licensing Board [TBAE], which is located relatively close to the College.

UTSA Program Actions
A. Curricular Awareness of IDP:
Efforts documented in the 2010 report continue including the expansion of discussion of the IDP program across the Graduate and Undergraduate Programs. In the Undergraduate program, a course (COA 1113 Introduction to the Built Environment) being taught for the second year to ALL incoming students (the common foundation year with Architecture, Construction Science and Management and Interior Design students) now includes a more enhanced focus on professional practice and ethical considerations in the building trades overall. Specifically, IDP and licensure are subjects discussed by our IDP coordinator (see B below). At the Graduate level, ARC 5133 Professional Practice and Construction in a Global Setting, a required course for all graduate students includes a more directed focus on IDP procedures and policies. The course instructor now regularly invites the Director of the Texas Board of Architectural Examiners (TBAE), the licensing body for professional architects in the State of Texas to speak to the ARC 5133 to this class, thus providing more education and linkage to the TBAE for our students.
B. IDP Coordinator established in 2010:
Most directly, we have appointed Rick Lewis as IDP Coordinator for the Department. He has attended the IDP conferences in Chicago in Summer 2010 and 2011 to keep up to date. He now monitors, A dedicated “Professionalism” posting board in the main Lobby where all students pass that contains information concerning internship opportunities, lectures, State of Texas Architecture licensure (TBAE) announcements and other topics of relevance to students’ professional development. In addition email communication is used for specific communiqués on the same issues.

C. Other Activities:
Other activities have been organized to foster greater IDP and professional practice awareness. These include an annual lecture hosted at the offices of the San Antonio Chapter of the AIA at the end of the spring semester (April 2010 & 2011) at which time the IDP program is described and questions from the student attendees fielded by Texas State IDP Professional Coordinator Mr. Gary Dunn, AIA. In communicating IDP concerns, Texas Board of Architectural Examiners licensure updates (including ARE insights) students and recent UTSA graduates alike are kept abreast of professional agenda matters at one meeting.

In the Fall of 2011 (October) the AIAS Chapter here at the UTSA College of Architecture hosted the South Regional Quad Conference of AIAS student chapters from across the southern US. NCARB Assistance Director Mr. Nick Serfass, AIA, was a guest speaker at the AIAS Conference and addressed IDP awareness and professional development benefits to attendees.

As the Department of Architecture continues to enjoy a very healthy relationship with the San Antonio Chapter of the AIA, numerous opportunities for students to be exposed to the professional design community occur corresponding to AIA sponsored lecture series, intern job posting on the AIA San Antonio web site, and ARE preparation committee endeavors. The Department Chair is serving as an invited advisory member of the AIA’s Board of Directors.

8. Physical Resources
The accredited degree program must provide the physical resources appropriate for a professional degree program in architecture, including design studio space for the exclusive use of each student in a studio class; lecture and seminar space to accommodate both didactic and interactive learning; office space for the exclusive use of each full-time faculty member; and related instructional support space. The facilities must also be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and applicable building codes.

VTR Comments
The significant growth of the program over a short period of time has resulted in challenges in physical resources of the college. An esprit de corps is lacking in the college due to physical deficiencies and many students expressed extreme dissatisfaction with the conditions. Many issues are not acceptable. They include:
1. “Hot desks” in lower level studios. At times two or even three students share the same studio desk.
2. A lack of secure storage for students’ equipment in all studios.
3. Use of an exit corridor for programmatic needs such as design studio jury space and the career fair. This presents life safety issues and is in conflict with code requirements.
4. Lack of a wood shop. This is an on-going problem with no resolution in sight and was identified in the previous accreditation review. The college has the equipment for the shop but it is currently in storage.
5. Lack of student lounge space.
6. Lack of dedicated space for student organization such as AIAS.
7. Insufficient printing and plotting facilities.
8. Lack of office space available for growth of the faculty. Two new tenure-track faculty are expected in the fall of 2010 but there is currently no space available to provide offices for these individuals.
9. Smaller than ideal studio desks for graduate students. Creative approaches to house larger numbers of students have been implemented but this has resulted in compressed workspace.
10. Shared offices. It is not unusual for full-time adjunct faculty to share office space. Efforts are made to pair faculty so that their office needs are not concurrent.
11. Lack of office space for student organizations.
12. Lack of climate control.

The university has developed a downtown campus master plan (copies were provided) that includes development south of the Monterey Building as a first priority over growth that has been identified in other areas of the plan. However, the plan does not specifically address growth needs of the College of Architecture. The college has goals for a new building, but there is no institutionalized plan for implementation; a budget and schedule are not part of the master plan. As a result, there is not clear support for addressing the physical needs of the college at the university level or in the near term.

Students feel the downtown campus is given second-class priority over the 1604 campus and access to cafeterias, bookstore and other facilities is limited. There is not a sense that student fees and tuition is reciprocated back to the college by the administration. Both faculty and students expressed concern about this.

UTSA Program Actions
The UTSA Architecture program has continued to work diligently with the College, University and our Advisory councils on efforts to improve the physical resources available to our students. I will address each of the items above.

A. Re: Issue #1 - “hot desks”
   Efforts mentioned in the 2010 report are now implemented that allow us to control enrollment and thus maximize available resources. Specifically we are now able to eliminate “hot desks” for the Second Year students. This has been made possible by the implementation of the Foundation Year Gateway and selective enrollment process for entry into the Common Foundation Year. Overall this limits the haphazard demands on all resources that were the result of our uncontrolled growth due to the University policy of open enrollment. Shared desks remain for the Foundation year studios, but two strategies have been implemented to ameliorate the need to share. The first is that the classes themselves are structured to be contact intensive during studio hours and the projects are kept small and portable so that most work can be completed as homework. In addition all Foundation year students have storage lockers for their gear. Second, over the summer the “Flex” room (a workspace set with desks, fans, a window and pin-up surfaces) was renovated and opened for those Foundation students to use outside of their scheduled class time.

B. Re: Issue #2 – Storage for all students
   As pointed out above, all foundation year students are provided lockable storage cabinets within the Foundation studio space. There is no structured storage for the remainder of the undergraduate studios (second to third year) as most students choose to bring their own storage bins that they move from studio to studio. In the graduate program half of all desks now include a storage cabinet and efforts to supply more will continue this next year.
C. Re: Issue #3 – Use of Exit Corridor for …
   In 2011, based on the changes made possible by the Gateway (See A above), the undergraduate studios that used to use the hallway for reviews on a casual basis now have dedicated review spaces designated within each “room” or individual studio space. Plans for 2012 include the more permanent installation of these review spaces – pin-up surfaces secured to the wall, dedicated furniture, etc. The hallway in question is now used regularly for the passive display of student works that is rotated on a continuous basis. In addition to this, UTSA has always had a Gallery available for reviews when not otherwise occupied. Plans for 2012 include the renovation of the Gallery. Last, mentioned above in A, the newly renovated “flex” room is outfitted for reviews as well on a temporary event by event basis.

D. Re: Issue #4 – Lack of Woodshop.
   The Fabrication Lab was opened in Fall of 2011, which includes woodworking equipment as well as two laser cutters for model-building and other fabrication opportunities. In the Spring of 2012 at least three studio course sections plan to use the facilities in direct support of their coursework.

E. Re: Issue #5 – Student Lounge space
   As mentioned above the “flex” room has been made available to Freshman students. For other undergraduates the University has established a satellite Café in the Architecture Building which food and drink until 3 pm and serves as a lounge space. The College has plans to add additional outdoor seating and space for students adjacent to the Café. For the Graduates, by nearly doubling the available space there is now sufficient room for a Lounge. For Fall 2011 a space with furniture has been set aside. For 2012, plans are underway to purchase furniture and develop a more established lounge area. Further, the College is currently negotiating for more space on the fourth floor of our building, some of which will be dedicated to Graduate students.

F. Re: Issue #6 & #11 – Space for Student Organizations
   Spaces are currently being allocated for student organizations to serve as office and storage space. These spaces should be available on a preliminary basis in Spring 2012 and finished out by Fall 2012.

G. Re: Issue #7 – Printing and Plotting
   As addressed in the 2010 report, the program added 8 new plotters (3 in each graduate studio + 2 elsewhere).

   Since that last report the program has added 22 additional workstations to our existing labs and an additional Computer Lab with 28 workstations, greatly increasing our computing capacity. Two Laser cutters one with a new workstation are now located in our new Fabrication Lab (See item D above).

H. Re: Issue #8 & #10 Office Space
   In 2011, the Program in consultation with the College has re-assessed space needs throughout the Monterey (Architecture) building to better consolidate faculty with similar interests as well as make available space for future new hires. In addition, mentioned above the possible acquisition of more space within our building (outside tenant is vacating) to further the amelioration of our space needs generally. It is worth noting that in response to the original VPR, the previous Dept Chair disputed part of this criticism as a misunderstanding as there was always sufficient space for the planned two hires.

I. Re: Issue #9 - Graduate Desks
   In 2010, with the expansion of graduate space there was also an expansion of furniture for graduate students. As it stands in 2011, the first year graduate studios are outfitted with larger, more traditional drafting desks. The second year graduate studios continue to
have the smaller desks, but more of them are now provided to each student (1.5 to 2 are now allocated per student) for more work surface area. In addition the expansion allowed for more presentation, layout, and common spaces within the studios as well.

I. Re: Issue #12 – Climate Control
This issue is not well explained in the VTR A perennial University Facilities issue with no near term solution when occupying a building based on centralized HVAC with inoperable windows. In place of the lack of climate control many faculty use the building as a good example of a building not designed for individual climate control and/or a building designed without concern for climate.

J. Re: General Issues discussed in VTR with regard to Physical Resources
The VTR observed out that the current Downtown Campus Master plan does not “specifically address the growth needs of the College.” The university has developed a downtown campus master plan (copies were provided to the visiting team) that includes development to the south and east of the Monterey Building as a first priority for growth pending budget considerations that are made more difficult by the current economic issues facing all states. While the Master Plan does not stipulate specific building occupancies, the consistent dialogue and documentation within the University Administration maintains that the needs of the Architecture program are of utmost concern. As mentioned above (E), an additional 7,500 sf of space in the existing Monterey Building (fourth floor) is currently being negotiated with facilities administration as additional Architecture program space.

13.22 Building Service Systems
Understanding of the basic principles and appropriate application and performance of plumbing, electrical, vertical transportation, communication, security, and fire protection systems

VTR Comments
The students demonstrated understanding of the basic principles and application of plumbing and electrical systems in ARC 5513. There was no evidence of work addressing vertical transportation, communication, security and fire protection systems. We were informed that the new textbook for this course that is in use this semester for the first time addresses these topic areas.

UTSA Program Actions
At the time of the latest NAAB visit (2010) ARC 5513 - Advanced Building Technology and Structures was a relatively new course and had just started using Mechanical and Electrical Equipment for Buildings by Ben Stein which includes sections on Vertical Transportation (Chapter 23) and Signal Equipment/Security, (Part VII) and Fire Protection (Chapter 13). From 2010 forward this text and these concerns have been a part of the course.

13.31 Professional Development
Understanding of the need for architects to provide leadership in the building design and construction process and on issues of growth, development, and aesthetics in their communities.

VTR Comment:
ARC 5133 has a limited discussion of this topic but student course work such as exams, projects or presentation do not address this topic.

UTSA Program Actions
Please see the response to item 1.3 above. In addition specific content has been developed in the ARC 5133 - Professional Practice and Construction in a Global Setting to deal more fully with the leadership role architects play in shaping the nature of the built environment and maintaining a
broader vision of how to positively influence the nature of places where people live and work. The initial assignment is a paper that challenges the master’s students to reflect on professionalism by projecting and documenting their professional aspirations to be explored over the course of the semester. The second assignment, a research paper, asks the students to evaluate a professional practice firm (from all sizes and organizational compositions) in accordance with the targeted company’s market, geographical setting, client type, technological inclinations, etc., and to critically evaluate how well the firm lives up to its resume and web-based claims concerning design philosophy, qualities of architectural achievement, and environmental engagements (among other things) within their communities. Later in the semester, another project requires role playing the part of professional consultant to an imagined development project to facilitate reflection on the licensed architect’s role in harnessing and organizing the abilities of allied professionals, in undertaking relatively complex building and site development campaigns. The students meet with guest architects, developers, etc., that are invited to engage break-out group discussions with students. Such professional guest critics bring a vital real-to-life element to the proceedings of the debates and discussions surrounding the difficulties that the professional faces in getting projects off the ground.

Relating to the ARC 5133 content reinforcements on professionalism, it is important to note that the SA Chapter of the AIA offers a young professionals leadership class, called 2PLP (Professional Practice Leadership Program) each year with recent classes including UTSA CoA graduates. Lastly, ARC 6931- Master’s Project Preparation has been revised in the Fall of 2011 to include the students visiting the offices of governmental planning officials, developers, financial experts and the like in order to familiarize them with the entire context of contemporary practice, as well as to help them situate and develop their capstone Master’s Project Studio project within this wider framework.

Causes of Concern

A. VTR Comment: Student Voice

The Department does not have a formalized method for students to voice opinions or to be appropriately engaged in decision making within the Department. As the College and the Department goes through curricular change and restructuring it is important that a method be found to give the students a voice and to make them feel more a part of the culture of the school. This is a challenge since many students commute have hot desk situations, and, out of financial necessity, have full time or part time jobs.

UTSA Program Actions

Both the College and Department Bylaws are currently under revision and will be addressing this issue. Beyond this, the Department has been actively working and communicating with our student organizations. In January the College will be launching a new website (with Facebook presence) that is intended to facilitate this kind of enhanced communication for students and between students, faculty, and the administration. In addition, the AIAS student president or other representative is invited to participate in all faculty meetings. And most recently (Fall 2011) the College supported the AIAS initiative to host the Southern Quad conference successfully increasing the exposure of AIAS within the college and region.

B. VTR Comment: Full Time Faculty

The college is locate in a large urban area and therefore takes advantage of many talented practitioners to teach studio or other course work. However, to consistently maintain and even raise the academic quality of the program it is important to increase the number of full time tenure-track faculty in proportion to the number of adjunct faculty. This is crucial to the success of the program and the level of quality desired by administration, faculty and students.
In 2010-11 the University has undertaken efforts to increase the amount of full-time faculty, but has continued to receive less support from the state to do so. In 2011, the Voluntary Separation Program was announced by the University as a means to grow the faculty by allowing more experienced and higher paid professors to retire thus freeing up funding for more full-time new hires over the next few years. Currently, the Department of Architecture is searching for 3 to 4 new positions to be filled in Fall 2012 in the areas of Building Technology and Design. In addition, the Office of the Provost has supported a stabilization of funding for more full-time non-tenure track (NTT) faculty, thereby creating a more stable teaching faculty from the NTT ranks. This effort allows us to hire and maintain relationships with faculty and requires those with longer term contracts to commit to serving actively on curriculum and other key committees.

C. VTR Comment: M. Arch 3 Program

As the curriculum changes and the M. Arch 3 Program expands, it is important that the NAAB criteria is fully addressed for all who transfer to UTSA. For example, evidence of concern is seen in meeting criteria related to Non-western Traditions, Human Diversity, Precedents and Human Behavior in the new history and theory elective program studio courses.

UTSA Program Actions

The M.Arch 3 curriculum already includes three courses that are meant to satisfy these 2004 criteria, as well as the new 2009 criterion, A.9. Historical Traditions and Global Culture. These courses are ARC 5612 – History of Modern Architecture that is the graduate version of our undergraduate course ARC 3613 that currently addresses all three of the 2004 criteria. Evidence of this may have been lacking in the 2009 APR due to the fact that many of the preparatory courses required by the M.Arch 3 plan students were not listed in the catalog. They will be a part of the 2012-2014 Graduate Catalog. The M.Arch 3 plan includes all coursework of the M.Arch 2. Within this students are required to take a history elective and the theory/criticism elective each. Courses that are allowed to satisfy this requirement must meet standards that should adequately address the concerns above. Graduate studios are also tasked with enhancing issues of Human Diversity, Behavior, and use of precedents in the course content. The Architecture program at UTSA remains vigilant with regard to these concerns for the M.Arch 3 student education.

D. VTR Comment: Program Self-Assessment

The program has matured and should be doing post-graduation assessment from alumni and practitioners in general. The entire program should be assessed, not just the academic part of the program.

UTSA Program Actions

The architecture program and College are in the process of establishing an alumni network, which will include the kind of assessments mentioned. In addition, the program already seeks feedback from its Advisory Council, which includes local practitioners and other representatives from the community. We anticipate the launch of the new website to enhance these efforts. Moreover, due to increased accreditation requirements from the state and our regional accrediting body SACS, the amount of self-assessment has increased greatly in measures that includes academics, the program as a whole, graduation rates, and student success after graduation.

E. VTR Comment: Human Resources

Due to the rapid expansion of the program and workload of both faculty and staff there is very little time for much of the faculty to pursue research scholarship and professional development. The faculty makes a concerted effort to have time available for exchange with and mentoring of students, a fact greatly appreciated by the students.
F. **VTR Comment: Human Resources Development.**

The faculty has limited opportunities for development through the lack of travel funds. Many members of the faculty finance their own travel in whole or part. Conversely, the faculty has been encouraged to become more active in pursuing research grants, which in the end can raise the reputation of the department.

**UTSA Program Actions**

The architecture faculty have received increased support the University and College to secure more research scholarship via staff appointments and enhanced opportunities. In fiscal year 2011, funded research has increased from $191,740 to $287,426. Every year faculty are supported for travel to conference presentations. In FY 2011, faculty presented their scholarship at 12 national and international conferences. In addition, the College has supported a Faculty Development Leave each year since 2008, faculty participation in the UTSA Leadership program each year 2010 and 2011, participation in a variety of training sessions, and travel to national forums on a variety of issues.

G. **VTR Comment: Financial Resources.**

Financial resources have been growing steadily over the past six years however the rate of growth is minimally adequate to maintain the program. Concerns include physical resources, full time faculty positions, adjunct and full time faculty compensation, support staff positions and faculty and student development opportunities.

**UTSA Program Actions**

The University is still experiencing a decline in revenue provided by the State of Texas from the most recent legislative session. The University and College have continued to find ways to limit the affect of these budget restraints on academic activities and were able to award a one-time Merit bonus in 2010 and a Merit increase for 2011. The College is continuing to expand its development activities to encourage funding from external sources.

Changes in Program since last NAAB visit

**Foundation Year Implementation:**

The 2010 Report documented the planned implementation of a common Foundation Year for all undergraduates in the College of Architecture, which needs no reiteration here. Since last year the program has passed though its first successful cycle. The primary goal of the Foundation sequence is enrollment management that has proved successful allowing us to maximize our use of available resources in instructional faculty as well as instructional space.

**Selective Admission to Foundation Year:**

In 2011, the College also initiated selective admission for incoming Freshman allowing us to admit the highest qualified students into the common Foundation year. Overall both efforts should help UTSA improve the quality of the architecture students as well improve their experience as students at UTSA.

**Increased Technology Infrastructure (incl. Lighting / Sustainability Lab):**

In 2011 the program also expanded its available technology for student use, primarily in the area of energy modeling. The College purchased performance monitoring software, 5 weather meters, 10 energy monitors and infrared thermometers, and 20 sound and light meters at a cost of approx. $18,000. In conjunction and in process is the establishment of a Lighting / Sustainability Laboratory to support our Interior Design and Architecture students in environmental and building technology use and for the testing and evaluation of lighting system performance.

End of UTSA 2011 Annual Report Narrative