Graduate Program Review
Texas Tech University

Program Reviewed: Graduate Programs (MARCH, MS in ARCH, Ph.D.) College of Architecture

Onsite Review Dates: March 24-26 2015

Name of Reviewers
Internal:
Please include name, title, and Department
Dr. Debajyoti Pati, Associate Professor, Department of Design
Dr. Delong Zuo, Associate Professor, Department of Civil Engineering
Dr. Hyojung Cho, Associate Professor, Department of Museum Science and Heritage Management

External:
Please include name, title, and Department
Dr. Charles Graham, Professor and Dean, College of Architecture, University of Oklahoma (AUTHOR OF THIS REPORT)
Lynn Ewanow, Associate Professor and Associate Dean, College of Architecture, Planning and Design, Kansas State University

I. Academic Unit Description and Strategic Plan
Please evaluate the following by marking an X in one of the blanks for each item:

Vision, Mission and Goals
___ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement
Similar programs as most peer schools. What makes the programs at TTU unique? Programs need further articulation.

Strategic Plan
___ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement
College’s strategic plan needs to be updated. Need metrics to be able to track progress.

Please comment on the positive components and suggested areas of improvement.

See accompanying narrative:
Programs need to define, communicate their uniqueness. Good components exist to achieve goals. The Strategic Plan needs to be updated before the NAAB report is submitted for 2016 review. College and program plans need to align with University plan.

II. Program Curriculum

Please evaluate the following: **Master of Architecture**

Alignment of program with stated program and institutional goals and purposes
___ Excellent   ___ Very Good   **X** Good   ___ Needs Improvement

Curriculum development coordination and delivery
___ Excellent   ___ Very Good   **X** Good   ___ Needs Improvement

Program learning outcomes assessment
___ Excellent   ___ Very Good   ___ Good   **X** Needs Improvement

Program curriculum compared to peer programs
___ Excellent   **X** Very Good   ___ Good   ___ Needs Improvement

Please evaluate the following by marking an X in one of the blanks for each item:

Please evaluate the following: **Master of Science in Architecture**

Alignment of program with stated program and institutional goals and purposes
___ Excellent   ___ Very Good   **X** Good   ___ Needs Improvement

Curriculum development coordination and delivery
___ Excellent   ___ Very Good   **X** Good   ___ Needs Improvement

Program learning outcomes assessment
___ Excellent   ___ Very Good   ___ Good   **X** Needs Improvement

Program curriculum compared to peer programs
___ Excellent   ___ Very Good   **X** Good   ___ Needs Improvement

Please evaluate the following by marking an X in one of the blanks for each item:

See accompanying narrative:
The M.S. in Architecture is a research-based degree program and as such needs to clearly exhibit the pursuit of new knowledge in a science-based curriculum.

All programs need a good outcomes assessment process. Information obtained must be followed and programs adjusted according to the information received.

*Please evaluate the following: Doctor of Philosophy in Land Use Management, Planning and Design*

**Alignment of program with stated program and institutional goals and purposes**

___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     _X_ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

Offering the PhD is in alignment—the program needs improvement as suggested by the self-study.

**Curriculum development coordination and delivery**

___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     _X_ Needs Improvement

**Program learning outcomes assessment**

___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     _X_ Needs Improvement

**Program curriculum compared to peer programs**

___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     _X_ Needs Improvement

*Narrative:*

The Ph.D. program is diffused because students are primarily lead by faculty in other departments on campus. The College of Architecture should regain control of the students’ programs for closer oversight in architecture-related topics to build a body of literature relevant to the College’s mission. This reviewer believes the program is not ready, as it currently exists, to compete with peer programs in architecture and the allied disciplines.

Reviewers 6 years ago said the Ph.D. program was a low performing program. This reviewer agrees that it is still a low performing program with little benefit to the College unless the adjustments above are achieved.

*Please evaluate the following by marking an X in one of the blanks for each item:*

**III. Faculty Productivity**

*Please evaluate the following by marking an X in one of the blanks for each item:*

**Qualifications**

**MARCH Program:**

___ Excellent     _X_ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

**M.S. and Ph.D. Programs:**
If the University wants the College to grow the MS and PhD programs, the current programs need improvement. Comments as to how to do this are made elsewhere in this report.

**Publications**
___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

The information contained in the self-study report made it difficult to determine the range and quality of all of the programs.

**Teaching Load**
___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

The idea that the Dean seeks input on teaching evaluations from others on the leadership team is good. This would tend to make the evaluations fairer based on broader input from peers/administrators with different perspectives.

**External Grants**
___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

More faculty need to be involved in professional activities at the local, regional and national levels.

**Community Service**
___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

Varies by faculty member, but overall, a spirit of cooperation and giving back to the community seemed to be strong among most faculty we talked to.

Please comment on the positive components and suggested areas of improvement.

See accompanying narrative:

The College of Architecture overall has a good faculty, with a good balance between researchers and practitioners.

**IV. Students and Graduates**

*Please evaluate the following by marking an X in one of the blanks for each item: Master of Architecture*

**Time to degree**
___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement
Retention
___ Excellent ___ Very Good _X_ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Graduate rates
___ Excellent ___ Very Good _X_ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Enrollment
___ Excellent _X_ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Demographics
___ Excellent ___ Very Good _X_ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Need more data to adjust student recruitment and retention efforts.

The College needs to recruit from outside its student body, especially for the M.S. and Ph.D. programs.

Number of degrees conferred annually
___ Excellent _X_ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Support Services
_X_ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Job Placement
_X_ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Student/ Faculty Ratio
___ Excellent _X_ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Please comment on the positive components and suggested areas of improvement
(See below.)

Master of Science in Architecture

Time to degree
___ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good _X_ Needs Improvement
Time to degree varies from 2.5-4.5 years. Need to find ways in curriculum to make it possible for students to graduate on more consistent time frames.

Retention
___ Excellent ___ Very Good _X_ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Graduate rates
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**Please comment on the positive components and suggested areas of improvement**

**Doctor of Philosophy in Land Use Planning, Management and Design**

**Time to degree**

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**Number of degrees conferred annually**
Please evaluate the following by marking an X in one of the blanks for each item:

**Support Services**

X Excellent  Very Good  Good  Needs Improvement

**Job Placement**

X Excellent  Very Good  Good  Needs Improvement

Could not tell due to incomplete data.

**Student/ Faculty Ratio**

X Excellent  Very Good  Good  Needs Improvement

Please comment on the positive components and suggested areas of improvement

Attention to student recruitment strategies pertinent to specific degree need needs to be clarified and communicated clearly to the faculty so they know what is going on and why, and, to become owners of efforts and programs to increase enrollment numbers and quality of programs.

Need more scholarships.

V. Facilities and Resources

Please evaluate the following by marking an X in one of the blanks for each item:

**Facilities**

X Excellent  Very Good  Good  Needs Improvement

**Facility Support Resources**

X Excellent  Very Good  Good  Needs Improvement

**Financial Resources**

X Excellent  Very Good  Good  Needs Improvement

**Staff Resources**

X Excellent  Very Good  Good  Needs Improvement

Please comment on the positive components and suggested areas of improvement

Good facilities, resources.

Need to continue advancing technologies in educational programs.
VI. Overall Ranking

Please provide summative conclusions based on the overall review.

Narrative:

The MARCH graduate program is a program of merit. It is of high quality.

The MS program is also a good program, but it has some room for improvement. For example, if the University wants it to be research based, then the pursuit of new knowledge and true research must be taught to the students and their thesis projects must reflect that pursuit of new knowledge with the rigor of scholars.

The Ph.D. program is currently too diffused around campus to really be considered a College of Architecture doctoral program. Oversight, management, and advising needs to be brought into the College for all students in this program.

There seems to be good placement of graduates.

Further efforts to build a good faculty that is responsive to contemporary practice and contemporary educational approaches for architects is required.

The facilities are very good.

Please provide summative recommendations based on the overall review.

Narrative:

The College’s Strategic Plan needs to be updated.

There needs to be more travel funds to get faculty out giving papers, conference proceedings etc. to project the image and impact of the College.

The College needs outcomes assessment data immediately for strategic planning. Also, this data will be required in the next NAAB accreditation review.

The College and it’s programs need to define their uniqueness based on regional needs and strengths.

The College needs a clear enrollment strategy with targets and milestones in it.

There was some evidence of low morale in certain faculty. While this can never be completely overcome, the College leadership needs to keep working on addressing the issues causing this. More conversations with the faculty about their needs would probably help improve morale.
Graduate students can be used to help faculty do more research and scholarship. Doctoral students are especially good to employ because they are usually in residence longer than Masters students, and, they have higher skill levels.

More theory should be taught in courses. Theory helps to balance practical information so architecture students have a good grounding in their design explorations.

Communication of the College’s vision and mission statement to outside constituents, alumni, professionals etc. is paramount to awareness. The College has a powerful story that needs to be told.

The faculty is weighted towards Full Professors (10) and tenured (12) with only 2 on tenure track. Visiting adjuncts (14 instructors, with 7 artists) poses certain challenges. More tenure track professors are needed to bring new perspectives to programs and also to seed the next generation of faculty leadership. Adjunct instructors do not always have the long term perspective that tenured or tenure track faculty have, which is not always good for strategic planning and implementation of long term program goals. Increasing the proportion of junior level tenure track faculty would mitigate the two issues. This does not, however, discount the potential for great contributions made by Full Professors and Instructors. They are necessary to give richness and expertise to professional programs. The recommendation is to increase the proportion of junior and mid-level faculty to complement the full professors and instructors.

*(See additional narrative in separate document.)*
1. **Excellence of teaching** - The quality of instruction seems to be very good. The tri-tiered studios – normal, topical, and accelerated provide good variety and for students so directed, challenges for excellence in education.

2. **Quality and quantity of research and scholarly activity** - This is lacking in some cases, but publications, especially books, was impressive.

3. **Effective organization and operation of the department and use of staff and facilities** - The organizational structure of the college seemed to be appropriate for operations.

4. ** Appropriateness and completeness of offerings** - The offerings seemed to be appropriate when compared to peers. The students, however, desired more collaboration classes.

5. **Ratio of degree production, considering staff and enrollment** - Seemed to be equivalent to peers.

6. **Quality of students (background and performance)** - Quality of students, as indicated on standardized test scores, was competitive.

7. **Effectiveness of academic counseling and guidance program** - Very good counseling and advising was available.

8. **Student-faculty communication in general** - Seemed to be very good.

9. **Faculty and student support** - The printing center, especially, was impressive. Labs and lecture spaces were very good too. Providing only $500 per faculty member annually for travel is insufficient. More travel funds are needed so faculty can represent the College in academic and professional venues.

10. **Library and research support** - Very good library and research support. The Library was staffed by capable people, and the faculty committee overseeing the Library was engaged in detailed operations of the Library.

11. **Adequacy of facilities and equipment** - Labs and studios, especially in the digital fabrication areas, were first rate.
12. **Definition, understanding, and acceptance of program goals** - This is where there was some confusion, especially on the faculty’s part. More discussions and input from the faculty would help to explain, clarify and implement the mission and goals of the College.

13. **Student and faculty awareness of degree requirements** - Students generally seemed to be aware of the degree requirements. Certificate programs need more explanation to students so they know what the benefits are.

14. **Willingness to collaborate in interdisciplinary academic programs** - The College’s definition of “interdisciplinary” programs is limited because all programs in the College are focused on architecture. Work with other units on campus would help students to learn how to collaborate with other, allied disciplines. The students desired more collaboration classes in their programs.

15. **Quality of supporting programs** - Good.

16. **Quality of graduates** - Good.

17. **Post degree performance of graduates** - Unable to determine due to incomplete data. Passing rates on the architect’s exam and post-graduate surveys would help to determine this.

18. **How is distance education being incorporated into their program(s)** - Unsure due to incomplete information.

19. **Are there a large number of dual-listed courses with undergraduate courses** - Unsure.

20. **Have a significant number of junior faculty left during this time period** - There does not seem to be a lot of faculty turnover. The College has, however, become “top-heavy” with Full Professors. During the meeting with the faculty, it was mentioned that more junior (Assistant Tenure Track) and mid-career faculty (Associate Professors) were desired.

21. **Are a large number of courses taught with less than 10 students per semester** - Unsure.

22. **Does the survey from students show critical gaps in the program or it operation** - Outcomes assessments are lacking, but recommended. The upcoming NAAB accreditation report will require this.

23. **Lack of facilities to conduct the research** - The facilities are in place to support a strong research program.
24. **Are the faculty serving on committees outside of their department and college?** – Yes, it appeared so. Community engagement off campus was very evident.

**Miscellaneous narrative:**

1. What is missing in offerings, research and educational initiatives that might be considered opportunities for moving programs towards excellence?
   a. Sustainable design
   b. Climate response
   c. Coordination of collaborative unites in health care research (across campus)
   d. Rural town technical assistance; should have a regional focus
   e. Consider where the College is located and how it can help communicate regional significance, help in history of the region, and assist with economic development

2. Messages that could be delivered to faculty, students, staff and alumni:
   a. The College is changing.
   b. Curriculum changes are necessary.
   c. University expectations towards more research is a contemporary reality. If the University is going to become a flagship school in Texas, it has to demonstrate research productivity and academic excellence.
   d. In the College of Architecture there is an appropriate drive towards more digital expertise in both fabrication and media.
   e. Changes in the health care programs across campus are occurring. The College has to align with many of those.
   f. Engagement in communities through urban design is required to build expertise and to give students contemporary experiences they will encounter in their careers.
   g. The College has, in fact, come a long way in the past decade towards being responsive to learning opportunities.

3. As expressed by the College leadership, the Vision is (This reviewer agrees that these are valid objectives…):
   a. To be good communicators.
   b. The leadership and the faculty should expect growth, especially by facilitating programs.
   c. The students are the next generation of practitioners who can make a better world.
   d. Merging disciplinary and intellectual dimensions in architectural education will move the College forward in terms of quality educational programs.