

## **Georgia Institute of Technology**

School of Architecture, College of Architecture

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Last Accreditation Visit in **2008**

### **Part II (Narrative Report)**

Georgia Tech submitted a Special Focused Evaluation Program Report in June 2010 as required by NAAB's 2008 accreditation decision. Based NAAB's letter of October 22, 2010 finding satisfactory resolution of deficiencies in the areas of Human Resources and Financial Resources, this Annual Report focuses only upon the remaining deficiencies cited in the 2008 Visiting Team Report. These include previous findings of deficiencies in the area of Physical Resources and with regard to three Student Performance Criteria.

#### **1.4. Conditions/Criteria Not Met**

##### **8. Physical Resources**

###### **Team Comments:**

*The Visiting Team notes that relative to physical resources, the issues identified in the 2002 VTR and in 1997 relative to adequate studio space and dedicated faculty offices still exist today without significant remedy and remain a concern. While some new studio space in the Hinman Building was made available to the Program, forming the basis for the cancellation of the 2005 Focused Visit, large recent increases in undergraduate enrollment have eroded or even reversed the impact of these modest spatial gains. Additional space anticipated in the Special Report has been a victim of a line-item veto by the State Legislature. While the Program has been resourceful in space utilization, there is no guarantee that necessary improvements will be realized. The Team is informed that the Governor's current budget includes a \$6.4 million earmark for the Program's physical improvements, and that it is likely to be signed shortly, but the shortage, if not addressed will sustain lower than acceptable conditions affecting both faculty and student performance. Phasing Plans for future improvements are not clearly articulated.*

*In addition to studio space, student storage, pin-up areas, and acoustics remain as concerns. Exclusive office space is not available for each full-time tenured or tenure-track member of the faculty. Part-time faculty complain of not having a dedicated space for student conferences. Exhibition space remains largely unsecured.*

###### **Program Response:**

The project for the renovation of the Hinman Building is nearing completion with move-in scheduled for December 2010 in time for the beginning of Winter/Spring semester 2011. This is an exciting project which has generated much anticipation and promises to have a transformative effect upon the spirit and performance of the entire school. In addition to the \$6.4 million in state funds, Georgia Tech has earmarked an additional \$2.5 million for the project. The Boston firm of Office d'A is teamed with the Atlanta firm of Lord Aeck Sargent for the project which includes restoration of the circa 1939 building fabric and adaptive reuse of the high-bay workshop as studio space for the Master of Architecture program accommodating approximately 140 design stations. The renovation will include formal and informal jury spaces, accommodations for digital output, research space for the digital design and building performance groups, and seven faculty offices. The move of M.Arch. students into this facility will allow more capacious accommodations for undergraduate students in architecture and other disciplines within the main College of Architecture building. Since January 2010, approximately 75 graduate students in architecture have been accommodated in a satellite studio space (which has been refurbished to include jury/pin-up space, seminar room, and digital output) located in a commercial zone adjacent to campus and a short walk from the College of Architecture.

13.25 Construction Cost Control

**Team Comments:**

*While construction estimating is briefly addressed in the Professional Practice required class, no evidence was found that any student in the Program produced even a superficial cost evaluation or estimate of any project.*

**Program Response:**

While the Architecture Program accepts NAAB's judgment of its deficiency in this area to the level of *ability*—as suggested in the Visiting Team's comments above—it nonetheless is attempting to address any question of deficiency in student performance with regard to *understanding*. First, we have noted the change in scope of this Student Performance Criterion (SPC) between 2004 and 2009:

**2004 Conditions**

25. Construction Cost Control *Understanding of the fundamentals of building cost, life-cycle cost, and construction estimating.*

**2009 Conditions**

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.*

We are responding to this new more inclusive approach through appropriate coverage of financial considerations in the Professional Practice course and by including life cycle cost considerations in our technical courses—structures, construction technology, and environmental systems. Furthermore, Building Information Modeling (BIM) approaches where integrated into design studio instruction are providing an important analytical tool aiding in the inventory and comparison of material quantities and costs. Elective course offerings available through the School of Building Construction's degree program in facility management also provide a resource for students in this area.

13.26 Technical Documentation

**Team Comments:**

*While specifications are briefly covered in the Professional Practice class, no evidence was found that any student in the Program was required to produce an outline specification.*

**Program Response:**

As reported last year, School of Architecture faculty agreed through curriculum reviews and discussions that this deficiency should be addressed through inclusion of outline specification writing in our Construction Technology II course. During Spring 2010, that course was reformatted to directly interface with our Options II Studio, the two together forming the basis of our key demonstrable efforts in Comprehensive Design (see below). This approach is being further refined in Spring 2011.

13.28 Comprehensive Design

**Team Comments:**

*The Program has focused on large scale projects which evaluate macro scale contextual impacts, programming issues, and responsiveness to sustainable design concerns, and students have exhibited an ability to produce plans, sections, and elevations. But this commendable work has been at the expense of clearly integrating the various building*

*systems required under this specific Criterion. Structural and environmental systems are only superficially indicated in the comprehensive design studio work, and building envelope systems, assemblies, and some aspects of life-safety are not well demonstrated at an Ability level.*

**Program Response:**

As mentioned above, the School of Architecture is further refining the efforts begun last year in co-joining the Options II Studio and the Construction Technology II courses toward the agenda of achieving greater design integration in the students' work of matters of envelope systems and assemblies. Greater attention will be paid here as well to life safety concerns in matters of egress, structural planning, and fire safety considerations. A further innovation being implemented this year is the inclusion of a structures tutor (an individual trained as both an architect and engineer and involved in delivery of our structures coursework) as part of the design studio instructional team in our Core III and Options II studio levels.

**Changes in Program since last NAAB visit**

- Organizational Changes
  - Effective January 1, 2010, the College of Architecture was administratively reorganized into five distinct schools: Architecture, Building Construction, City & Regional Planning, Industrial Design, and Music. Each school is headed by a School Chair.
  - The School of Architecture, the unit responsible for Georgia Tech's NAAB-accredited professional degree program, now encompasses the Master of Architecture plus the following additional degree programs: Doctor of Philosophy, Master of Science in Architecture, Master of Science in Urban Design, Bachelor of Science in Architecture. The new School of Architecture was created from the fusion of two formerly separate units, the Architecture Program and the Ph.D. Program.
- Changes in Leadership
  - Professor George B. Johnston, previously serving in the position of Director of the Professional Program in Architecture, was appointed to the position of Interim Chair of the School of Architecture effective January 1, 2010. An advertised search was commenced at that time to fill the Chair position on a permanent basis. On-campus interviews were held during Fall Semester 2010 and the appointment of a new school chair is immanent.
  - During this transitional period, Associate Professor Michael Gamble has been serving in the role of Curriculum Coordinator for Professional and Pre-Professional Programs in Architecture; and Professor John Peponis has likewise been serving in the role of Curriculum Coordinator of Post-Professional Programs in Architecture.
- Changes in Faculty
  - Professor Elizabeth M. Dowling retired after over forty years of service as a leader in the area of architectural history.
  - Faculty Searches were successfully concluded to fill vacant positions and build strategic strengths in the areas of Digital Design & Fabrication, High Performance Building, and Architectural Design. Four individuals were hired:
    - Assistant Professor Tristan Al-Haddad (M.Arch, B.S.Arch., Georgia Tech) in the area of Digital Design and Fabrication
    - Assistant Professor Daniel Baerlecken (Dip. Ing., RWTH Aachen University) in the area of Digital Design and Fabrication
    - Assistant Professor Jason Brown (Ph.D. in Architecture, M.S.C.E., Georgia Tech) in the area of Building Performance
    - Assistant Professor Minjung Maing (M.Arch., MIT; M.S.C.E., Stanford) in the area of Building Performance

- Associate Professors Ellen Dunham Jones and George Barnett Johnston were each promoted to the rank of Professor.