

SPECIAL FOCUSED EVALUATION REPORT

PREPARED FOR THE

NATIONAL ARCHITECTURAL ACCREDITING BOARD

REGARDING THE

MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE PROFESSIONAL DEGREE PROGRAM

**SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE
GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY**

SUBMITTED BY

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PROGRAM RESPONSES TO ISSUES OF CONCERN

As outlined in the accreditation decision letter from the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB) dated July 22, 2008, Georgia Tech is required to prepare a Special Program Focused Evaluation Report due June 1, 2010 in the areas of **Human Resources** and **Financial Resources**.

The Visiting Team’s concerns with regard to these two areas—Human Resources and Financial Resources—are particularly intertwined and inter-connected. The 2008 VTR found that increased enrollments combined with reduced revenues had led to a sacrifice in quality of instruction through the employment of increasing numbers of part-time instructors. As detailed below, the School of Architecture has moved aggressively in a short time to control enrollments, enhance revenues (even during a period of economic downturn), and rebalance and build quality in the mix of full-time/tenure-track and part-time instructors in the pre-professional and professional degree programs.

Condition 6: HUMAN RESOURCES

While the VTR finds Condition 6 “Met,” the report notes:

An area of growing concern is the enlargement of the undergraduate program. Full-time faculty hires have not kept up with this increase; the added students since the past visit have largely been handled by part-time instructors. Concern was expressed by faculty that some students can now move through the entire undergraduate program and not have a full-time faculty member in studio. (VTR p.10).

In addition, the Summary of Team Findings cites the following among its Causes for Concern:

The Team is concerned that, beyond the studio and faculty office space deficiencies, the significant relative loss of funding to the Program from the Institution with a concurrent increase in enrollment has caused the Program administration to hire less qualified part-time studio instructors than a professional degree program of the quality at Georgia Tech should provide to students. With an increasing number of current hires being either relatively recent graduates or unlicensed professionals, the lack of technical experience and expertise is evidenced in student work in the Comprehensive Design studios. The Program needs to redress this deficiency immediately. (VTR p. 4).

Program Response:

In response to the 2008 VTR concerns, Georgia Tech has moved to stabilize undergraduate enrollment at a more sustainable level and to fill vacant positions in the full-time corps of instruction with highly qualified tenure-track faculty members.

Enrollment. The spike in undergraduate enrollment cited as a Visiting Team concern in 2008 has been brought under control through adjustments in Georgia Tech’s centralized admissions process for entering undergraduate students. Management of the number of internal transfers into the College of Architecture from the Institute-at-large remains a challenge, however, as Georgia Tech students in good standing with less than sixty credit hours are automatically given the prerogative of electing one change of major without penalty.

Whether entering as freshmen or as internal/external transfer students, all undergraduate majors in the College of Architecture—including Architecture, Building Construction, and Industrial Design—must first matriculate through the Common First Year (CFY) before declaring a major in one of the three respective fields. Freshman enrollment in the College of Architecture reached a peak of 223 students in 2004 with CFY enrollment totaling 280. By Fall 2009 freshman enrollment in the COA was 134 while combined freshman and transfer students enrolled in the CFY totaled 186.

Freshman & Sophomore Enrollment 2002-2010

Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010*
COA Freshmen	149	161	223	196	201	192	155	134	105*
COA Common 1st Yr.	206	202	280	228	243	215	193	186	150*
B.S.Arch. Sophomores	61	89	83	121	116	98	80	56	83*

* = projected enrollments

Undergraduate enrollment in the School of Architecture (not to be confused with the *College* of Architecture) is comprised of the total of those sophomores who—following the CFY—elect Architecture as their major plus all continuing junior- and senior-level students in the major. (In the chart above, for example CFY enrollment of 186 in Fall 2009 is yielding an enrollment of 83 Sophomores with a major in architecture in Fall 2010.) The peak freshman enrollment period of 2004-2007 has thus resulted in increased enrollment at the other levels in the undergraduate curriculum in subsequent years. Projections show undergraduate student enrollment in the School of Architecture stabilizing at about 200 students by Fall 2010. Over the last three years, graduate student enrollment, including both Master of Architecture and post-professional Master of Science students, has remained steady between 130 and 140 students. Thus, from a peak enrollment of 380 students in 2007, pre-professional and professional program enrollment in the School of Architecture will be approximately 322 students in Fall 2010.

School of Architecture Enrollment 2002-2010

Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010*
SOA B.S.Arch. Enrollment	180	195	211	248	246	244	235	209	190*
SOA M.Arch. Enrollment	146	116	105	109	125	136	137	138	132*
TOTAL	326	311	316	357	371	380	372	347	322*

* = projected enrollments

Maintenance of enrollment at these levels is sustainable within current staffing and resource levels allowing an optimal mix of full-time/tenure-track and part-time instruction in architectural design studios as described below.

Faculty Composition and Credentials.

As noted in the 2008 VTR, increases in student enrollment were largely being accommodated mid-decade through the employment of an increased number of part-time instructors in both undergraduate and graduate level architectural design studios. Control of undergraduate enrollment has been a key factor in re-establishing a more proper balance between full-time/tenure-track and part-time instruction in architectural design studios. While 56% of undergraduate and graduate studio sections were taught by part-time instructors in AY 2008-2009, the proportion of part-time studio instruction was slightly reduced to 53% in AY 2009-2010.

B.S.Arch./M.Arch. Studio Sections Taught

	FT/TT	PT	TOTAL
2008-2009	24	30	54
2009-2010	23	26	49
2010-2011*	31	17	48

FT/TT = Full-Time / Tenure-Track Faculty

PT = Part-Time Faculty

* = Projected May 2010

Next year, AY 2010-2011, we project that only 35% of the studio sections will be taught by part-time instructors. This more dramatic reduction in part-time studio instruction is being achieved through the hiring of four new tenure-track faculty members, three of whom are well-qualified to teach both pre-professional and professional level architectural design studios and each with prior years of experience in architectural practice and education and well-considered research agendas. The fourth individual, a mechanical engineer by discipline, will contribute as a collaborator in the professional program's agenda of sustainable design and technical integration as well as in the advanced studies programs in the area of high performance buildings. A fifth individual newly hired in Spring 2009, an architectural historian, represents a new faculty position made available through the Georgia Tech Provost's Office as a "target of opportunity" hire. Thus, two of these five hires are females, and another proposal has been submitted to the Provost for an additional or sixth "target of opportunity" hire as we continue to pursue a strategy of building diversity in terms of gender and ethnic representation on the

faculty. A decision from the Office of the Provost on this latter proposal had not been reached at the time of this special report.

With these additions, the full-time corps of instruction across all programs in the School of Architecture—including B.S.Arch., M.Arch., M.S., and Ph.D. will be comprised of 32 individuals, 20 of whom are licensed architects (including 8 licensed in non-US jurisdictions) and 16 of whom hold the Doctor of Philosophy degree. Another four faculty members hold professional degrees in architecture, though they are not currently licensed. Additionally, the full-time faculty includes one licensed landscape architect and three engineers. One of the new hires holds both architecture and engineering degrees at both graduate and undergraduate levels. Of the 18 full-time faculty who regularly teach design studios in the pre-professional and professional programs, 15 are licensed architects, one is in the process of obtaining licensure, and two others hold professional degrees in architecture though they are not licensed.

The part-time faculty participating in design studio instruction during AY 2009-2010 included 19 individuals, 15 of whom were licensed architects. Our staffing projection for AY 2010-2011 design studios includes 12 part-time instructors, 10 of whom are licensed architects (three in non-US jurisdictions) and two of whom are in the process obtaining licensure. Eight of these individuals are principals or partners in architectural firms. This group brings a broad range of prior experience in both national and international architectural firms including: Perkins+Will Architects, Zaha Hadid Architects, Peter Eisenman Architects, Kohn Pedersen and Fox, Mack Scogin Merrill Elam Architects, John Portman & Associates, Swanke Hayden Connell Architects, Venturi Scott Brown & Associates, and Lord Aeck Sargent Architects.

Additions and replacements of full-time/tenure-track positions are allowing us to reduce the program's dependency upon part-time design studio instructors, and the part-time instructors we are hiring are being carefully considered in terms of the professional experiences they bring to our overall instructional profile. Several Professors of the Practice of Architecture drawn from the ranks of local firms now serve as members of our corps of instruction; and new funding has now been requested from the Institute to hire two additional Professors of Practice in the areas of Architectural Design and Building Technology and Architectural Design and Global Practice in order to further leverage Georgia Tech's proximity to the expertise available in Atlanta's broad and deep array of cutting-edge, global architectural practices.

Condition 10: FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The 2008 VTR found Condition 10 “Not Met” and commented:

Relative to the number of students taught, the Program’s financial resources have eroded since the 2002 Visit. Both the faculty and the administration of the Program express general concern that the quality of specific aspects of the Program is currently declining. This is most evidenced in the students’ studio work, most likely the consequence of inexperience in technical mentoring, the result of less experienced, unlicensed faculty. As studio is the central element of architectural education, it is of considerable concern. Impacts on educational quality also may affect faculty morale and retention. (VTR, p. 12).

Some aspects of this result from widespread conditions at the Institute and are largely beyond the College's or Department's control. Program faculty raises have been very modest over this period (approximately 11%). The Program's dedicated budget has only increased by approximately 16% since the prior visit (some of this increase results from the recent establishment of an endowed chair).

In the context of the large enrollment increases that the Program has faced, such relatively static budgetary allocation proves problematic. Student growth has been much higher than faculty growth. The Program is currently holding at least one faculty line open in order to use the funds to pay part-time instructors. Part-time instructors' compensation is below both national norms of architecture programs in major cities and of competing regional programs as well. Faculty discussed recent erosions of general funds for expenditures in the department for a dedicated lecture series for the department, for the full funding of trips to professional conferences, and for exhibitions.

The President informed the Team that the financial resources coming to every College were proportional to the actual enrollment from two years prior to the current year. This suggests that the "bulge" which so stressed the physical and financial resources of the Program during the past two years should be substantially alleviated by next year assuming the dean assigns the architecture program its share of the increase. Between 2002 and 2008 , the state's allocation increased 41.6%. The college of architecture's allocation increased only 36.6%, and the architecture program's allocation increased 17.8%, while enrollment increased 40% in 2004. As it significantly impacts this Program, adequate financial resources requires confirmation in the coming two years.

The Program has hired a Development Officer to develop a fundraising strategy and implement it as soon as possible. Coming from the world of non-profit arts programs, she appears confident in the potential to expand contributions to the Program.

Program Response:

The global economic downturn has significantly affected tax revenues in the State of Georgia during the last two fiscal years. This has in turn led to revenue reductions within the University System of Georgia, including Georgia Tech. During fiscal year 2009, the net reduction to the College of Architecture Budget was 4.6%, and in the current fiscal year, 2010, the reduction totaled 3%. Additionally, faculty and staff were required to observe six mandatory unpaid furlough days during the most recent academic year.

Despite this setback, however, several factors have mitigated the reductions creating a sense of optimism about the long-term budgetary prospects for the Master of Architecture program and the School of Architecture as a whole. The allocation of enrollment impact funds (FY 2009), the adoption of a differential tuition assessment, the initiation of a summer tuition incentive, and the addition of one full-time faculty line through a target of opportunity hire have cumulatively contributed to the achievement of positive growth in the School of Architecture’s “bottom-line” funding during a period of State budget recisions. Our projection (below) illustrates the anticipated budgetary situation for FY 2011 assuming another 3% across-the-board budget cut next year. Indeed, positive growth in the operating funds of the pre-professional and professional programs can be maintained with cuts as high as 8% based upon the supplemental revenue streams, the particular aspects of which are described below.

School of Architecture Budget 2009-2011

	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011*
Full-time Faculty and Staff	\$2,417,770	\$2,492,770	\$2,492,770
Other Personal Services	\$409,887	\$389,887	\$329,887
Non-Personal Services	\$92,134	\$92,134	\$65,434
TOTAL	\$2,919,791	\$2,974,791	\$2,888,091
FY Budget Cut	-\$104,780	-\$86,700	-\$86,643
Enrollment Impact	\$97,000	\$0	\$0
Differential Tuition	\$0	\$125,540	\$350,000
Summer Salary Incentive	\$0	\$33,400	\$65,000
GRAND TOTAL	\$2,912,011	\$3,047,031	\$3,216,448

* = Budget Projection, assuming a 3% cut in State Allocations

Enrollment Impact

In order to help the School of Architecture cope with the impact of the undergraduate enrollment spike mid-decade, the Institute provided a budgetary supplement to the program of approximately \$100,000 a year for three years, in Fiscal Years 2007-2009. Since this funding was not a permanent allocation, it could not be used to support new full-time/tenure-track hires; rather, the funding was used in a tactical manner to support the hiring of part-time faculty for design studio instruction. It is this practice that the 2008 VTR criticized. While this approach filled a short-term need, more sustainable supplementary funding sources are again allowing a more strategic approach to long-term staffing needs.

Differential Tuition

With an argument significantly bolstered by NAAB’s findings about the eroding financial integrity of Georgia Tech’s professional program in architecture, the School of Architecture proposed, Georgia Tech’s administration strongly supported, and the Board of Regents of the State of Georgia approved a plan to assess an additional “differential” tuition for all students matriculating into the Master of Architecture Program. This differential tuition assessment has created a significant new revenue stream earmarked specifically for support of and enhancements to the professional program. Beginning with Fall semester 2009, each new student entering the M.Arch. Program is being assessed an additional \$1995 per semester, the sum of which is being returned directly to the School. After the new tuition rate is phased in over the next three years, this assessment will produce a new income stream to the M.Arch. Program of approximately \$500,000 per year. This places the Master of Architecture Program tuition at the mid-point of its public peer institutions.

Estimated Differential Tuition 2009-2012

	Enrolled Summer	Enrolled 1st Year	Enrolled 2nd Year	Enrolled 3rd Year	Enrolled Total	Differential Tuition
2009-2010 (FY10)			31		31	\$125,540
2010-2011 (FY11)	18	24	32	32	106	\$375,024
2011-2012 (FY12)	18	24	48	48	138	\$502,704

Summer Incentive Funding

Recent State-mandated budget recisions put summer instruction at risk because funding set aside by each academic unit for summer salaries from its fiscal year allocations was vulnerable to the mid-year cuts. In order to incentivize summer instruction, the Institute agreed to return to academic units any tuition income from summer enrollment above and beyond an assigned base line number of credit hours. This approach has yielded a modest yet significant new revenue stream for the School of Architecture, and demand from students for summer instruction options is growing. In FY 2010, over \$33,000 was returned to the School of Architecture based upon this new policy, and it is estimated that net revenue from the current summer sessions, to be credited in FY 2011, will exceed \$65,000.

New Endowment Funding

As described in our 2009 NAAB Annual Report, an endowment established by the T. Gordon Little Foundation has made possible the award of approximately six fellowships per year to be used in the recruitment of the most qualified applicants into the Master of Architecture Program. Supplemental returns from that endowment also supported a prominent lecture series in the preceding academic year. Additionally, an annual lecture by a prominent practitioner of landscape architecture has been endowed by alumni and friends in the name of Architecture faculty member and Senior Associate Dean Douglas C. Allen.

CHANGES IN OUR ACCREDITED PROGRAM SINCE 2008

Changes in Administration and Administrative Structure

- July 2008: Professor Alan Balfour, Dean of the School of Architecture at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute appointed Dean of the College of Architecture at Georgia Tech
- June 2009: Professor Ellen Dunham-Jones steps down as Director of the Architecture Program in order to return to full-time teaching and research
- July 2009: Professor George B. Johnston is appointed Director of the Master of Architecture Program
- July 2009: Associate Dean Sabir Khan serves as Director of the Bachelor of Science in Architecture Program
- January 2010: The College of Architecture is administratively reorganized from academic “programs” into five schools with autonomous budgets. These are the Schools of Architecture, Building Construction, City & Regional Planning, Industrial Design, and Music. The School of Architecture includes four degree programs: Bachelor of Science in Architecture, Master of Architecture, Master of Science, and Doctor of Philosophy.
- January 2010: Professor George B. Johnston is appointed Interim Chair of the School of Architecture. A search committee is formed to seek candidates for the position of Chair of the School of Architecture.

Changes in Faculty: Departures

- 2008: Assistant Professor Ruchi Choudhary accepts a position at the University of Cambridge in the United Kingdom
- 2009: Assistant Professor Franca Trubiano accepts a position at the University of Pennsylvania
- 2009: Associate Professor Christopher Jarrett is appointed Chair of the School of Architecture at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte
- 2010: Professor Elizabeth Dowling retires from Georgia Tech after almost forty years of service; named Professor Emeritus May 2010.

Changes in Faculty: Arrivals

- 2009: Dr. Mario Carpo of Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture Paris-La Villette is appointed Professor of Architecture at Georgia Tech
- 2009: Dr. Laura Hollengreen of University of Arizona is appointed Associate Professor of Architecture at Georgia Tech
- 2010: Tristan Al-Haddad, holding the Master of Architecture degree from Georgia Tech, is appointed Assistant Professor of Architecture at Georgia Tech
- 2010: Minjung Maing, holding a Master of Architecture from MIT and a Master of Civil Engineering from Stanford, is appointed Assistant Professor of Architecture at Georgia Tech
- 2010: Daniel Baerlecken, holding degrees from RWTH Aachen University, is appointed Assistant Professor of Architecture at Georgia Tech

- 2011: Jason Brown, holding the Master of Science in Mechanical Engineering and the Ph.D (ABD) in Architecture from Georgia Tech will be appointed Assistant Professor of Architecture effective January 2011.

Changes in Curriculum

- The Administration and Faculty are addressing the deficiencies cited in the 2008 VTR with regard to Student Performance Criteria pertaining to Comprehensive Design by implementing stronger linkages between graduate-level architectural design studios and co-requisite coursework in construction technology, site planning, and detailing. Outcomes of these efforts are currently being evaluated. Some specific revisions in curriculum structure will be considered in the next academic year with regard to these issues.

Changes in Facilities

- January 2010: 75 M.Arch. students are relocated to a satellite space three blocks away from the College of Architecture
- January 2010: A \$9.0 million renovation and adaptive reuse commences of the Hinman Research Building. The renovation will add 16,000 square feet of studio and instructional space for the Master of Architecture program (which includes 142 design studio work stations), five designated pin-up areas with 200 linear foot of display, 2,000 square feet of faculty office space, and 4,500 square feet of research space. Architects for the exterior renovation and preservation are Lord Aeck Sargent of Atlanta; architects for the interior renovation are Office dA of Boston. The facility will be operational in January 2011.

SUMMARY

As is evident, the College and School of Architecture have been undergoing significant organizational, leadership, and personnel changes over the past two years. Added to these, substantial budget cuts during this period and extended enrollment spikes were yielding unfavorable consequences in areas of faculty composition and academic quality. The convergence of these circumstances together with the concerns articulated in NAAB's 2008 Visiting Team Report created a climate of urgency within which new opportunities have been explored and pursued over the intervening two years. Among these, new revenue sources exceeding the amounts of cuts in public funding, the hiring of new tenure-track faculty, the improved management of undergraduate enrollment, and the imminent and significant addition of new facilities bode well, we believe, for the future trajectory of the School. As we continue to focus upon the achievement of demonstrable improvements in our teaching and learning outcomes, we are also challenging ourselves to innovate and renew our approaches to professional education through more meaningful contacts between practice and research; and to yield a higher dividend in the equation linking performance and design.