Rochester Institute of Technology
Department of Architecture- Golisano Institute for Sustainability

Initial Accreditation Visiting Team Report

Master of Architecture (undergraduate degree + 105 semester credit hours)

The National Architectural Accrediting Board
November 4, 2015

The National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB), established in 1940, is the sole agency authorized to accredit U.S. professional degree programs in architecture. Because most state registration boards in the United States require any applicant for licensure to have graduated from an NAAB-accredited program, obtaining such a degree is an essential aspect of preparing for the professional practice of architecture.
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I. Summary of Team Findings

1. Team Comments and Visit Summary

The Master of Architecture program at Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) combines design, application, interdisciplinarity, and innovation in a way intended to directly reflect RIT's heritage as a blended institution in both technical training and art and design. The curriculum is designed to engage the principles and practices of sustainable design—virtually every required course is designed and presented through the lens of sustainability. The program is offered jointly by the College of Imaging Arts and Sciences (CIAS) and the Golisano Institute for Sustainability (GIS).

The creation of this program was sparked, nurtured, and led by the architectural community at a time when RIT had a relatively new president and the GIS facility was being built. The vision and persistence of the local architectural community provided critical momentum throughout the RIT program approval process. The program has been designed as a new synthesis of architectural thinking and approach based on foundational principles of sustainability, urbanism, and multidisciplinary education and practice.

The Master of Architecture program at RIT is already producing graduates who are bringing recognition to RIT and this program. Recently, an RIT graduate was named the AIA New York State Student of the Year. After only a few years, this young program is attracting students from several continents (North America, South America, and Asia). The program values an education balanced in theory and practice. With clear intent, the program is aimed at raising the bar of sustainable design thinking and application.

The graduates from the earliest classes at RIT are now contributing to firms and communities. The dedication to student success is positive and unified, and it is raising the stature and overall awareness of the program within the university. The quality and diversity of the faculty also is designed to enhance the reputation of the program.

This program is relevant and important to RIT, the City of Rochester, and the State of New York. There is an entrepreneurial spirit among students and faculty as the program broadens its view and reach through its co-op activities, its interest in global issues, and its exploration of foreign cultures through travel abroad.

As we searched for evidence of compliance with the conditions and procedures required for accreditation, we found the team room to be well organized to reflect the work of every course that contributes to the program. We also found our interactions with key stakeholders in the program—administrators at all levels of the university, faculty, staff, alumni, and students—to be important to our process as they provided the team with the following insights:

University Administration:

The Master of Architecture program enjoys enthusiastic support at the highest level of the university administration. President Bill Destler proudly highlights the program's commitment to sustainability and the commitment of the local profession to supporting the program. He understands the importance and value of this architecture program as a differentiator.

GIS and CIAS Administration:

The administrators at the GIS and the CIAS, led by Dr. Nabil Nasr and Dean Lorraine Justice, are committed to the success of the program and its students, and have worked hard to create opportunities.
Faculty and Staff:

The faculty and staff are a diverse, dedicated, committed group that is supportive of one another and of the students they serve. Faculty members are motivated to teach, share, and advise as they focus their energy on student success and a solid education in architecture, which is balanced in theory and practice.

Alumni:

Perhaps no group could be more proud of, or committed to, this program than the local professional community, led by the local AIA chapter. This is manifested by their presence as mentors for students, as employers of graduates and co-op students, and as funders of scholarships and grants. We expect that the relationship between the program and alumni will continue to grow even stronger, particularly as graduates assume positions of leadership in their workplaces.

Students:

The students form a tight community that supports one another, mentors one another, and is very proud of RIT and its program. They are enthusiastic and passionate, and they exhibit leadership skills.

As we examined the work represented in the team room, we observed some solid work and noted particular strength with respect to the SPC in Realm C. Leadership and Practice, including those concerning professional practice, which we believe are Met with Distinction.

There were, however, several conditions that, in our judgment, did not yet meet the requirements established by the NAAB. These include Long-Range Planning processes and Self-Assessment Procedures. In addition, we found that several SPC did not rise to the level needed to meet the requirements, and are therefore noted as Not Met. These include Communication Skills, Fundamental Design Skills, Use of Precedents, Pre-Design, Comprehensive Design, and Building Envelope Systems.

Overall, the team believes that the RIT Master of Architecture program is positioned for growth and depth, and is leveraging its unique focus on sustainability, urbanism, multi-disciplinary design, connection with the profession, and increased opportunities for study abroad.

2. Conditions Not Met

I.1.4 Long-Range Planning
I.1.5 Self-Assessment Procedures

A.1. Communication Skills
The evidence for communication skills as an ability to read, write, speak, and listen varied widely from high-pass to low-pass, particularly in written evidence displayed in the team room (i.e., overall organization, paragraph and sentence structure, use of complete sentences, grammar, and spelling). Therefore, this criterion is Not Met. Cited coursework was ARCH 621 — Architectural History I and ARCH 622 — Architectural History II.

A.6. Fundamental Design Skills
The student work did not consistently reflect evidence of an ability to effectively use basic architectural and environmental principles in the cited course, ARCH 632 — Architectural Design II. Although these principles are identified in the course syllabus, the student
coursework and projects did not consistently demonstrate that the principles were being employed or demonstrate an ability to use them. Therefore, this criterion is **Not Met**.

### A.7. Use of Precedents

As an ability to examine and comprehend fundamental principles in relevant precedents, three courses were cited for student work examples: ARCH 733 – Architectural Studio III, ARCH 734 – Architectural Studio II, and ARCH 751 – Architectural Theory. Although some evidence was found, it did not consistently reflect an ability from low-pass to high-pass projects, and, therefore, this criterion is **Not Met**.

### B.1. Pre-Design

The student work displayed for the primary designated course, ARCH 733 – Architectural Studio III, did not consistently demonstrate the ability to prepare a comprehensive program, and, therefore, this criterion is **Not Met**.

### B.6. Comprehensive Design

Evidence for comprehensive design did not consistently rise to the full required level of ability for the integration of the SPC included in this criterion. This was particularly true for the work displayed in the team room. The team requested supplemental evidence from projects not displayed in the team room and, to the credit of the program, the additional work provided came closer to the intent of the SPC than that in the team room. However, the evidence did not appear to be representative of all design sections, and, in the end, the team chose to remain with the original assessment of **Not Met**.

### B.10. Building Envelope Systems

Student work for the cited course, ARCH 742 – Integrated Building Systems II, did not reflect an understanding of basic principles in the appropriate application of building envelope systems, and, therefore, this criterion is **Not Met**.

### 3. Causes of Concern

The team made several observations:

#### A. SPC Compliance Threshold

We observed that the threshold for low-pass appears to be below the standard required to meet some of the SPC.

#### B. Consistent Integration of Sustainability

For a program focused on sustainability, there appears to be only a conceptual understanding of sustainable design principles demonstrated in the student work, particularly in the design studio sequence.

### 4. Progress Since the Previous Site Visit (2013)

#### 2009 Condition 1.1.1, History and Mission: The program must describe its history, mission and culture and how that history, mission, and culture is expressed in contemporary context. Programs that exist within a larger educational institution must also describe the history and mission of the institution and how that history, mission, and culture is expressed in contemporary context.

The accredited degree program must describe and then provide evidence of the relationship between the program, the administrative unit that supports it (e.g., school or college) and the
institution. This includes an explanation of the program’s benefits to the institutional setting, how the institution benefits from the program, any unique synergies, events, or activities occurring as a result, etc.

Finally, the program must describe and then demonstrate how the course of study and learning experiences encourage the holistic, practical and liberal arts-based education of architects.

**Previous Team Report (2013):** At the time of the visit the master of architecture program is in the fifth semester of a seven semester program. Evidentiary proof that the stated goals and mission of the program being fulfilled are still to be produced.

**2015 Team Assessment:** As has been stated in previous reports, the APR amply fulfills the requirement for narrative of the history, mission, and culture of the program. Now that the first cohort of students has graduated, the evidence for the relationship between the program and the institution now exists. The team found evidence in the APR of the program’s benefits to RIT and how RIT benefits from the new Master of Architecture program. Further, in discussions with all levels of the university administration, the team found solid, enthusiastic support for the program and its positive impact on the college and the university.

The team considers this condition to be **Met.**

**2009 Condition I.1.2, Learning Culture and Social Equity:**

- **Learning Culture:** The program must demonstrate that it provides a positive and respectful learning environment that encourages the fundamental values of optimism, respect, sharing, engagement, and innovation between and among the members of its faculty, student body, administration, and staff in all learning environments both traditional and non-traditional.

  Further, the program must demonstrate that it encourages students and faculty to appreciate these values as guiding principles of professional conduct throughout their careers, and it addresses health-related issues, such as time management.

  Finally, the program must document, through narrative and artifacts, its efforts to ensure that all members of the learning community: faculty, staff, and students are aware of these objectives and are advised as to the expectations for ensuring they are met in all elements of the learning culture.

- **Social Equity:** The accredited degree program must provide faculty, students, and staff—irrespective of race, ethnicity, creed, national origin, gender, age, physical ability, or sexual orientation—with a culturally rich educational environment in which each person is equitably able to learn, teach, and work. This includes provisions for students with mobility or learning disabilities. The program must have a clear policy on diversity that is communicated to current and prospective faculty, students, and staff and that is reflected in the distribution of the program’s human, physical, and financial resources. Finally, the program must demonstrate that it has a plan in place to maintain or increase the diversity of its faculty, staff, and students when compared with diversity of the institution during the term of the next two accreditation cycles.

**Previous Team Report (2013):** Refer to specific 2013 Team Assessment comments earlier in this report: Causes of Concern from 2011 VTR: I.1.2, Studio Culture. Please also refer to specific 2013 Team Assessment comments on page 6: Progress Since the Last Site Visit (2011) 2009 Condition I.1.2, Learning Culture and Social Equity.

**2015 Team Assessment:** The team found that the program, through its studio culture policy and diversity policies, has developed a respectful learning culture. The students are aware of these
policies and are included in the development and approval process for the policies. The team considers this condition to be **Met.**

**2009 Condition I.1.4, Long-Range Planning:** *An accredited degree program must demonstrate that it has identified multi-year objectives for continuous improvement within the context of its mission and culture, the mission and culture of the institution, and, where appropriate, the five perspectives. In addition, the program must demonstrate that data is collected routinely and from multiple sources to inform its future planning and strategic decision making.*

**Previous Team Report (2013):** Refer to specific 2013 Team Assessment comments on page 2: Causes of Concern from the 2011 VTR, 2009 Condition I.1.4, Long-Range Planning.

**2015 Team Assessment:** Earlier this year, the university completed and adopted Greatness Through Difference: RIT’s 2016-2025 Strategic Plan. The GIS 2.0 Academic Unit 2025 Strategic Plan has also recently been adopted. Both plans provide frameworks for the alignment of the architecture program’s development with the strategic vision of RIT and the GIS for the future. While the Architectural Program Advisory Council (APAC) has now been formed and has convened by teleconference, no progress has been made in “identifying a list of key indicators that will be analyzed at regular intervals” as stated in the APR. As noted by previous visiting teams, the program continues to evolve from its original founding principles. For example, the dramatic rise in the number of advanced placement students and the significant growth in the international student population are two developments that point to the need to collect data routinely and from multiple sources in order to consider how developments impact the alignment with long-range plans and inform strategic decision-making.

The team considers this cause for concern not fully resolved, and, therefore, this condition is **Not Met.**

**2009 Condition I.1.5, Self-Assessment Procedures:** *The program must demonstrate that it regularly assesses the following:*

- How the program is progressing towards its mission.
- Progress against its defined multi-year objectives (see above) since the objectives were identified and since the last visit.
- Strengths, challenges, and opportunities faced by the program while developing learning opportunities in support of its mission and culture, the mission and culture of the institution, and the five perspectives.
- Self-assessment procedures shall include, but are not limited to:
  - Solicitation of faculty’s, students’, and graduates’ views on the teaching, learning, and achievement opportunities provided by the curriculum.
  - Individual course evaluations.
  - Review and assessment of the focus and pedagogy of the program.
  - Institutional self-assessment, as determined by the institution.
  - The program must also demonstrate that results of self-assessments are regularly used to advise and encourage changes and adjustments to promote student success as well as the continued maturation and development of the program.

**Previous Team Report (2013):** Refer to specific 2013 Team Assessment comments earlier in this report: Progress Since the Last Site Visit (2011) 2009 Condition I.1.5, Self-Assessment Procedures.
2015 Team Assessment: The team found evidence that progress has been made since the 2013 NAAB team visit as the program evolves and matures. The program does not have its own strategic plan. Rather, it uses the GIS plan as a guide for the direction of the program. The procedures for self-assessment as defined by the NAAB have been established and are beginning to be implemented, but there is not yet sufficient evidence for how assessments are being used to improve the program. The team determined that this condition is not yet resolved and is, therefore, Not Met.

2009 Condition I.2.1, Human Resources and Human Resource Development (faculty and staff):
- An accredited degree program must have appropriate human resources to support student learning and achievement. This includes full and part-time instructional faculty, administrative leadership, and technical, administrative, and other support staff. Programs are required to document personnel policies which may include, but are not limited to, faculty and staff position descriptions.
- Accredited programs must document the policies they have in place to further Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action (EEO/AA) and other diversity initiatives.
- An accredited degree program must demonstrate that it balances the workloads of all faculty and staff to support a tutorial exchange between the student and teacher that promotes student achievement.
- An accredited degree program must demonstrate that an IDP Education Coordinator has been appointed within each accredited degree program, trained in the issues of IDP, and has regular communication with students and is fulfilling the requirements as outlined in the IDP Education Coordinator position description and regularly attends IDP Coordinator training and development programs.
- An accredited degree program must demonstrate it is able to provide opportunities for all faculty and staff to pursue professional development that contributes to program improvement.
- Accredited programs must document the criteria used for determining rank, reappointment, tenure and promotion as well as eligibility requirements for professional development resources.


2015 Team Assessment: The Department of Architecture is well supported by dedicated and highly competent and caring staff who work effectively together to serve the needs of students, including prospective students, and faculty and administrators. This was evident to the team from our meeting with the staff. One staff member is located in the department, and the others are in the Department of Sustainability and the GIS. The staff largely demonstrated an understanding of their role in promoting the mission of the department and the GIS. The level of staffing appeared adequate to handle the various tasks required to run the operations of the department. Staff members are able to request opportunities for professional development and have taken advantage of these opportunities.

This academic year, the Department of Architecture has doubled the size of its tenured/tenure-track faculty through a successful search that yielded two new assistant professors who bring gender and ethnic diversity to the faculty. This brings the number of tenured/tenure-track faculty to the level set forth in the business plan to meet the needs of the present student enrollment. When enrollment grows to the projected numbers, one additional tenured/tenure-track faculty member will be added. It is a matter of concern that two previously hired assistant professors left the department after short stays. In addition to Department of Architecture faculty, tenured/tenure-
track faculty from the Department of Sustainability, plus adjunct faculty from the practice community, teach required and elective courses in the Department of Architecture. Faculty have opportunities for professional development that contributes to program improvement. These opportunities include funds for travel and other activities. In addition, there are internal and external programs and grants to support faculty in research and scholarship, including sabbaticals and funding. RIT’s Teaching and Learning Center offers faculty development opportunities to promote and support teaching excellence. The two newly hired faculty members told the team about support that they have received from RIT in developing research programs, funding opportunities, and potential collaborative research opportunities. EEO/AA policies are documented. There is an IDP Coordinator who is an adjunct faculty member, and students are aware of, and attend, IDP information sessions. The designated IDP Coordinator is on leave this semester, and a faculty member is substituting for her in her absence and will attend the Licensing Advisors Summit. RIT has policies on faculty employment, rank, and tenure. The GIS has a written document outlining criteria for rank, reappointment, tenure, and promotion.

The team considers this condition to be Met.

2009 Condition I.2.1, Human Resources and Human Resource Development (students):
- An accredited program must document its student admissions policies and procedures. This documentation may include, but is not limited, to application forms and instructions, admissions requirements, admissions decisions procedures, financial aid and scholarships procedures, and student diversity initiatives. These procedures should include first-time freshmen, as well as transfers within and outside of the university.
- An accredited degree program must demonstrate its commitment to student achievement both inside and outside the classroom through individual and collective learning opportunities.

Previous Team Report (2013): Admissions requirements are clearly spelled out on the university and program websites. However, they differ from the outlined detail in the APR. E.g., the APR indicates a focus in letters of recommendation on communicative, collaborative and leadership abilities while the website for architecture identifies focus on creativity. There is no explicit comment on general education requirements for the NAAB degree, i.e., 45 semester credit hours. Evidence indicated other fundamental opportunities such as student organization participation, field trips, participation in research projects, and access to student support services are being met. A financial aid pool of approximately 30% of gross tuition charges is provided to the program for distribution to students in the program.

2105 Team Assessment: The program has a thorough process for acceptance, including agreements that place advanced-standing students with undergraduate degrees from the SUNY Delhi and SUNY Alfred campuses. The university and the director of the college provide financial assistance to student organizations such as AIAS, which makes chapter events and travel to conferences possible. Obviously, the connection to the local AIA and professional community gives the program a great resource for career development workshops and personal assistance for students. The school also has an IDP Coordinator in place, who ensures that the students have the information they need to begin pursuing licensure and who encourages them to begin their IDP as they participate in the co-op experience.

The team considers this issue to be Met.

2009 Condition I.2.5, Information Resources: The accredited program must demonstrate that all students, faculty, and staff have convenient access to literature, information, visual, and digital resources that support professional education in the field of architecture.
Further, the accredited program must demonstrate that all students, faculty, and staff have access to architecture librarians and visual resources professionals who provide information services that teach and develop research and evaluative skills, and critical thinking skills necessary for professional practice and lifelong learning.


2015 Team Assessment: The team found evidence of sufficient resources to support the program and believes that this condition is now Met.

2009 Condition I.3.1, Statistical Reports: Programs are required to provide statistical data in support of activities and policies that support social equity in the professional degree and program as well as other data points that demonstrate student success and faculty development.

- Program student characteristics
  - Demographics (race/ethnicity and gender) of all students enrolled in the accredited degree program(s).
    - Demographics compared to those recorded at the time of the previous visit.
    - Demographics compared to those of the student population for the institution overall.
  - Qualifications of students admitted in the fiscal year prior to the visit.
    - Qualifications of students admitted in the fiscal year prior to the upcoming visit compared to those admitted in the fiscal year prior to the last visit.
  - Time to graduation.
    - Percentage of matriculating students who complete the accredited degree program within the "normal time to completion" for each academic year since the previous visit.
    - Percentage that complete the accredited degree program within 150% of the normal time to completion for each academic year since the previous visit.

- Program faculty characteristics
  - Demographics (race/ethnicity and gender) for all full-time instructional faculty.
    - Demographics compared to those recorded at the time of the previous visit.
    - Demographics compared to those of the full-time instructional faculty at the institution overall.
  - Number of faculty promoted each year since last visit.
    - Compare to number of faculty promoted each year across the institution during the same period.
  - Number of faculty receiving tenure each year since last visit.
    - Compare to number of faculty receiving tenure at the institution during the same period.
  - Number of faculty maintaining licenses from U.S. jurisdictions each year since the last visit, and where they are licensed.

Previous Team Report (2013): Refer to specific 2013 Team Assessment comments earlier in this report: Progress Since the Last Site Visit (2011) 2009 Condition I.3.1, Statistical Reports.

2015 Team Assessment: The team found evidence of the information required by the NAAB and believes that this condition is now Met.
2009 Criterion A.2., Design Thinking Skills: Ability to raise clear and precise questions, use abstract ideas to interpret information, consider diverse points of view, reach well-reasoned conclusions, and test alternative outcomes against relevant criteria and standards.

Previous Team Report (2013): Although some evidence of this SPC was found in ARCH-751, this criterion is not yet met.

2015 Team Assessment: The requirement for a demonstration of design thinking skills is now Met as evidenced in ARCH 731 – Architectural Studio I and ARCH 733 – Architectural Studio III.

2009 Criterion A.5., Investigative Skills: Ability to gather, assess, record, apply, and comparatively evaluate relevant information within architectural coursework and design processes.

Previous Team Report (2013): Although some evidence of this SPC was found in ARCH-753, this criterion is not yet met.

2015 Team Assessment: The ability to apply investigative skills in coursework and design processes is now Met in ARCH 753 – Research Seminar and ARCH 761 – Understanding Sustainability.

2009 Criterion A.7., Use of Precedents: Ability to examine and comprehend the fundamental principles present in relevant precedents and to make choices regarding the incorporation of such principles into architecture and urban design projects.

Previous Team Report (2013): Although some evidence of this SPC was found in ARCH-752, this criterion is not yet met.

2015 Team Assessment: As evidence of an ability to examine and comprehend fundamental principles in relevant precedents, three courses were cited for student work examples: ARCH 733 – Architectural Studio III, ARCH 734 – Architectural Studio II, and ARCH 751 – Architectural Theory. Although some evidence was found, it did not consistently reflect an ability, from low-pass to high-pass projects, with respect to this criterion, and therefore, this criterion is Not Met.

2009 Criterion A.8., Ordering Systems Skills: Understanding of the fundamentals of both natural and formal ordering systems and the capacity of each to inform two- and three-dimensional design.

Previous Team Report (2013): Incomplete evidence of this SPC was found in ARCH-631 and ARCH-632

2015 Team Assessment: The requirement for an understanding of ordering systems skills is Met in ARCH 631 – Architecture Design I.

2009 Criterion A.9., Historical Traditions and Global Culture: Understanding of parallel and divergent canons and traditions of architecture, landscape and urban design including examples of indigenous, vernacular, local, regional, national settings from the Eastern, Western, Northern, and Southern hemispheres in terms of their climatic, ecological, technological, socioeconomic, public health, and cultural factors.
Previous Team Report (2013): Some evidence of this SPC was found in ARCH-621 and ARCH-622; this criterion is not yet met.

2015 Team Assessment: The requirement for demonstrating an understanding of historical traditions and global culture is now Met in ARCH 621 – Architecture History I and ARCH 622 – Architecture History II.

2009 Criterion A.10., Cultural Diversity: Understanding of the diverse needs, values, behavioral norms, physical abilities, and social and spatial patterns that characterize different cultures and individuals and the implication of this diversity on the societal roles and responsibilities of architects.

Previous Team Report (2013): Although some evidence of this SPC was found in ARCH-621 and ARCH-622, this criterion is not yet met.

2015 Team Assessment: The requirement for an understanding of cultural diversity and its implication with respect to the roles and responsibilities of architects is now Met in ARCH 621 – Architecture History I and ARCH 622 – Architecture History II.


Previous Team Report (2013): Evidence of this SPC was not found in ARCH-753.

2015 Team Assessment: The requirement for an understanding of the role of applied research is now Met in ARCH 753 – Research Seminar.

2009 Criterion B.1., Pre-Design: Ability to prepare a comprehensive program for an architectural project, such as preparing an assessment of client and user needs, an inventory of space and equipment requirements, an analysis of site conditions (including existing buildings), a review of the relevant laws and standards and assessment of their implications for the project, and a definition of site selection and design assessment criteria.

Previous Team Report (2013): Evidence of this SPC was not found in ARCH-753 – the primary designated course. Some evidence of this SPC was found in ARCH-731 and ARCH-733.

2015 Team Assessment: The student work displayed for the primary designated course, ARCH 733 – Architectural Studio III, did not consistently demonstrate the ability to prepare a comprehensive program, and, therefore, this criterion is Not Met.

2009 Criterion B.2., Accessibility: Ability to design sites, facilities, and systems to provide independent and integrated use by individuals with physical (including mobility), sensory, and cognitive disabilities.

Previous Team Report (2013): Although some evidence of this SPC can be found, insufficient evidence was available to deem this criterion met.
2015 Team Assessment: The requirement for the ability to design sites, facilities, and systems for those with disabilities is now Met in ARCH 734 – Architectural Studio IV.

2009 Criterion B.4., Life Safety: Ability to apply the basic principles of life-safety systems with an emphasis on egress.

Previous Team Report (2013): Although some evidence of this SPC was found in ARCH-733 and ARCH-744, this criterion is not yet met.

2015 Team Assessment: The ability to apply life safety principles in design is now Met in ARCH 743 – Integrated Building systems III.

2009 Criterion B.6., Comprehensive Design: Ability to produce a comprehensive architectural project that demonstrates each student’s capacity to make design decisions across scales while integrating the following SPC:

Previous Team Report (2013): As the program is currently in the first semester of its third year, the primary course identified as meeting this SPC, ARCH-790 Thesis Studio, has not yet been taught.

2015 Team Assessment: Evidence for comprehensive design skills did not consistently rise to the full required level of ability for the integration of the SPC included in this criterion. This was particularly true for the work displayed in the team room. The team requested supplemental evidence from projects not displayed in the team room, and, to the credit of the program, the additional work provided came closer to the intent of the SPC than that in the team room. However, the evidence did not appear representative of all design sections, and, in the end, the team chose to remain with the original assessment of Not Met.

2009 Criterion 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.

Previous Team Report (2013): Evidence of this SPC was not found in ARCH-741, ARCH-742, ARCH-743 or ARCH-744; ARCH-745 has not yet been taught.

2015 Team Assessment: The requirement for an understanding of financial considerations in project development is now Met in ARCH 734 – Architecture Studio IV.

2009 Criterion B.8., Environmental Systems: Understanding the principles of environmental systems’ design such as embodied energy, active and passive heating and cooling, indoor air quality, solar orientation, daylighting and artificial illumination, and acoustics, including the use of appropriate performance assessment tools.

Previous Team Report (2013): The Master of Architecture Program has deemed that this criterion will be primarily met in ARCH-745. As this course will be taught for the first time in Spring 2014, there was not yet any student evidence to review.

2015 Team Assessment: The requirement for an understanding of the principles of environmental systems is Met in ARCH 744 – Integrated Building Systems IV.
2009 Criterion B.11., Building Service Systems Integration: Understanding of the basic principles and appropriate application and performance of building service systems such as plumbing, electrical, vertical transportation, security, and fire protection systems.

Previous Team Report (2013): The Master of Architecture Program has deemed that this criterion will be primarily met in ARCH-745. As this course will be taught for the first time in Spring 2014, there was not yet any student evidence to review.


2009 Student Performance Criteria–Realm C: Architects need to manage, advocate, and act legally, ethically and critically for the good of the client, society and the public. This includes collaboration, business, and leadership skills. Student learning aspirations include:

- Knowing societal and professional responsibilities
- Comprehending the business of building.
- Collaborating and negotiating with clients and consultants in the design process.
- Discerning the diverse roles of architects and those in related disciplines.
- Integrating community service into the practice of architecture.

Previous Team Report (2013): Very little progress is being made in Realm C, as the program is relatively new and students have only progressed through five of seven semesters of study required for graduation. As noted – the key professional practice course Arch-771 identified as the primary source for many of the SPCs has yet to be taught. Thus, substantial aspects of the criteria have yet to be established in the evidence of student work.

2015 Team Assessment: The architecture program enjoys a unique and exceptionally strong relationship with the professional architectural community in Rochester. This relationship has resulted in the establishment of a successful co-op program and the engagement of adjunct faculty that provide students with first-hand exposure to issues regarding the architect’s societal and professional responsibilities, mentors that come from diverse backgrounds, and models for the various roles that architects play in shaping the built environment. The relationship has also served as a bridge between the university and the City of Rochester by providing an opportunity for students to engage with the community and discover the positive impact that architects have through practice. A unique culture is evident in the ethic that is taking root in students’ commitment to social responsibility and environmental stewardship. ARCH 771 – Professional Practice is now being taught and is providing significant coverage for the SPC in Realm C. This requirement is now Met with Distinction.

2009 II.2.3, Curriculum Review and Development: The program must describe the process by which the curriculum for the NAAB-accredited degree program is evaluated and how modifications (e.g., changes or additions) are identified, developed, approved, and implemented. Further, the NAAB expects that programs are evaluating curricula with a view toward the advancement of the discipline and toward ensuring that students are exposed to current issues in practice. Therefore, the program must demonstrate that licensed architects are included in the curriculum review and development process.

2015 Team Assessment: The Department of Architecture has a curriculum committee composed of nine members. The committee is chaired by a founding member of the department who is a registered architect. The committee includes two additional faculty members from the Department of Architecture: the two recent hires who are new this academic year. Also from the Department of Architecture is one student and one adjunct faculty member who is a practitioner but is not a registered architect. The committee includes one faculty member from the Department of Sustainability, three faculty members from the College of Imaging Arts and Sciences and one faculty member from the College of Applied Science and Technology. The APR states that the goal of the curriculum committee over the past year has been to review the entire curriculum. The department head clarified that an annual program review will be conducted during this current academic year and will commence immediately upon the conclusion of the NAAB visit. Following the last NAAB visit, the department used the team’s findings to address: issues of curriculum flexibility; clarification and revision of the program goals, mission, and objectives; current admission requirements for calculus and physics; the awarding of advanced standing to applicants; acceptable global experiences; and portfolio review evaluation. The changes that resulted were approved by the State Education Department in May 2015. In our initial meeting with the associate provost, the team learned that RIT is proud of its Student Learning Outcomes Assessment program and publishes an annual progress report. The department has a Learning Outcomes Assessment process in place. The outcomes selected for assessment are well aligned with the NAAB SPC. The department appears to collect data, analyze the data, report the results, and discuss the results.

The Team considers this condition to be Met.

2009 Par: Two (II): Section 3 – Evaluation of Preparatory/Preprofessional Education:

Because of the expectation that all graduates meet the SPC (see Section 1 above), the program must demonstrate that it is thorough in the evaluation of the preparatory or preprofessional education of individuals admitted to the NAAB-accredited degree program.

In the event a program relies on the preparatory/preprofessional educational experience to ensure that students have met certain SPC, the program must demonstrate it has established standards for ensuring these SPC are met and for determining whether any gaps exist. Likewise, the program must demonstrate it has determined how any gaps will be addressed during each student’s progress through the accredited degree program. This assessment should be documented in a student’s admission and advising files.

Previous Team Report (2013): Refer to specific 2013 Team Assessment comments earlier in this report: Progress Since the Last Site Visit (2011) 2009 Condition II.3, Evaluation of Preparatory/Pre-Professional Education.

2015 Team Assessment: The Department of Architecture has two methods of evaluating preparatory/preprofessional education in cases of admission with advanced standing. The first method is admission through an articulation agreement. The department maintains articulation agreements with Alfred University, SUNY Delhi, and the CIAS Department of Interior Design. These agreements align coursework at those institutions with coursework in the Department of Architecture in order to ensure that entering students have met the relevant SPC. The second method involves evaluation of specific courses for students applying from all other institutions. In those cases, an applicant’s course materials are reviewed by two to three faculty to determine whether the published course outcomes align with the outcomes of the RIT courses for which a
waiver is sought. If the student passed the course, then it is determined that the student has achieved the course outcomes and, by extension, has fulfilled the relevant SPC.

The team considers this condition to be **Met.**

2009 II.4.2 Access to NAAB Conditions and Procedures: *In order to assist parents, students, and others as they seek to develop an understanding of the body of knowledge and skills that constitute a professional education in architecture, the school must make the following documents available to all students, parents and faculty:*
- The 2009 NAAB Conditions for Accreditation
- The NAAB Procedures for Accreditation (edition currently in effect)

**Previous Team Report (2013):** While the Master of Architecture Program website (see below) listed the requisite websites as above, both links were not working properly. [http://www.rit.edu/qis/architecture/program/accreditation](http://www.rit.edu/qis/architecture/program/accreditation)

**2015 Team Assessment:** The statement on Access to NAAB Conditions and Procedures is found on the program’s webpage under the tab “Program – Accreditation.”

2009 II.4.5 ARE Pass Rates: *Annually, the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards publishes pass rates for each section of the Architect Registration Examination by institution. This information is considered to be useful to parents and prospective students as part of their planning for higher/post-secondary education. Therefore, programs are required to make this information available to current and prospective students and their parents either by publishing the annual results or by linking their website to the results.*

**Previous Team Report (2013):** Not applicable at this time.

**2015 Team Assessment:** This is not applicable, as the first graduates are not yet eligible to take the ARE exam.
PART ONE (I): INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT AND COMMITMENT TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

PART ONE (I): SECTION 1 – IDENTITY AND SELF-ASSESSMENT

I.1.1 History and Mission:

[X] The program has fulfilled this requirement for narrative and evidence.

2015 Team Assessment: As has been stated in previous reports, the APR amply fulfills the requirement for narrative of the history, mission, and culture of the program. Now that the first cohort of students has graduated, the evidence for the relationship between the program and the institution now exists. In the APR, the team found evidence of the program's benefits to RIT and how RIT benefits from the new Master of Architecture program. Further, in discussions with all levels of the university administration, the team found solid, enthusiastic support for the program and its positive impact on the college and university.

I.1.2 Learning Culture and Social Equity:

- Learning Culture: The program must demonstrate that it provides a positive and respectful learning environment that encourages the fundamental values of optimism, respect, sharing, engagement, and innovation between and among the members of its faculty, student body, administration, and staff in all learning environments, both traditional and non-traditional.

  Further, the program must demonstrate that it encourages students and faculty to appreciate these values as guiding principles of professional conduct throughout their careers, and it addresses health-related issues, such as time management.

  Finally, the program must document, through narrative and artifacts, its efforts to ensure that all members of the learning community: faculty, staff, and students are aware of these objectives and are advised as to the expectations for ensuring they are met in all elements of the learning culture.

- Social Equity: The accredited degree program must provide faculty, students, and staff—irrespective of race, ethnicity, creed, national origin, gender, age, physical ability, or sexual orientation—with a culturally rich educational environment in which each person is equitably able to learn, teach, and work. This includes provisions for students with mobility or learning disabilities. The program must have a clear policy on diversity that is communicated to current and prospective faculty, students, and staff and that is reflected in the distribution of the program’s human, physical, and financial resources. Finally, the program must demonstrate that it has a plan in place to maintain or increase the diversity of its faculty, staff, and students when compared with diversity of the institution during the term of the next two accreditation cycles.

[X] The program has demonstrated that it provides a positive and respectful learning environment.

[X] The program has demonstrated that it provides a culturally rich environment in which each person is equitably able to learn, teach, and work.

2015 Team Assessment: As a small emerging program, its culture exudes a sense of unity. This is evident with respect to the student body, the faculty, and the Rochester community as a whole. The students in this program receive diverse perspectives in the classroom. Though the number of full-time faculty members is limited, professors offer unique personal and professional backgrounds, including professors who are practicing architects from outside the country and professors from the GIS. Students enjoy the ability to work often with professionals, both inside and outside the field of architecture, through their participation as critics on studio reviews, site visits, and charrettes. The program has had a
significant percentage of international students since its formation, which creates a diverse culture. Additionally, some of the students in the M. Arch. program have come from RIT’s National Technical Institute for the Deaf. This dynamic affords students in the program the opportunity to learn new ways to communicate and think about design. Students are also involved in the continuing revision process for the program’s studio culture and curriculum. Through AIAS, students compile ideas and issues for the faculty to consider, and student leaders meet with the program director regularly.

I.1.3 Response to the Five Perspectives: Programs must demonstrate, through narrative and artifacts, how they respond to the following perspectives on architecture education. Each program is expected to address these perspectives consistently within the context of its history, mission, and culture and to further identify as part of its long-range planning activities how these perspectives will continue to be addressed in the future.

A. Architectural Education and the Academic Community. *That the faculty, staff, and students in the accredited degree program make unique contributions to the institution in the areas of scholarship, community engagement, service, and teaching.* In addition, the program must describe its commitment to the holistic, practical and liberal arts-based education of architects and to providing opportunities for all members of the learning community to engage in the development of new knowledge.

[X] The program is responsive to this perspective.

2015 Team Assessment: The Department of Architecture’s unique contribution to the academic community stems from its three-pronged focus on sustainability, the urban core, and integration. The Department of Architecture is housed alongside the Department of Sustainability within the GIS. The Department of Architecture’s contribution in the area of sustainability is teaching future practitioners of architecture and related fields about sustainable architecture and urbanism. The faculty of the Department of Sustainability are engaged in significant research. The faculty of the Department of Architecture are not currently working on sustainability research at a high level. The department head has significant experience in this area. Two of the four faculty members have just joined the faculty this semester, so this may be a developing area, and the two new faculty members have expressed enthusiasm for research. It was reported that some students have graduate assistantships that engage them in research with the Department of Sustainability faculty, but the team did not find evidence of this activity.

At present, the department’s greatest contribution seems to be in the area of community engagement in the urban core. Students and faculty are highly engaged with the local community in Rochester. In fact, the Department of Architecture is strongly linked to the City of Rochester through the practice community, as the department developed out of a practitioner-led initiative by the AIA chapter and is staffed to a large degree by local practitioners who serve as adjuncts. Examples of students and faculty getting involved in projects in the City of Rochester include ARCH 752 – Urban and Regional Planning Studio, ARCH 753 – Adaptive Studio, and the design charrette with Malmö University faculty and students.

The department’s focus on integration is related to its strategic position in its relationships with both the GIS and the CIAS. We found some evidence of collaboration with students in the Department of Interior Design in ARCH 744 – Integrated Building Systems, and the new department head indicated a strong intention to build upon this collaboration. Faculty from the departments of Sustainability, Interior Design, and Industrial Design teach courses in the Department of Architecture. The potential for increased interdisciplinary collaboration seems a

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1 See Boyer, Ernest L. *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate.* Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. 1990.
powerful way for the Department of Architecture to demonstrate leadership in achieving a key objective of RIT’s new strategic plan.

B. Architectural Education and Students. That students enrolled in the accredited degree program are prepared: to live and work in a global world where diversity, distinctiveness, self-worth, and dignity are nurtured and respected; to emerge as leaders in the academic setting and the profession; to understand the breadth of professional opportunities; to make thoughtful, deliberate, informed choices; and to develop the habit of lifelong learning.

[X] The program is responsive to this perspective.

2015 Team Assessment: When prompted, most students say that they chose RIT’s M. Arch. program for its unique focus on sustainability and related resources. This encourages students to push the profession in a positive direction. RIT’s interest in innovative research makes it a place for an architecture student to engage technological discovery and application in design. Additionally, the university has many connections internationally and pursues possible exchange programs that allow students to more effectively fulfill the global perspectives travel requirement. Students are empowered by their interactions with the local Rochester community, making the connection to the urban core a defining facet of their time in the M. Arch. program. Through these interactions and the required co-op, students are becoming well equipped to work in the current interdisciplinary architectural profession.

C. Architectural Education and the Regulatory Environment. That students enrolled in the accredited degree program are provided with: a sound preparation for the transition to internship and licensure within the context of international, national, and state regulatory environments; an understanding of the role of the registration board for the jurisdiction in which it is located; and, prior to the earliest point of eligibility, the information needed to enroll in the Intern Development Program (IDP).

[X] The program is responsive to this perspective.

2015 Team Assessment: In the team’s meeting with students, there was a mixed response to the question, “do you intend to pursue licensure?” Fewer than 50% indicated that they intended to pursue licensure, with a handful indicating that they had not yet made a determination. A student pointed out that, for many of the international students, licensure was not something that is required in their home country and might account for the fact that the majority of the students had no plans to pursue licensure. The students indicated that adjunct faculty member Michelle Murname, AIA, serves as the IDP Coordinator, and she meets each semester with students and makes a presentation on the IDP program.

To fulfill graduation requirements, students are required to complete a co-op experience in a “real-world job” that must last 10 weeks or a minimum of 350 hours.

D. Architectural Education and the Profession. That students enrolled in the accredited degree program are prepared: to practice in a global economy; to recognize the impact of design on the environment; to understand the diverse and collaborative roles assumed by architects in practice; to understand the diverse and collaborative roles and responsibilities of related disciplines; to respect client expectations; to advocate for design-based solutions that respond to the multiple needs of a diversity of clients and diverse populations, as well as the needs of communities; and to contribute to the growth and development of the profession.

[X] The program is responsive to this perspective.
2015 Team Assessment: The RIT Master of Architecture program has demonstrated through its past graduates and current students that it is preparing students to take their place in a global society. The program's earliest graduates are being readily hired and are becoming sought-after resources for sustainability in their firms. Within the current program, students are undertaking increasingly collaborative projects by engaging in positions at the university, and are contributing to student organizations such as AIAS. Through coursework, and through opportunities to study in other countries and around the U.S., students are becoming increasingly aware of the different cultures, economic conditions, and social circumstances that will prepare them for effective and meaningful practice. Through a rigorous co-op program, students are experiencing early engagement in the profession and the opportunity for mentoring from practitioners.

E. Architectural Education and the Public Good. That students enrolled in the accredited degree program are prepared: to be active, engaged citizens; to be responsive to the needs of a changing world; to acquire the knowledge needed to address pressing environmental, social, and economic challenges through design, conservation and responsible professional practice; to understand the ethical implications of their decisions; to reconcile differences between the architect's obligation to his/her client and the public; and to nurture a climate of civic engagement, including a commitment to professional and public service and leadership.

[X] The program is responsive to this perspective.

2015 Team Assessment: Discussions with the students revealed a sense that this group chose RIT's Department of Architecture as a result of deep personal commitment to a sustainability ethic. This seems to be a self-selected group that is keenly aware of its responsibilities regarding addressing pressing societal issues. The department fosters this spirit by engaging the students in architectural design studio projects and in urban and regional planning course projects, both in and with the local community, and by requiring a global experience. Students are highly engaged with the local professional community in multiple ways. The department was founded as an initiative of the local AIA chapter, and AIA members demonstrate a strong commitment to the students. They serve as mentors to a large percentage of individual students, teach as adjunct faculty in the program, serve as critics on studio reviews, serve as IDP Coordinator, employ students in the co-op program, and run programs that are well attended by students. Students are learning in an environment in which strong professional service and leadership are modeled for them. There is an active AIAS group in the department.

I.1.4 Long-Range Planning: An accredited degree program must demonstrate that it has identified multi-year objectives for continuous improvement within the context of its mission and culture, the mission and culture of the institution, and, where appropriate, the five perspectives. In addition, the program must demonstrate that data is collected routinely and from multiple sources to inform its future planning and strategic decision making.

[X] The program's processes do not meet the standards as set by the NAAB.

2015 Team Assessment: Earlier this year, the university completed and adopted Greatness Through Difference: RIT's 2015-2025 Strategic Plan. The GIS 2.0 Academic Unit 2025 Strategic Plan has also recently been adopted. Both provide frameworks for the alignment of the architecture program's development with the strategic vision of RIT and the GIS for the future. While the Architectural Program Advisory Council (APAC) has now been formed and has convened by teleconference, no progress has been made in "identifying a list of key indicators that will be analyzed at regular intervals" as stated in the APR. As noted by previous visiting teams, the program continues to evolve from its original founding principles. For example, the dramatic rise in the number of advanced-placement students and the significant growth in the international student population are two developments that point to the need to
collect data routinely and from multiple sources in order to consider how developments impact the alignment with long-range plans and inform strategic decision-making.

The team considers this condition to be **Not Met**.

**I.1.5 Self-Assessment Procedures:** The program must demonstrate that it regularly assesses the following:

- How the program is progressing towards its mission.
- Progress against its defined multi-year objectives (see above) since the objectives were identified and since the last visit.
- Strengths, challenges, and opportunities faced by the program while developing learning opportunities in support of its mission and culture, the mission and culture of the institution, and the five perspectives.
- Self-assessment procedures shall include, but are not limited to:
  - Solicitation of faculty’s, students’, and graduates’ views on the teaching, learning, and achievement opportunities provided by the curriculum.
  - Individual course evaluations.
  - Review and assessment of the focus and pedagogy of the program.
  - Institutional self-assessment, as determined by the institution.

The program must also demonstrate that results of self-assessments are regularly used to advise and encourage changes and adjustments to promote student success as well as the continued maturation and development of the program.

[X] The program’s processes do not meet the standards as set by the NAAB.

**2015 Team Assessment:** The team found evidence that progress has been made since the 2013 NAAB team visit as the program evolves and matures. The program does not have its own strategic plan. Rather, it uses the GIS plan as a guide for the direction of the program. The procedures for self-assessment as defined by the NAAB have been established and are underway, but, because this is a young program, there is not yet sufficient evidence of how the assessments are being used to improve the program. Therefore, the team determined that this condition is **Not Met**.
PART ONE (I): SECTION 2 – RESOURCES

1.2.1 Human Resources and Human Resource Development:

- Faculty and Staff:
  - An accredited degree program must have appropriate human resources to support student learning and achievement. This includes full and part-time instructional faculty, administrative leadership, and technical, administrative, and other support staff. Programs are required to document personnel policies which may include but are not limited to faculty and staff position descriptions2.
  - Accredited programs must document the policies they have in place to further Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action (EEO/AA) and other diversity initiatives.
  - An accredited degree program must demonstrate that it balances the workloads of all faculty and staff to support a tutorial exchange between the student and teacher that promotes student achievement.
  - An accredited degree program must demonstrate that an IDP Education Coordinator has been appointed within each accredited degree program, trained in the issues of IDP, and has regular communication with students and is fulfilling the requirements as outlined in the IDP Education Coordinator position description and regularly attends IDP Coordinator training and development programs.
  - An accredited degree program must demonstrate it is able to provide opportunities for all faculty and staff to pursue professional development that contributes to program improvement.
  - Accredited programs must document the criteria used for determining rank, reappointment, tenure and promotion as well as eligibility requirements for professional development resources.

[X] Human Resources (faculty and staff) are adequate for the program.

2015 Team Assessment: The Department of Architecture is well supported by dedicated and highly competent and caring staff who work effectively together to serve the needs of students, including prospective students, and faculty and administrators. This was evident to the team from our meeting with the staff. One staff member is in the department, and the others are in the Department of Sustainability and the GIS. The staff largely demonstrated an understanding of their role in promoting the mission of the department and the GIS. The level of staffing appeared adequate to handle the various tasks required to run the operations of the department. Staff members are able to request opportunities for professional development and have taken advantage of these opportunities.

In this academic year, the Department of Architecture has doubled the size of its tenured/tenure-track faculty through a successful search that yielded two new assistant professors who bring gender and ethnic diversity to the faculty. This brings the number of tenured/tenure-track faculty to the level set forth in the business plan to meet the needs of the present student enrollment. When enrollment grows to the projected numbers, one additional tenured/tenure-track faculty member will be added. It is a matter of concern that two previously hired assistant professors left the department after short stays. In addition to Department of Architecture faculty, tenured/tenure-track faculty from the Department of Sustainability, plus adjunct faculty from the practice community, teach required and elective courses in the Department of Architecture. Faculty have opportunities for professional development that contributes to program improvement. These opportunities include funds for travel and other activities. In addition, there are internal and external programs and grants to support faculty in research and scholarship, including sabbaticals and funding. RIT’s Teaching and Learning Center offers faculty development opportunities to promote and support teaching excellence. The two newly hired faculty told the team about support that they have received from RIT in developing research programs, funding opportunities, and potential collaborative research opportunities. EEO/AA policies are documented. There is an IDP Coordinator who is an adjunct faculty member, and students are aware of, and attend, IDP information sessions. The designated IDP Coordinator is on leave this

2 A list of the policies and other documents to be made available in the team room during an accreditation visit is in Appendix 3.
semester, and a faculty member is substituting for her in her absence and will attend the Licensing Advisors Summit. RIT has policies on faculty employment, rank, and tenure. The GIS has a written document outlining criteria for rank, reappointment, tenure, and promotion.

- **Students:**
  - An accredited program must document its student admissions policies and procedures. This documentation may include, but is not limited to application forms and instructions, admissions requirements, admissions decisions procedures, financial aid and scholarships procedures, and student diversity initiatives. These procedures should include first-time freshman, as well as transfers within and outside of the university.
  - An accredited degree program must demonstrate its commitment to student achievement both inside and outside the classroom through individual and collective learning opportunities.

[X] Human Resources (students) are adequate for the program.

2105 Team Assessment: The program has a thorough process for acceptance, including agreements that place advanced-standing students with undergraduate degrees from the SUNY Delhi and SUNY Alfred campuses. The university and director of the college provide financial assistance to student organizations such as AIAS, which makes chapter events and travel to conferences possible. The connection to the local AIA and professional community gives the program a solid resource for career development workshops and personal assistance for students. The school also has an IDP Coordinator in place, who ensures that the students have the information they need to begin pursuing licensure and who encourages them to begin their IDP as they participate in the co-op experience.

1.2.2 Administrative Structure and Governance:

- **Administrative Structure:** An accredited degree program must demonstrate it has a measure of administrative autonomy that is sufficient to affirm the program’s ability to conform to the conditions for accreditation. Accredited programs are required to maintain an organizational chart describing the administrative structure of the program and position descriptions describing the responsibilities of the administrative staff.

[X] Administrative structure is adequate for the program.

2015 Team Assessment: The Department of Architecture is housed within the GIS, which is treated by RIT as an administrative structure equivalent to a college. The director of the GIS is considered to be equivalent to a dean. The Department of Architecture has its own administrative executive, the department head, who reports to the director of the Golisano Institute for Sustainability(GIS). An administrative chart is provided in the APR.

- **Governance:** The program must demonstrate that all faculty, staff, and students have equitable opportunities to participate in program and institutional governance.

[X] Governance opportunities are adequate for the program.

2015 Team Assessment: Since RIT now recognizes the GIS as being equivalent to a college, faculty in the Department of Architecture have the opportunity to participate in the Faculty Senate, and staff and students have equitable opportunities to participate in the equivalent staff and student governance organizations. One of the tenured members of the Department of Architecture faculty currently represents the GIS on the Faculty Senate.

Faculty and students participate in Department of Architecture committees.
I.2.3 Physical Resources: The program must demonstrate that it provides physical resources that promote student learning and achievement in a professional degree program in architecture. This includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Space to support and encourage studio-based learning
- Space to support and encourage didactic and interactive learning.
- Space to support and encourage the full range of faculty roles and responsibilities including preparation for teaching, research, mentoring, and student advising.

[X] Physical resources are adequate for the program.

2015 Team Assessment: Louise Slaughter Hall and the recently completed GIS building provide adequate design studio, classroom, faculty, and administrative resources for the Master of Architecture program. The studios in Slaughter Hall are not all currently adjacent to one another, and students indicated a desire for co-locating studios to reinforce the studio culture and to facilitate informal peer-to-peer mentoring. The GIS facility, a LEED Platinum building, also serves as a model for students studying sustainable design principles and is being used to mine data on actual building performance. A wood shop that is well equipped and staffed, an art studio, and a lab space are located in the CIAS building across campus and provide additional support space for students. Students have expressed a desire for some fundamental wood shop equipment to be located adjacent to the studio space to support work on larger scale models that are constructed and difficult to transport across campus.

I.2.4 Financial Resources: An accredited degree program must demonstrate that it has access to appropriate institutional and financial resources to support student learning and achievement.

[X] Financial resources are adequate for the program.

2015 Team Assessment: While year-to-year student enrollment has varied from initial projections for the program, financial commitments are being honored in support of the 5-year business plan that was part of the original architecture program proposal. Each year, the university president, provost, and Finance Office develop budget allocations based on prioritizing annual planning requests from the academic units and institutes such as the GIS. GIS Director Nabil Nasr and GIS CFO Randy Jones continue to represent the architecture program at the university level of budget and planning and, in turn, allocate resources to the program.

The program has demonstrated that it has the resources to support student learning, and, therefore, this condition is Met. Despite a downturn in enrollment over the last year, as well as the transition of some faculty, the program has now solidified a core faculty and has good space resources for studio and shops within Slaughter Hall, the GIS, and the CIAS. The university's financial model for funding new programs is committed and sustained, and it provides for faculty growth to five full-time faculty in accordance with the business plan for the program.

I.2.5 Information Resources: The accredited program must demonstrate that all students, faculty, and staff have convenient access to literature, information, visual, and digital resources that support professional education in the field of architecture.

Further, the accredited program must demonstrate that all students, faculty, and staff have access to architecture librarians and visual resources professionals who provide information services that teach and develop research and evaluative skills, and critical thinking skills necessary for professional practice and lifelong learning.

[X] Information resources are adequate for the program.
2015 Team Assessment: The librarians assigned to this program have enthusiasm for their work and a passion for getting the students to utilize the library's resources for their applied research. These librarians provide orientation sessions to the first-year M. Arch. students in order to acquaint them with the vast amount of resources that are available. The librarians also re-orient the thesis prep students as they begin focusing on their personal projects. There is a large collection of hard-copy books and journals, and there is funding and planning to continue the growth of that collection. Additionally, there is an impressive number of online tools, such as the interlibrary loan system and the ConnectNY system, which makes it simple to retrieve books that RIT's campus does not possess within days.
PART ONE (I): SECTION 3 – INSTITUTIONAL AND PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS

I.3.1 Statistical Reports: Programs are required to provide statistical data in support of activities and policies that support social equity in the professional degree and program as well as other data points that demonstrate student success and faculty development.

- Program student characteristics
  - Demographics (race/ethnicity and gender) of all students enrolled in the accredited degree program(s).
    - Demographics compared to those recorded at the time of the previous visit.
    - Demographics compared to those of the student population for the institution overall.
  - Qualifications of students admitted in the fiscal year prior to the visit.
    - Qualifications of students admitted in the fiscal year prior to the upcoming visit compared to those admitted in the fiscal year prior to the last visit.
  - Time to graduation.
    - Percentage of matriculating students who complete the accredited degree program within the "normal time to completion" for each academic year since the previous visit.
    - Percentage that complete the accredited degree program within 150% of the normal time to completion for each academic year since the previous visit.

- Program faculty characteristics
  - Demographics (race/ethnicity and gender) for all full-time instructional faculty.
    - Demographics compared to those recorded at the time of the previous visit.
    - Demographics compared to those of the full-time instructional faculty at the institution overall.
  - Number of faculty promoted each year since last visit.
    - Compare to number of faculty promoted each year across the institution during the same period.
  - Number of faculty receiving tenure each year since last visit.
    - Compare to number of faculty receiving tenure at the institution during the same period.
  - Number of faculty maintaining licenses from U.S. jurisdictions each year since the last visit, and where they are licensed.

[X] Statistical Reports were provided and provide the appropriate information.

2015 Team Assessment: The required documents were provided in the APR and by the program during the team visit.

I.3.2. Annual Reports: The program is required to submit annual reports in the format required by Section 10 of the 2009 NAAB Procedures. Beginning in 2008, these reports are submitted electronically to the NAAB. Beginning in the fall of 2010, the NAAB will provide to the visiting team all annual reports submitted since 2008. The NAAB will also provide the NAAB Responses to the annual reports.

The program must certify that all statistical data it submits to NAAB has been verified by the institution and is consistent with institutional reports to national and regional agencies, including the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System of the National Center for Education Statistics.

The program is required to provide all annual reports, including statistics and narratives that were submitted prior to 2008. The program is also required to provide all NAAB Responses to annual reports.

\(^2\) In all cases, these statistics should be reported in the same format as they are reported in the Annual Report Submission system.
transmitted prior to 2006. In the event a program underwent a Focused Evaluation, the Focused Evaluation Program Report and Focused Evaluation Team Report, including appendices and addenda should also be included.

[X] Annual Reports and NAAB Responses were provided and provide the appropriate information.

2015 Team Assessment: The reports are available in the Department of Architecture Office as stated in the APR.

1.3.3 Faculty Credentials: The program must demonstrate that the instructional faculty are adequately prepared to provide an architecture education within the mission, history and context of the institution.

In addition, the program must provide evidence through a faculty exhibit⁴ that the faculty, taken as a whole, reflects the range of knowledge and experience necessary to promote student achievement as described in Part Two. This exhibit should include highlights of faculty professional development and achievement since the last accreditation visit.

[X] Faculty credentials were provided and demonstrate the range of knowledge and experience necessary to promote student achievement.

2015 Team Assessment: The recent hire of two new faculty members, Dr. Giovanna Potesta and Nana-Yaw Andoh, has added diversity of background and culture to the full-time faculty, which now totals four. They also add a range of knowledge and experience to the core faculty profile. The plan for the department is to add another full-time faculty member to form a core faculty of five, in addition to the continued use of adjunct instructors.

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⁴ The faculty exhibit should be set up near or in the team room. To the extent the exhibit is incorporated into the team room, it should not be presented in a manner that interferes with the team's ability to view and evaluate student work.
PART ONE (I): SECTION 4 – POLICY REVIEW

The information required in the three sections described above is to be addressed in the APR. In addition, the program shall provide a number of documents for review by the visiting team. Rather than be appended to the APR, they are to be provided in the team room during the visit. The list is available in Appendix 3.

[X] The policy documents in the team room met the requirements of Appendix 3.

2015 Team Assessment: The required policy documents were found in the team room or provided by the program during the team visit.
PART TWO (II): EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES AND CURRICULUM

PART TWO (II): SECTION 1 – STUDENT PERFORMANCE – EDUCATIONAL REALMS AND STUDENT PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

II.1.1 Student Performance Criteria: The SPC are organized into realms to more easily understand the relationships between individual criteria.

Realm A: Critical Thinking and Representation:
Architects must have the ability to build abstract relationships and understand the impact of ideas based on research and analysis of multiple theoretical, social, political, economic, cultural, and environmental contexts. This ability includes facility with the wider range of media used to think about architecture, including writing, investigative skills, speaking, drawing, and model making. Students' learning aspirations include:

- Being broadly educated.
- Valuing lifelong inquisitiveness.
- Communicating graphically in a range of media.
- Recognizing the assessment of evidence.
- Comprehending people, place, and context.
- Recognizing the disparate needs of client, community, and society.

A. 1. Communication Skills: Ability to read, write, speak, and listen effectively.

[X] Not Met

2015 Team Assessment: The evidence for communication skills as an ability to read, write, speak, and listen varied widely from high-pass to low-pass, particularly in written evidence displayed in the team room (i.e., overall organization, paragraph and sentence structure, the use of complete sentences, grammar, and spelling). Therefore, this criterion is Not Met. Cited coursework was ARCH 621 – Architectural History I and ARCH 622 – Architectural History II.

A. 2. Design Thinking Skills: Ability to raise clear and precise questions, use abstract ideas to interpret information, consider diverse points of view, reach well-reasoned conclusions, and test alternative outcomes against relevant criteria and standards.

[X] Met

2015 Team Assessment: The demonstration of design thinking skills is Met as evidenced in several courses, including ARCH 731 – Architectural Studio I and ARCH 733 – Architectural Studio III.

A. 3. Visual Communication Skills: Ability to use appropriate representational media, such as traditional graphic and digital technology skills, to convey essential formal elements at each stage of the programming and design process.

[X] Met

2015 Team Assessment: The ability to utilize visual communication skills is Met in ARCH 611 – Architectural Representation I and ARCH 612 – Architectural Representation II.
A. 4. Technical Documentation: Ability to make technically clear drawings, write outline specifications, and prepare models illustrating and identifying the assembly of materials, systems, and components appropriate for a building design.

[X] Met

2015 Team Assessment: The ability to make technically clear drawings and prepare outline specifications is Met in ARCH 734 – Architecture Studio IV.

A. 5. Investigative Skills: Ability to gather, assess, record, apply, and comparatively evaluate relevant information within architectural coursework and design processes.

[X] Met

2015 Team Assessment: The ability to apply investigative skills in coursework and design processes is Met in ARCH 753 – Research Seminar and ARCH 781 – Understanding Sustainability.

A. 6. Fundamental Design Skills: Ability to effectively use basic architectural and environmental principles in design.

[X] Not Met

2015 Team Assessment: The student work did not consistently reflect evidence of an ability to effectively use basic architectural and environmental principles in the cited course, ARCH 632 – Architectural Design II. Although these principles are identified in the course syllabus, the student coursework and projects did not consistently demonstrate that the principles were being employed or demonstrate an ability to use them. Therefore, this criterion is Not Met.

A. 7. Use of Precedents: Ability to examine and comprehend the fundamental principles present in relevant precedents and to make choices regarding the incorporation of such principles into architecture and urban design projects.

[X] Not Met

2015 Team Assessment: As an ability to examine and comprehend fundamental principles in relevant precedents, three courses were cited for student work examples: ARCH 733 – Architectural Studio III, ARCH 734 – Architectural Studio II, and ARCH 751 – Architectural Theory. Although some evidence was found, it did not consistently reflect an ability from low-pass to high-pass projects, and, therefore, this criterion is Not Met.

A. 8. Ordering Systems Skills: Understanding of the fundamentals of both natural and formal ordering systems and the capacity of each to inform two- and three-dimensional design.

[X] Met

2015 Team Assessment: An understanding of ordering systems skills is Met in ARCH 631 – Architecture Design I.
A. 9. **Historical Traditions and Global Culture:** *Understanding* of parallel and divergent canons and traditions of architecture, landscape and urban design including examples of indigenous, vernacular, local, regional, national settings from the Eastern, Western, Northern, and Southern hemispheres in terms of their climatic, ecological, technological, socioeconomic, public health, and cultural factors.

[X] Met

**2015 Team Assessment:** An understanding of historical traditions and global culture is Met in ARCH 621 – Architecture History I and ARCH 622 – Architecture History II.

A. 10. **Cultural Diversity:** *Understanding* of the diverse needs, values, behavioral norms, physical abilities, and social and spatial patterns that characterize different cultures and individuals and the implication of this diversity on the societal roles and responsibilities of architects.

[X] Met

**2015 Team Assessment:** An understanding of cultural diversity and its implication with respect to the roles and responsibilities of architects is Met in ARCH 621 – Architecture History I and ARCH 622 – Architecture History II.

A. 11. **Applied Research:** *Understanding* the role of applied research in determining function, form, and systems and their impact on human conditions and behavior.

[X] Met

**2015 Team Assessment:** The understanding of the role of applied research is met in ARCH 753 – Research Seminar.

**Realm A. General Team Commentary:** Student work consistently demonstrated the ability to inquire through research to gain an understanding of the multiple contexts of social and environmental factors that influence the generation of abstract ideas that form the foundation for eventually arriving at design solutions. However, evidence was deficient in demonstrating how student research and inquiry is then applied to shape the development of alternative ideas and conceptual approaches. Sustainability principles are clearly taught, but, often, evidence is missing regarding how these principles are applied to determine an optimal approach, given the multiple factors that must be taken into account. While students demonstrated the ability to evaluate building attributes such as thermal performance and daylighting, they expressed a desire to gain a more complete “conceptual” understanding of sustainable strategies and principles that would allow them to generate and inform initial design strategies and guide the development of their design proposals. While communication using a broad range of representational media was evidenced in student work, the ability to convey ideas and well-reasoned conclusions in written form was found to be inconsistent. Students demonstrated the ability to effectively engage their peers through group dialogue and debate in classrooms and within the studio environment.

**Realm B: Integrated Building Practices, Technical Skills and Knowledge:**
Architects are called upon to comprehend the technical aspects of design, systems, and materials, and be able to apply that comprehension to their services. Additionally, they must appreciate their role in the implementation of design decisions, and their impact of such decisions on the environment. Students’ learning aspirations include:

- Creating building designs with well-integrated systems.
- Comprehending constructability.
- Incorporating life safety systems.
- Integrating accessibility.
- Applying principles of sustainable design.

B. 1. Pre-Design: Ability to prepare a comprehensive program for an architectural project, such as preparing an assessment of client and user needs, an inventory of space and equipment requirements, an analysis of site conditions (including existing buildings), a review of the relevant laws and standards and assessment of their implications for the project, and a definition of site selection and design assessment criteria.

[ ] Not Met

2015 Team Assessment: The student work displayed for the primary designated course, ARCH 733 – Architectural Studio III, did not consistently demonstrate the ability to prepare a comprehensive program, and, therefore, this criterion is Not Met.

B. 2. Accessibility: Ability to design sites, facilities, and systems to provide independent and integrated use by individuals with physical (including mobility), sensory, and cognitive disabilities.

[ ] Met

2015 Team Assessment: The ability to design sites, facilities, and systems for those with disabilities is Met in ARCH 734 – Architectural Studio IV.

B. 3. Sustainability: Ability to design projects that optimize, conserve, or reuse natural and built resources, provide healthful environments for occupants/users, and reduce the environmental impacts of building construction and operations on future generations through means such as carbon-neutral design, bioclimatic design, and energy efficiency.

[ ] Met

2015 Team Assessment: The ability to design environments that are sustainable is Met in ARCH 761 – Understanding Sustainability, ARCH 762 – Industrial Ecology Fundamentals, and ARCH 763 – Sustainable Buildings Metrics.

B. 4. Site Design: Ability to respond to site characteristics such as soil, topography, vegetation, and watershed in the development of a project design.
2015 Team Assessment: The ability to respond to site characteristics in project design is Met in ARCH 731 – Architectural Studio I.

B. 5. Life Safety: Ability to apply the basic principles of life-safety systems with an emphasis on egress.

[X] Met

2015 Team Assessment: The ability to apply life safety principles in design is Met in ARCH 743 – Integrated Building systems III.

B. 6. Comprehensive Design: Ability to produce a comprehensive architectural project that demonstrates each student’s capacity to make design decisions across scales while integrating the following SPC:

A.2. Design Thinking Skills
A.4. Technical Documentation
A.5. Investigative Skills
A.8. Ordering Systems
A.9. Historical Traditions and Global Culture

B.2. Accessibility
B.3. Sustainability
B.4. Site Design
B.5. Life Safety
B.7. Environmental Systems
B.9. Structural Systems

[X] Not Met

2015 Team Assessment: Evidence of comprehensive design skills did not consistently rise to the full required level of ability for the integration of the SPC included in this criterion. This was particularly true for the work displayed in the team room. The team requested supplemental evidence from projects not displayed in the team room, and, to the credit of the program, the additional work provided came closer to the intent of the SPC than that in the team room. However, the evidence did not appear representative of all design sections, and, in the end, the team chose to remain with the original assessment of Not Met.

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.

[X] Met

2015 Team Assessment: The required understanding of financial considerations in project development is Met in ARCH 734 – Architecture Studio IV.

B. 8. Environmental Systems: Understanding the principles of environmental systems’ design such as embodied energy, active and passive heating and cooling, indoor air
quality, solar orientation, daylighting and artificial illumination, and acoustics, including the use of appropriate performance assessment tools.

[X] Met

2015 Team Assessment: The required understanding of the principles of environmental systems is Met in ARCH 744 – Integrated Building Systems IV.

B. 9. Structural Systems: Understanding of the basic principles of structural behavior in withstanding gravity and lateral forces and the evolution, range, and appropriate application of contemporary structural systems.

[X] Met

2015 Team Assessment: The required understanding of basic structural systems in design is Met in ARCH 742 – Integrated Building Systems II and ARCH 743 – Integrated Building Systems III.

B. 10. Building Envelope Systems: Understanding of the basic principles involved in the appropriate application of building envelope systems and associated assemblies relative to fundamental performance, aesthetics, moisture transfer, durability, and energy and material resources.

[X] Not Met

2015 Team Assessment: Student work for the cited course, ARCH 742 – Integrated Building Systems II, did not reflect an understanding of the basic principles in the appropriate application of building envelope systems, and, therefore, this criterion is Not Met.

B. 11. Building Service Systems Integration: Understanding of the basic principles and appropriate application and performance of building service systems such as plumbing, electrical, vertical transportation, security, and fire protection systems

[X] Met


B. 12. Building Materials and Assemblies Integration: Understanding of the basic principles utilized in the appropriate selection of construction materials, products, components, and assemblies, based on their inherent characteristics and performance, including their environmental impact and reuse.

[X] Met

2015 Team Assessment: The required understanding of building materials and assemblies integration in Met in ARCH 741 – Integrated Building Systems I.
Realm B. General Team Commentary: For a program that finds its identity in the seamless incorporation of sustainable practices, the integrated building projects did not yield a conceptual understanding of how to incorporate these design principles. Rather, it appears that students learned principles of healthful environments, carbon-neutral design, bioclimatic design, and energy efficiency, but they struggled to conceptually apply these principles early in the design process. Often, this resulted in settling on running an analysis report on a computer model to generate the metrics of sustainability. While it is evident that students have communication with the community and professionals during site visits—as well as early in the design process—pre-design programmatic development based on client interactions, site conditions, and space and inventory requirements seems to lack emphasis in the early development of studio projects. Knowledge of how to tie together the various systems of a building seems to be inconsistent in the cross-section of student work.

Realm C: Leadership and Practice:
Architects need to manage, advocate, and act legally, ethically, and critically for the good of the client, society and the public. This includes collaboration, business, and leadership skills. Student learning aspirations include:

- Knowing societal and professional responsibilities.
- Comprehending the business of building.
- Collaborating and negotiating with clients and consultants in the design process.
- Discerning the diverse roles of architects and those in related disciplines.
- Integrating community service into the practice of architecture.

C. 1. Collaboration: Ability to work in collaboration with others and in multi-disciplinary teams to successfully complete design projects.

[X] Met

2015 Team Assessment: The ability to work collaboratively is Met in ARCH 699 – Co-op Architecture and ARCH 752 – Urban and Regional Planning.


[X] Met

2015 Team Assessment: The required understanding of the relationship between human behavior and building design is Met in ARCH 641 – Fundamentals of Building Systems.

C. 3. Client Role in Architecture: Understanding of the responsibility of the architect to elicit, understand, and reconcile the needs of the client, owner, user groups, and the public and community domains.

[X] Met

2015 Team Assessment: The required understanding of the relationship between the architect and the client is Met in ARCH 771 – Professional Practice.
C. 4. Project Management: *Understanding* of the methods for competing for commissions, selecting consultants and assembling teams, and recommending project delivery methods.

**[X] Met**

**2015 Team Assessment:** The required understanding of methods for competing for projects, creating project teams, and recommending delivery methods is **Met** in ARCH 771 – Professional Practice.

C. 5. Practice Management: *Understanding* of the basic principles of architectural practice management such as financial management and business planning, time management, risk management, mediation and arbitration, and recognizing trends that affect practice.

**[X] Met**

**2015 Team Assessment:** The required understanding of the principles of practice management is **Met** in ARCH 771 – Professional Practice.

C. 6. Leadership: *Understanding* of the techniques and skills architects use to work collaboratively in the building design and construction process and on environmental, social, and aesthetic issues in their communities.

**[X] Met**

**2015 Team Assessment:** The required understanding of leadership techniques is **Met** in ARCH 752 – Urban and Regional Planning and ARCH 771 – Professional Practice.

C. 7. Legal Responsibilities: *Understanding* of the architect’s responsibility to the public and the client as determined by registration law, building codes and regulations, professional service contracts, zoning and subdivision ordinances, environmental regulation, and historic preservation and accessibility laws.

**[X] Met**

**2015 Team Assessment:** The required understanding of the architect’s legal responsibilities is **Met** in ARCH 771 – Professional Practice.

C. 8. Ethics and Professional Judgment: *Understanding* of the ethical issues involved in the formation of professional judgment regarding social, political and cultural issues, and responsibility in architectural design and practice.

**[X] Met**

**2015 Team Assessment:** The required understanding of the architect’s responsibilities regarding ethical and professional judgment is **Met** in ARCH 752 – Urban and Regional Planning and ARCH 771 – Professional Practice.
C. 9. Community and Social Responsibility: *Understanding* of the architect's responsibility to work in the public interest, to respect historic resources, and to improve the quality of life for local and global neighbors.

[X] Met

2015 Team Assessment: The required understanding of the architect's responsibility to the community and society is Met in ARCH 752 – Urban and Regional Planning and ARCH 771 – Professional Practice.

Realm C. General Team Commentary: The architecture program enjoys a unique and exceptionally strong relationship with the professional architectural community in Rochester. This relationship has resulted in the establishment of a successful co-op program and the engagement of adjunct faculty that provide students with first-hand exposure to issues regarding the architect's societal and professional responsibilities, mentors that come from diverse backgrounds, and models for the various roles that architects play in shaping the built environment. The relationship has also served as a bridge between the university and the City of Rochester by providing an opportunity for students to engage with the community and discover the positive impact that architects have through practice. A unique culture is evident in the ethic that is taking root in students' commitment to social responsibility and environmental stewardship. The team believes that the SPC in Realm C, including those concerning professional practice, are Met with Distinction.
PART TWO (II): SECTION 2 – CURRICULAR FRAMEWORK

II.2.1 Regional Accreditation: The institution offering the accredited degree program must be, or be part of, an institution accredited by one of the following regional institutional accrediting agencies for higher education: the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS); the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSACS); the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC); the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCAAS); the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU); and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC).

[X] Met

2015 Team Assessment: At its session on June 25, 2009, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education accepted the RIT progress letter. A letter from the accrediting agency to RIT President Bill Destler, dated June 26, 2009, is contained in the APR.

II.2.2 Professional Degrees and Curriculum: The NAAB accredits the following professional degree programs: the Bachelor of Architecture (B. Arch.), the Master of Architecture (M. Arch.), and the Doctor of Architecture (D. Arch.). The curricular requirements for awarding these degrees must include professional studies, general studies, and electives. Schools offering the degrees B. Arch., M. Arch., and/or D. Arch. are strongly encouraged to use these degree titles exclusively with NAAB-accredited professional degree programs.

[X] Met

2015 Team Assessment: The school offers a 3-1/2 year Master of Architecture degree (105 semester credit hours with a 4-year undergraduate degree in architecture or a field other than architecture). Evidence of this degree program is provided through the outline of degree track and curriculum options.

II.2.3 Curriculum Review and Development: The program must describe the process by which the curriculum for the NAAB-accredited degree program is evaluated and how modifications (e.g., changes or additions) are identified, developed, approved, and implemented. Further, the NAAB expects that programs are evaluating curricula with a view toward the advancement of the discipline and toward ensuring that students are exposed to current issues in practice. Therefore, the program must demonstrate that licensed architects are included in the curriculum review and development process.

[X] Met

2015 Team Assessment: The Department of Architecture has a curriculum committee composed of nine members. The committee is chaired by a founding member of the department who is a registered architect. The committee includes two additional faculty members from the Department of Architecture, the two recent hires who are new this academic year. Also from the Department of Architecture is one student and one adjunct faculty member who is a practitioner but is not a registered architect. The committee also includes one faculty member from the Department of Sustainability, three faculty members from the College of Imaging Arts and Sciences, and one faculty member from the College of Applied Science and Technology. The APR states that the goal of the curriculum committee over the past year has been to review the entire curriculum. The department head clarified that an annual program review will be conducted during this current academic year, and will commence immediately upon the conclusion of the NAAB visit. Following the last NAAB visit, the department used the team’s findings to address issues of curriculum flexibility; clarification and revision of the program goals, mission, and objectives; the current admission requirements for calculus and physics; the awarding of advanced standing to applicants; acceptable global experiences; and portfolio review evaluation. The changes that resulted were approved by the State Education Department in May 2015. In our initial meeting with the associate provost, the team learned that RIT is proud of its Student Learning Outcomes Assessment program and publishes an annual progress report. The department has a Learning Outcomes
Assessment process in place. The outcomes selected for assessment are well aligned with the NAAB SPC. The department appears to collect data, analyze the data, report the results, and discuss the results.
PART TWO (II): SECTION 3 – EVALUATION OF PREPARATORY/PREPROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

Because of the expectation that all graduates meet the SPC (see Section 1 above), the program must demonstrate that it is thorough in the evaluation of the preparatory or preprofessional education of individuals admitted to the NAAB-accredited degree program.

In the event a program relies on the preparatory/preprofessional educational experience to ensure that students have met certain SPC, the program must demonstrate it has established standards for ensuring these SPC are met and for determining whether any gaps exist. Likewise, the program must demonstrate it has determined how any gaps will be addressed during each student’s progress through the accredited degree program. This assessment should be documented in a student’s admission and advising files.

[X] Met

2015 Team Assessment: The Department of Architecture has two methods of evaluating preparatory/preprofessional education in cases of admission with advanced standing. The first method is admission through articulation agreements. The department maintains articulation agreements with Alfred University, SUNY Delhi, and the CIA Department of Interior Design. These agreements align coursework at those institutions with coursework in the Department of Architecture in order to ensure that entering students have met the relevant SPC. The second method is through the evaluation of specific courses for students applying from all other institutions. In those cases, an applicant’s course materials are reviewed by two to three faculty members to determine whether the published course outcomes align with the outcomes of the RIT courses for which a waiver is sought. If the student passed the course, then it is determined that the student has achieved the course outcomes and, by extension, has fulfilled the relevant SPC.
PART TWO (II): SECTION 4 – PUBLIC INFORMATION

II.4.1 Statement on NAAB-Accredited Degrees: In order to promote an understanding of the accredited professional degree by prospective students, parents, and the public, all schools offering an accredited degree program or any candidacy program must include in catalogs and promotional media the exact language found in the 2009 NAAB Conditions for Accreditation, Appendix 5.

[X] Met

2015 Team Assessment: The statement on NAAB-Accredited Degrees is found on the program’s webpage under the tab “Program – Accreditation.”

II.4.2 Access to NAAB Conditions and Procedures: In order to assist parents, students, and others as they seek to develop an understanding of the body of knowledge and skills that constitute a professional education in architecture, the school must make the following documents available to all students, parents, and faculty:

The 2009 NAAB Conditions for Accreditation
The NAAB Procedures for Accreditation (edition currently in effect)

[X] Met

2015 Team Assessment: Access to NAAB Conditions and Procedures is found on the program’s webpage under the tab “Program – Accreditation.”

II.4.3 Access to Career Development Information: In order to assist students, parents, and others as they seek to develop an understanding of the larger context for architecture education and the career pathways available to graduates of accredited degree programs, the program must make the following resources available to all students, parents, staff, and faculty:

www.ARCHCareers.org
The NCARB Handbook for Interns and Architects
Toward an Evolution of Studio Culture
The Emerging Professional’s Companion
www.NCARB.org
www.aia.org
www.aias.org
www.acsa-arch.org

[ ] Met
[ ] Not Met

2015 Team Assessment: The program’s website contains access to all the career development information and resources listed, except for www.ARCHCareers.org. In checking the program’s website, we find that access to this link no longer exists. The NAAB office has advised our team not to check any box for this requirement.

II.4.4 Public Access to APRs and VTRs: In order to promote transparency in the process of accreditation in architecture education, the program is required to make the following documents available to the public:

All Annual Reports, including the narrative
All NAAB responses to the Annual Report
The final decision letter from the NAAB
The most recent APR
The final edition of the most recent Visiting Team Report, including attachments and addenda

These documents must be housed together and accessible to all. Programs are encouraged to make these documents available electronically from their websites.

[X] Met

2015 Team Assessment: These documents are available in the Department of Architecture Office.

II.4.5 ARE Pass Rates: Annually, the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards publishes pass rates for each section of the Architect Registration Examination by institution. This information is considered to be useful to parents and prospective students as part of their planning for higher/post-secondary education. Therefore, programs are required to make this information available to current and prospective students and their parents either by publishing the annual results or by linking their website to the results.

[ ] Met
[] Not Met

2015 Team Assessment: This is not applicable, as the first graduates are not yet eligible to take the ARE exam.
III. Appendices:

1. Program Information

[Taken from the Architecture Program Report, responses to Part One: Section 1 Identity and Self-Assessment]

A. History and Mission of the Institution (I.1.1)

Reference Rochester Institute of Technology, APR, pp. 3

B. History and Mission of the Program (I.1.1)

Reference Rochester Institute of Technology, APR, pp. 3-6

C. Long-Range Planning (I.1.4)

Reference Rochester Institute of Technology, APR, pp. 12-13

D. Self-Assessment (I.1.5)

Reference Rochester Institute of Technology, APR, pp. 13-18
2. **Conditions Met with Distinction**

The team found particular strength in the curriculum focused on professional practice in Realm C. Leadership and Practice.
3. The Visiting Team

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IV. Report Signatures

Respectfully Submitted,

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Representing the NCARB
Program Response to the Final Draft Visiting Team Report
1. I.1.4 – Long Range Planning

We have now structured a specific list of key indicators for the Architecture Program Advisory Council (APAC) to focus on as primary elements toward strategically addressing long range planning and growth. These include in part - trends shaping the design profession, practice techniques and patterns, and emerging professional demography as graduates migrate into various career paths. At a local level, our professors of practice and mentors – both as critics and supporters of our coop program - are being solicited to comment on an intern’s design, intellectual and educational attributes and competencies as young professionals in our regional workforce (paying attention to international students). Combined, this multi-pronged approach will better inform long range planning and strategic decision-making.
2. I.1.5 – Self-Assessment Procedures

As noted in other sections of the VTR, the department works with the RIT Office of Student Learning Outcomes Assessment (SLOA) for regular self-assessment. Notwithstanding our data set as presently small and not yet fully statistically significant, we still review and analyze our data as a part of our annual retreat/advance. And of note - the architecture program’s self-assessment has just been identified by SLOA as one of RIT’s “best practices”, given our process and having the NAAB Realms directly linked and included as a part of our student learning outcomes. In addition, the department head serves as a member of RIT’s Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Council (SLOAC).

3. II.1.1 – A.1 – Communication Skills

We realize that our history course sequence requires considerable writing assignments, and identifying these courses alone to meet A.1 was an error on our part. We have recently observed diminished writing proficiency, given the increased percentage of international students in our program over the last two years. We have now adjusted compliance with A.1 to the following courses – ARCH 753 - Research Seminar/Thesis Prep and ARCH 790 – Thesis. In addition, we require all international students to take English testing upon entry into our program, and - if additional skills are warranted - they are required to take our mandatory English language course that has been tailored specifically for architecture students. Additionally, we have added a new elective offering (Expressions in Speaking and Writing for Architects) focused specifically on writing and communication skills, allowing both international and domestic students the opportunity to hone in on tools and techniques as they move through the program.

4. II.1.1 – A.6 – Fundamental Design Skills

The Fundamental Design Skills SPC was originally matched to a course that was merged into ARCH 632 – Architectural Design II during the recent transitioning from RIT’s quarter system to the semester system. This resulted in a limited number of student projects available to sufficiently show compliance with this SPC. ARCH 632 had previously been taught by different adjunct faculty and lacked consistency. With all our full time faculty now a regular and routine part of the studio sequence – and each faculty member having singular oversight with one year of the three year studio sequence – we are more focused on design skill development and studio course sequencing across the curriculum. Particular focus on demonstrating the ability to express incorporate fundamental design skills in the first year design studio sequence remains a priority.

5. II.1.1 – A.7 - Use of Precedents

Use of precedents has now been incorporated into all studio courses with clear exercises in course syllabi to both examine and document “best practices”, requiring an evaluation, analysis and critique of relevant buildings to more fully inform and direct design exploration. In addition, we will continue to refer to and study precedents in our history and theory classes and include these courses as a part of the total cohort in meeting this SPC.
6. II.1.1 – B.1 – Pre-Design

ARCH 733 – Architectural Studio III has as its focus “adaptive” design exploration. As a result, it has sometimes been difficult to prepare a comprehensive program where many factors are already pre-established. While we intend to keep programming as an explorative element in each of our studios, we have made adjustments to our curriculum to have this SPC primarily met in ARCH 735 – Integrative Studio and ARCH 771 – Professional Practice, where a more directed and definitive comprehensive program can be appropriately explored, understood and demonstrated.

7. II.1.1 – B.6 – Comprehensive Design

In 2015 we offered for the first time our comprehensive studio course ARCH 735 – Architectural Studio IV: Integrative. While we were pleased that we came close to satisfying this SPC on our first attempt, we learned how difficult it was to satisfy the 11 embedded SPCs. Following the recent site visit we adjusted the course syllabi and content to reflect the upcoming new Realm C in the 2014 Conditions. We have every confidence in our ability to satisfy the new C.2 and C.3 criteria and are already implementing these changes in the spring 2016 offering of this course.

8. II.1.1 – B.10 - Building Envelope Systems

This SPC was met during the 2013 site visit, and the course material for ARCH 742 – Integrated Building Systems II did not change for the 2015 site visit. Nonetheless, we have re-examined the syllabus in ARCH 742, and are folding B.10 into both ARCH 741 and ARCH 743 (Integrated Building Systems I and III respectively) so that building envelopes can be explored sequentially across all three courses, providing both basic principles early on, and more technical and detailed explorations later on.

9. Causes of Concern A. SPC Compliance Threshold

The request to identify a high and low pass consistently across all courses often proves difficult as in some cases that margin was rather narrow, thus making faculty select projects that received a relatively high grade as a low-pass due to the lack of poor work in that course, resulting in the threshold for low-pass unfairly high. Therefore when such work is compared to work from another class where a project was worthy of a low grade, hence a low-pass, it appears that it has fallen below the required standard. Our goal is to keep working toward a consistent level of student work such that the margin between high and low pass is rather narrow. The faculty has identified the importance of mid-project reviews across design studios and other courses as a way to address these issues earlier in the process in order to ensure that the margin between high and low pass remains consistently narrow, and have placed this item as a priority for our annual spring retreat/advance.

10. Causes of Concern B. Consistent Integration of Sustainability

There may be very few programs of architecture which begin at as high a level of sustainable design inquiry as ours, outlining core sustainable principles at the onset of course delivery. Thus – as a key cornerstone of our program – we have worked to set a high standard in this regard from program launch through each successive year, and to continue to raise the bar as our program grows and develops. We continuously examine ways to
integrate and more fluidly weave a robust sustainable discourse throughout our curriculum as a whole. Since the site visit we have increased the collaborative and cohesive efforts among the sustainability, technical, and representation courses into the design courses in each of the three years of the program through project and assignment matching. This semester, for example we have articulated specific explorative opportunities to align assignments in ARCH 762 - Industrial Ecology Fundamentals with ARCH 734 – Architectural Studio II. In addition, we are inviting additional local architects as outside “experts” into our studios to act as consultants and supporting critics. We are appreciative of this observation both as a comment about our curriculum but also a comment on how we articulate our intentions.

As our program continues to grow and mature, we receive annual feedback from our students (and now alums), as well as hold an annual retreat/advance to discuss key aspects specific to program improvement. We examine methods to more effectively educate and demonstrably communicate principles of sustainability as a key and essential ingredient to be applied holistically and comprehensively in our curriculum, enhancing cognizant decision making in design exploration, expression and execution – thereby enriching both the design process, and critically reflecting on design outcomes.

Once again, we are deeply appreciative to the NAAB and its volunteer Site Visit Team for its supportive guidance, keen insight, perceptive observations and constructive review to help shape, direct and enrich our program’s direction and growth.