American University of Sharjah
College of Architecture, Art & Design

Visiting Team Report

B. Arch. (159 semester credit hours)

The National Architectural Accrediting Board
20 February 2013

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 a 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 & Visit Summary

The visiting team would like to begin this report by acknowledging the effort and hospitality of the American University of Sharjah (AUS), its College of Architecture, Art and Design (CAAD), and its Department of Architecture. The individuals with whom this team had the pleasure to interact on this visit were uniformly courteous and gracious. Everyone involved, starting with Rachida Cherki in the administrative office and including Pramod Kumar in the IT Department, was professional and uniformly helpful.

APR and Team Room – The material assembled by the Department of Architecture for review by this visiting team was well-organized and clearly presented. The Architecture Program Report was admirable in many respects: it was concise, succinct, and easy to follow. The team room was both a readily understandable presentation of the required material and a comfortable milieu for the team to conduct its work. The attention shown to these preparatory steps by the Department of Architecture made the job of the visiting team easier: it allowed the team to focus on a detailed review of the B. Arch program.

Leadership – The visiting team found that B. Arch. students at AUS benefit from engaged, energetic, and concerned leadership. Peter Di Sabatino, the dean of CAAD, is dedicated to advancing the educational mission of his college, committed to the best for the professional architecture program, and willing to pursue bold and innovative approaches to education. The head of the Department of Architecture, Michael Hughes, displays great enthusiasm for and dedication to architecture education. He is widely complimented by students and faculty for his clear leadership of the program, for his availability to all of the program's population, and for his willingness to constructively address any meaningful concern brought to his attention. The presence of these two experienced and very competent professionals provides dynamic leadership for the B. Arch program.

Faculty - The B. Arch students at AUS benefit greatly from the committed and highly accomplished full-time department faculty. To an individual, the permanent faculty is open and available to its students. Their unwavering dedication to the intellectual and professional development of their students was readily apparent to this visiting team. Augmented by talented leaders of the UAE architecture profession who often assist the program at review time, the faculty is an invaluable and, indeed, indispensable asset to the accredited program in architecture.

Students – The B. Arch students at AUS are an impressive group of mature and dedicated students. They are talented, smart, and articulate. The students come from an impressively wide variety of geographic and academic settings and thus infuse the program with a genuine diversity that is virtually unique among programs of professional architecture education. The visiting team found them clearly not only committed to their professional architecture education but also willing to take full advantage of any opportunity to be involved in the department's governance and policy formulation. The visiting team found the students to be the core resource of the program.

Opportunities – The visiting team believes there are several opportunities that AUS might consider as it strives to achieve its stated goal of have an exceptional and unique professional program in architecture.

- The program is situated in a college with several programs in related disciplines. While there is structured interaction among all CAAD students in the first-year shared design foundations program, the visiting team left with the impression that the various programs currently function separately in most regards. The program is encouraged to explore opportunities for greater formal interdisciplinary classes that would enrich the B. Arch program and all of CAAD.

- The visiting team heard from several student sources that the architecture program would benefit from its own Web presence. The visiting team can see potential advantages in internal communication, outreach, recruitment of both student and faculty, and student exposure to an increasingly important professional tool if a way can be found, consistent with the policies of the AUS central administration, for CAAD to have a web presence under its control.
- It was also heard from many of the CAAD architecture students that there is great enthusiasm for a master's degree in architecture at AUS. The visiting team can see value to AUS in having a post-professional degree in architecture in the future. However, greater faculty stability needs to be achieved (see "Causes of Concern") in order to ensure that this effort does not divert needed resources and attention from the still maturing B. Arch. program.
- The program is encouraged to consider instituting a more structured and robust lecture series. It would, among other benefits, enrich the students' educational experience, increase exposure of the program to the global architectural community, and offer another vehicle to assist in faculty recruitment.
- In the experience of this visiting team, the integration of knowledge and abilities required in the comprehensive project is often hard to achieve in a residential design project. Required competencies in life safety and structural and environmental systems integration are particularly difficult to demonstrate through this building type. The visiting team sees an opportunity for greater student success if a different building typology is selected for the project.

2. Conditions Not Met

Student Performance Criterion A.4 *Technical Documentation*
Student Performance Criterion B.2 *Accessibility*
Student Performance Criterion B.5 *Life Safety*
Student Performance Criterion B.6 *Comprehensive Design*

3. Causes of Concern

A. Faculty turnover and recruiting

The team believes that the rate of faculty turnover cited in the previous VTR remains a concern and has perhaps intensified. This has a serious ripple effect within the program, given the need for key required courses to be reinvented on short notice by inexperienced faculty. Departmental leadership is encouraged to play the central role in recruiting faculty who can contribute to core needs of a clearly structured and integrated curriculum.

B. Faculty diversity

The program has an extraordinarily diverse student body with a high percentage of women. The school and the university are encouraged to make the recruitment and retention of women faculty an imperative.

4. Progress Since the Previous Site Visit (2010)

2004 Condition 3, Public Information: *To ensure an understanding of the accredited professional degree by the public, all schools offering an accredited degree program or any candidacy program must include in their catalogs and promotional media the exact language found in the* NAAB Conditions for Accreditation*, Appendix A. To ensure an understanding of*

the body of knowledge and skills that constitute a professional education in architecture, the school must inform faculty and incoming students of how to access the NAAB Conditions for Accreditation*.*

Previous Team Report (2010): The following text is not included in the media publications of the university.

> *Master's degree programs may consist of a preprofessional undergraduate degree and a professional graduate degree that, when earned sequentially, constitute an accredited professional education. However, the preprofessional degree is not, by itself, recognized as an accredited degree.*
>
> *The NAAB grants candidacy status to new programs that have developed viable plans for achieving initial accreditation. Candidacy status indicates that a program should be accredited within 6 years of achieving candidacy, if its plan is properly implemented.*
>
> **2013 Team Assessment:** Since the 2010 visit, the requirement for this Criterion has changed. Currently, this required information can be found on the AUS web site.

2004 Condition 5, Studio Culture: *The school is expected to demonstrate a positive and respectful learning environment through the encouragement of the fundamental values of optimism, respect, sharing, engagement, and innovation between and among the members of its faculty, student body, administration, and staff. T he school should encourage students and faculty to appreciate these values as guiding principles of professional conduct throughout their careers.*

Previous Team Report (2010): This criterion is not met. The issue of time management as it applies to the faculty and the students is not adequately addressed. In addition, the policy should state a structured review process (annually, biannually, etc.) by students and the faculty to assess its effectiveness.

> **2013 Team Assessment:** The recently adopted (May 2012) Studio Culture Policy addresses the previous comments. In the future, any revisions will be influenced by the newly added Studio Culture survey.

2004 Condition 8, Physical Resources: *The accredited degree program must provide the physical resources appropriate for a professional degree program in architecture, including design studio space for the exclusive use of each student in a studio class; lecture and seminar space to accommodate both didactic and interactive learning; office space for the exclusive use of each full-time faculty member; and related instructional support space. The facilities must also be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and applicable building codes.*

Previous Team Report (2010): Unlike many schools of architecture the quantity of physical space is not an issue at the SA+D. Ample space is provided for offices, studios, lecture, seminar, classroom, media, and leisure needs. There are several computer labs and a well-organized woodshop. In addition to the on-site men's and women's dormitories, quality on-site faculty housing is provided as a standard benefit. Maintenance, renovation, and expansion projects are ongoing within the SA+D building; a partial renovation was completed in summer 2009 and plans for a second renovation/addition are in place for construction in summer 2010. Long term planning for the enlargement of the program includes the primary physical resources of the SA+D building.

But there are reasons why this criterion is not met. Neither the site nor the building is in

compliance with ADA including the recently completed partial renovation at the building entry. We could find no evidence of a plan to bring the building or the site into compliance with ADA or that it was an administrative concern. Additionally, there are a number of tripping hazards associated with damaged site paving and the newly constructed feature stairs at the building entry for which we could find no plans for correction. The tripping hazards are of particular concern to the NAAB team for the safety of all, especially the many students who wear the *abaya* (robes).

> **2013 Team Assessment:** Since the last visit, improvements in accessibility to the program's building have been made, principally through the addition of exterior ramps. By international standards the interior of the building is substantially accessible and in the team's opinion the program would be aggressive in providing accessibility accommodation to anyone requiring it.
>
> The visiting team did not feel that it was the purview of NAAB to comment on issues of general campus maintenance as raised by the previous visiting team.

2004 Criterion 13.29, Architect's Administrative Roles: Understanding of *obtaining commissions and negotiating contracts, managing personnel and selecting consultants, recommending project delivery methods, and forms of service contracts*

Previous Team Report (2010): ARC 561: Construction management delivered by the Department of Civil Engineering partially meets the requirement of "*recommending project delivery methods"* and student outcomes demonstrate a level of understanding.

The syllabus for ARC 462 covers the full NAAB requirement. However, no e*v*idence was found in the student outcomes for "*obtaining commissions, negotiating contracts and selecting consultants."*

> **2013 Team Assessment:** This specific Student Performance Criterion has been changed in the current NAAB Conditions. The understanding required by the 2004 Criterion 13.29, Architect's Administrative Roles is now found elsewhere in Realm C: Leadership and Practice, and the visiting team found that all Realm C criteria were met, so this no longer a condition not met.

II. Compliance with the Conditions for Accreditation

(Note, every assessment should be accompanied by a brief narrative. In the case of SPCs being Met, the team is encouraged to identify the course or courses where evidence of student accomplishment was found. Likewise, if the assessment of the condition or SPC is negative, please include a narrative that indicates the reasoning behind the team's assessment.)

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*: 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.

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

2013 Team Assessment: The Architecture Program Report (APR) contains a clear and concise historical overview of the American University of Sharjah (AUS) as well as a clear presentation of the evolution of the architecture program. The APR also provides evidence that the program benefits from its institutional setting and in turn contributes in reasonable measure to the vibrancy of the overall academic community.

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.

2013 Team Assessment: The newly adopted Studio Culture Policy (May 2012) in combination with the annual studio culture survey ensures a respectful and positive learning environment that addresses the regional perspectives of AUS.

Due to the nature of the AUS student and faculty makeup, a culturally rich environment is inevitable. The social equity and mutual respect were evident to the visiting team during meetings held with the faculty and students and through general interaction of program participants observed during this visit.

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.[1] 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.

2013 Team Assessment: The AUS occupies a unique position with a mission and structure based on an American model of higher education while immersed in the cultural setting of the United Arab Emirates. Its curricula combine liberal education together with focused professional programs, and the university and the school attract students from throughout the Arab world and beyond. The CAAD is a valued unit of the AUS, and the professional degree program in architecture is highly selective and respected within the institution. Architecture students are actively engaged with the other design disciplines in both the school and other colleges, and students from other colleges enroll in courses in CAAD. Faculty from the architecture program serve on a number of university committees and participate in institutional governance.

The school values creative inquiry and research through design and making. CAAD holds a number of academic events and conferences that promote the interaction of the program with institutions and professionals beyond the university and the regional community. Design Week in particular provides an opportunity for students and faculty to engage professionals and academics from leading institutions in the United States and other parts of the world.

Engagement with the community occurs largely through individual faculty efforts and institutional initiatives with local authorities and organizations like the Sharjah Art Foundation.

The program has recently initiated a series of curricular changes that will serve the students well in their ability to integrate many aspects of design inquiry. Students have participated in study abroad programs such as the recent Milan, Italy, summer studio.

[1] See Boyer, Ernest L. *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*. Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. 1990.

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.

2013 Team Assessment: The visiting team found adequate evidence that supports the intent of this NAAB Perspective. This was highlighted in the student meeting, where students from all years of the B. Arch. were represented and participated throughout the discussion. Students articulated their appreciation for the learning environment and the high standard of excellence they perceive in their program's standards and curriculum. Further students conveyed an appreciation for the work and dedication of CAAD faculty. The student leaders of the program stated they were comfortable in being able to air their concerns with the program's faculty and administration. Students felt confident that the program was preparing them for a career in architecture. However, many expressed an understanding of and interest in less narrowly defined architectural endeavors.

The students in the architecture program have demonstrated a significant level of commitment through their dedication to the profession in a highly competitive program. They are determined, self-motivated, and inquisitive, and it is apparent to the team that they are taking the necessary steps to become lifelong learners.

Overall the conversations with the students were representative of a mature student body, respectful of one another and articulate in their often strong, individual ideas.

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.

2013 Team Assessment: Due to the unique regulatory environment that CAAD operates in, where students can become licensed upon graduation, the visiting team feels comfortable with the students' understanding of the local regulatory environment. In addition several students reported to the team that they were enrolled in the IDP program with the goal of recording hours worked during internships during school for future career flexibility.

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.
2013 Team Assessment: Given the highly diverse and cosmopolitan student body and a faculty drawn from a score of different counties, it was not surprising to the visiting team to learn that architecture students at AUS receive an educational grounding that includes an understanding of

both architecture practice in the global economy and the multiple potential roles an architect can play in it. Through their education as well as their frequent interaction with local practitioners who regularly participate with the program as visiting jury critics, the visiting team found AUS architecture students aware of their future responsibilities to clients and community and enthusiastic about the opportunity to apply their architecture skills to address the multiple problems of both the immediate Gulf Region and the wider human community.

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.

2013 Team Assessment: The visiting team has learned that one of the overarching missions of the American University of Sharjah is to educate students of the region to become future leaders. The team has found evidence that this is truly being accomplished within the CAAD program. In meetings with students and faculty, it is clear that there is a learning culture that instills the value of ethical decisions and a duty to take the knowledge acquired at this institution out into the region and beyond and put it to use in a meaningful way.

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 meet the standards as set by the NAAB.

2013 Team Assessment: At the university level, the director of institutional effectiveness and planning, appointed in 2011, leads a three-tiered process that guides the university. The first tier serves as the master plan for the university, while the second tier focuses at the program level, and the third tier at the individual course level. The master plan is developed on a 10-year cycle with progress toward goals evaluated annually.

CAAD completed a SWOT analysis in 2010 that resulted in a 10-year departmental plan and a rearticulation of the college's mission and goals, built around the Five Perspectives on architecture education as defined by NAAB. This work also informed the ongoing curricular revisions. Due to the relative youth of the program, the planning focus has been on short- and medium-term efforts to ensure continued accreditation both by NAAB and the UAE Commission for Academic Accreditation (5-year cycle). The next review of this process is scheduled for fall 2013. The university suggests that this process include faculty, current students, and alumni.

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, 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 meet the standards as set by the NAAB.

2013 Team Assessment: An ongoing program of institutional self-assessment that meets NAAB standards has been identified by the visiting team. This program is led by the university's Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning and is supported by a web-based program that tracks QA/IE initiatives. Departmentally, the CAAD annually assesses the following:

- What is the academic program or administrative unit trying to do?
- How well is it doing?
- How does it know how well it is doing or not doing?
- How can it improve what it is doing?

PART ONE (I): SECTION 2 – RESOURCES

I.2.1 Human Resources & Human Resource Development:

- *Faculty & 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[2].*
  - *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 & Staff) are adequate for the program

2013 Team Assessment: The team found that the CAAD has adequate human resources in administrative leadership and staff supporting administrative and technical operations. Faculty resources are a serious concern given the high level of faculty turnover. This was a particular concern in the staffing of required courses and the comprehensive studio. The implementation of the new mentorship process is critically important for a program that annually hires a significant number of new and visiting faculty.

The AUS Faculty Handbook and the recently developed Department of Architecture Bylaws and Policies are thorough. Although the school describes its commitment to diversity and EEO/AA in its policy documents, the visiting team failed to find clear goals and benchmarks regarding diversity and inclusive excellence in its hiring of women faculty. The lack of women in leadership positions is a particular concern in a school with such a high percentage of women students.

The team has found that the faculty workload is very high and does not appear to offer adequate recognition or course release for significant service roles. Faculty members typically teache 9 credit hours per semester with 16 students in a typical studio. This makes it difficult to pursue the research and creative work required for reappointment and promotion. Staffing of the administrative and technical operations of the school seems adequate.

Although the school has appointed a new IDP educator coordinator, that person has not had the opportunity to communicate adequately with the students. The school should encourage this person to attend IDP coordinator training. This is a particular concern given the difficulty that students will have in completing IDP in the UAE.

The team found that the school provided ample support for faculty participation in conferences and other development opportunities. The technical and administrative staff felt that there were not

[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.

policies in place to support their professional development. This was a particular concern to the fabrication lab staff.

The team found that assessment policies were in place for faculty review, but that there remained some concern that teaching assessment should go beyond tabulating student evaluations.

- *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

2013 Team Assessment: The visiting team found evidence that the school's admission policies and procedures are clearly documented both on the web site and in the Undergraduate Catalog published annually. Potential architecture students participate in a Foundation course during their first year and are then selected for the architecture program for limited seats through a portfolio review process. GPA is also taken into consideration.

The CAAD commitment to student achievement is demonstrated through a formalized advising system that ensures students are making informed decisions about their advancement in the program. There is evidence of learning opportunities outside the classroom including class trips to other countries and internships with firms both locally and internationally.

I.2.2 Administrative Structure & 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

2013 Team Assessment: The accredited program in architecture at AUS is an academic unit within the College of Architecture, Art, and Design and, as such, does not enjoy all of the administrative autonomy of a free-standing academic unit. For example, the program has no direct control over the preparation or management of its annual budget. While some traditional measures of program autonomy are lacking, nonetheless, when factoring in other measures of autonomy, such as control of its curriculum; input into faculty hiring, retention, and promotion; and ongoing management of its facilities, the visiting team found that the accredited program in architecture has sufficient control over the conditions of accreditation to determine that its administrative structure satisfies the NAAB guidelines in this area.

While a formal organization chart of the architecture program was not available at the time of the visit, the team did receive a detailed narrative outlining the structure and organization of the Department of Architecture.

- **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

  2013 Team Assessment: The visiting team found that the faculty and staff participate in a meaningful fashion in both the governance of AUS, the CAAD, and the accredited program. The architecture program has a faculty member who last year chaired the University Undergraduate Curriculum Committee. Another faculty member has long been an active contributor to the University Senate and enjoys a similar level of involvement including five members of the College Curriculum Committee within the governance of the CAAD. Faculty also participates in multiple and meaningful ways in the governance of the accredited program through the Department of Architecture Curriculum Committee, the search committee, the faculty personnel committee, and the academic affairs committee.

  The students have an active and participatory student government. There is an AIAS chapter at AUS. While students do not have fixed seats on the program's standing committees, the architecture students do have a seat on the CAAD Student Government. Further the visiting team heard from the students that the program administration is open to student input and a willing participant with them in discussion of a broad range of issues relating to the program.

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

2013 Team Assessment: The visiting team found that the space provided for the architecture program within the CAAD was adequate for the purposes of the program. Since the previous visit, the Digital Lab and shop spaces have been greatly expanded and now include two robotic arms, laser cutters, vacuum former, CNC plasma cutter, and several 3-D printers. The student studio spaces are arranged on three floors around an open atrium and are well laid out and utilized. Computers and print equipment as well as state-of-the-art A/V equipment support the learning environment. All faculty have their own private offices in close proximity to the studios, which encourages student/faculty interaction.

Since the last visit, improvements in accessibility to the program's building have been made, principally through the addition of exterior ramps. The interior of the building is substantially accessible by international accessibility standards, and in the team's opinion the program would provide accommodation to anyone requiring such.

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

2013 Team Assessment: The visiting team found that the accredited program in architecture at AUS has sufficient financial resources available to support student learning and achievement. As indication of this condition, the visiting team heard from the architecture students that they are generally satisfied that a suitable level of funding exists. Further, it was reported to the team that in recent years the program has

enjoyed the good fortune of having modest surpluses at the end of the year that have been available to augment physical resources.

Starting this year, AUS will absorb major portions of its yearly utility expenses, which had previously been provided at no charge to the university by the government of Sharjah. When fully implemented in 2014, it is estimated this change will cost the university approximately 36 million dhs, or around $US 10 million. Put another way, this new expense will be on the order of five percent of the university's total operating budget for 2012–13. This new requirement will potentially affect all programs throughout the university, and diligence and creativity will be needed by the central administration, the CAAD leadership, and the architecture program's administration to ensure that dealing with this new requirement will not lead to a diminution in the quality of the architecture education.

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

2013 Team Assessment: The architecture library is located in the main library on campus, which in turn is located in close proximity to the CAAD. There is a librarian assigned as a liaison to the CADD program. The records of the main library indicate a growth in the titles identified as supporting the accredited program in architecture from 1,691 titles in 2001 to 7,079 titles last year. Every indication the team received indicated that the library is adequately funded and well-utilized by students.

PART I: SECTION 3–REPORTS

I.3.1 Statistical Reports[3]. *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 & 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 & 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

2013 Team Assessment: Statistical reports covering the required material in the appropriate format were included in the APR. The team observed that the APR provided the required statistical data regarding the demographics for the students and faculty portion of the program. The data for full-time, adjunct, and visiting faculty demonstrated a definite lack of diversity, specifically in that the percentage of female faculty was very low. Alternatively, the percentage of female students in the school was disproportionately high compared to the males. The program leadership has identified the need for a more balanced ratio of female to male faculty that is more reflective of student demographics.

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.*

[3] In all cases, these statistics should be reported in the same format as they are reported in the Annual Report Submission system.

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 transmitted prior to 2008. 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

2013 Team Assessment: Annual Reports and NAAB responses as required were available to the visiting team on the university web site.

I.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 exhibit[4] *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.

2013 Team Assessment: The APR contained the required faculty credentials, which, in turn, demonstrated that the individual faculty members have the requisite knowledge, experience, and professional qualifications (demonstrated by a high percentage of licensed architects) necessary to provide an architecture education for AUS students and to meet the mission of the program, the CAA, and the university. The visiting team did note that nine of the résumés included in the APR were for individuals who – because of retirement, resignation, extended indefinite leave, reassignment, or non-renewal – are no longer teaching in the accredited program in architecture. See “Causes of Concern.”

[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

2013 Team Assessment: The team room contained the Department of Architecture Bylaws & Policies, the June 2012 American University of Sharjah Faculty Handbook, the past five years of the American University of Sharjah Undergraduate Catalogue, the November 2011 Bachelor of Architecture Curriculum Revision, and other documents required by the visiting team for its assessment and deliberation.

PART TWO (II): EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES AND CURRICULUM

PART TWO (II): SECTION 1 – STUDENT PERFORMANCE -- EDUCATIONAL REALMS & 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] Met

2013 Team Assessment: The visiting team found adequate evidence that students in the accredited program have the ability to write effectively in several of the nondesign studio classes. The student-wide meeting and participation in classes observed by the team demonstrated that students had the requisite speaking and listening skills.

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

2013 Team Assessment: The visiting team observed sufficient evidence in the student course work in conjunction with ARC 227 *Design Principles of the Built Environment* to judge this criterion met.

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

2013 Team Assessment: The visiting team found this criterion well-met, observing ample evidence that the students in the accredited program in architecture develop good visual communication. This skill was demonstrated in the course work for ARC 201 *Architectural and Interior Design Studio I*, ARC 202 *Architectural and Interior Design Studio II,* and elsewhere in the required studio work of subsequent years.

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] Not Met

2013 Team Assessment: Although the visiting team found laudable evidence of technical documentation in the areas of drawings and models, no evidence of written outline specifications prepared by students was available despite being listed in the course descriptions for ARC 402 *Design Studio VI* and ARC 463 *Professional Practice*.

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

[X] Met

2013 Team Assessment: The student work the visiting team reviewed prepared for ARC 425 *Ideas in Architecture* demonstrated that investigative skills consistent with the student performance criterion were attained by the students in the AUS program in architecture.

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

[X] Met

2013 Team Assessment: The visiting team found this criterion well-met in the student course work prepared for ARC 201 *Architectural and Interior Design Studio I*, ARC 202 *Architectural and Interior Design Studio II,* and in additional locations in subsequent required studio work.

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] Met

2013 Team Assessment: The visiting team found this criterion well met in the student course work prepared for ARC 201 *Architectural and Interior Design Studio I*, ARC 302 *Architectural Design Studio III*, ARC 227 *Design Principles of the Built Environment,* and in other required course work.

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

2013 Team Assessment: The visiting team found this criterion met in the course work for ARC 201 *Architectural and Interior Design Studio I* and ARC 202 *Architectural and Interior Design Studio II.*

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

2013 Team Assessment: The visiting team has found minimal evidence that this criterion has been met in the following courses: ARC 227, *Design Principles of the Built Environment* and ARC 425 *Ideas in Architecture*. The new history curriculum of ARC 221 *Pre-Modern Architecture and Urban Form* and ARC 222 *Modern Architecture and Urban Form* should augment the student's understanding of these important themes.

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

2013 Team Assessment: The visiting team found sufficient examples that students gained an understanding of cultural diversity consistent with the requirements of this criterion in multiple places in the required curriculum including research in conjunction with studio work and in the student work in conjunction with ARC 425 *Ideas in Architecture*.

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

2013 Team Assessment: The visiting team found this criterion met in the course work for ARC 505 *Architectural Design Studio VI* and ARC 506 *Architectural Design Studio VII.*

For the program's future use, the team notes the NAAB Conditions state that the program must demonstrate "…that each graduate possesses the knowledge and skills defined in the criteria…." Therefore, if all the work submitted by the program for a specific criterion is group work, as it is in this instance, the program must produce some kind of evidence that each student in the group has developed the requisite understanding.

Realm A. General Team Commentary: The student work reviewed by this visiting team indicated a generally high level of ability in design thinking, research, and analysis in the appropriate contexts. This ability was demonstrated most clearly in drawings, renderings and, models. Verbal communication was, on the whole, quite good, particularly given that English is a second language to the majority of the AUS architecture students but could be strengthened in all forms of written communication.

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.**

[X] Met

2013 Team Assessment: While not a strength of the accredited architecture program at AUS, the visiting team did find sufficient evidence in ARC 272 *Site Planning* and ARC 401 *Architectural Design Studio VI* to judge this criterion satisfied at the minimal level.

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**.

[X] Not Met

2013 Team Assessment: Student work from ARC 301 *Architectural Design Studio III*, ARC 401 *Architectural Design Studio V*, and ARC 272 *Site Planning* fail to show student ability at the requisite level.

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.**

[X] Met

2013 Team Assessment: This criterion was found to be satisfied by the student work in ARC 354 *Ideas in Architecture* and in second- and third-year studio work.

B. 4. **Site Design: *Ability* to respond to site characteristics such as soil, topography, vegetation, and watershed in the development of a project design.**

[X] Met

2013 Team Assessment: Site planning ability was demonstrated in ARC 201 *Architectural and Interior Design Studio I*. The student work from the project for a coastal retreat integrates topography and planting design.

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

[X] Not Met

2013 Team Assessment: The visiting team found that AUS architecture students are exposed to life-safety systems in ARC 451 *Environmental Controls Systems*; however, the studio work for ARC 402 *Architectural Design Studio VI* failed to demonstrate the basic principles of life-safety at the ability level.

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	**B.2. Accessibility**
A.4. Technical Documentation	**B.3. Sustainability**
A.5. Investigative Skills	**B.4. Site Design**
A.8. Ordering Systems	**B.7. Environmental Systems**
A.9. Historical Traditions and Global Culture	**B.9.Structural Systems**
B.5. Life Safety	

[X] Not Met

2013 Team Assessment: The student work reviewed by the visiting team was insufficient to demonstrate that all students in the accredited program gained the ability to produce the requisite comprehensive design. Some of the individual student projects examined displayed meaningful deficiencies in life safety design, structural systems, accessibility, and site design.

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

2013 Team Assessment: This criterion is met. The team found evidence in ARC 463 *Professional Practice* through the completion of complex pro formas and some cost modeling.

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

2013 Team Assessment: This criterion is adequately met through course work evidence found in ARC 354 *Environmental Energies and the Building Form* and ARC 455 *Environmental Control*

Systems such as the studies of active and passive cooling systems, HVAC systems, water systems, solar orientation, and appropriate performance systems tools.

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

2013 Team Assessment: This criterion is minimally met in ARC 344 *Structural Design for Architects*. In addition, a sufficient demonstration of understanding is also found in ARC 301 *Architectural Design Studio 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] Met

2013 Team Assessment: The visiting team has found evidence of a basic understanding of the principles of building envelope systems in ARC 434 *Materials and Methods: Finish*.

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

2013 Team Assessment: The visiting team found this criterion met in the course work for ARC 455 *Environmental Control Systems* and minimally demonstrated in the design work prepared in conjunction with ARC 402 *Architectural and Interior Design Studio VI.*

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

2013 Team Assessment: The visiting team found this criterion met in the course work for ARC 232 *Materials and Methods: Rough* and ARC 434 *Materials and Methods: Finish*.

Realm B. General Team Commentary: Student work in required courses showed basic understanding of most of the required technical aspects of building design, systems and materials. Application of this understanding at the ability level was missing in some instances.

Integration of building systems could be strengthened as well as demonstration of life safety and accessibility. Sustainable design principles were apparent in some course work but could be strengthened in many of the design studio projects.

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

2013 Team Assessment: The team found sufficient evidence to judge this criterion met in ARC 463 *Professional Practice* through the execution of a group project that included engagement with local firms. Additional evidence was found in ARC 272 *Site Planning* in group project #2.

C. 2. Human Behavior: *Understanding* of the relationship between human behavior, the natural environment and the design of the built environment.

[X] Met

2013 Team Assessment: This criterion is met. The team found evidence in ARC 354 *Environmental Energies and the Building Form* and ARC 272 *Site Planning* by exhibiting an understanding of the relationship between human behavior, the natural environment, and the design of the built environment

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

2013 Team Assessment: This criterion is met. The team found evidence in ARC 463 *Professional Practice* in the adequate completion of an analysis of an architect's role in understanding and reconciling client needs in both the public and private sectors.

C. 4. Project Management: *Understanding* of the methods for competing for commissions, selecting consultants and assembling teams, and recommending project delivery methods

[X] Met

2013 Team Assessment: This criterion is met. The team found evidence in ARC 463 *Professional Practice* that included the execution of a group project to analyze a local firm project.

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

2013 Team Assessment: This criterion is met in the student work prepared for ARC 463 *Professional Practice* in the execution of a group project that analyzed the operations and management of a local firm.

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

2013 Team Assessment: This criterion is met in the student work prepared for ARC 463 *Professional Practice* in the execution of a group project that analyzed the operations and management of a local firm.

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

2013 Team Assessment: This criterion is met. The team found evidence in the class assignments and assessments prepared for ARC 463 *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

2013 Team Assessment: This criterion is met: the team found evidence in ARC 463 *Professional Practice* in the homework assignments, quizzes, and formal exams of that course.

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

2013 Team Assessment: This criterion is met in evidence found in ARC 463 *Professional Practice* where collaborative group projects and analysis focused on public interest, historic resources and improvement of quality of life.

Realm C. General Team Commentary: The legal and ethical issues affecting clients and the public were demonstrated in the general course work this visiting team examined. Student work showed an understanding of the professional and business skills necessary for practice. While acknowledged as a professional duty, community service is not shown to be a significant focus of the program.

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 (NCACS); the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU); and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC).*

[X] Met

2013 Team Assessment: The American University of Sharjah was reaccredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools in 2009 for a period of ten years.

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

2013 Team Assessment: AUS offers a Bachelor of Architecture for its only professional degree in architecture.

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

2013 Team Assessment: The APR clearly outlines the process used to evaluate and modify its curriculum. The Department of Architecture Curriculum Committee is chaired by a licensed architect.

PART TWO (II) : SECTION 3 – EVALUATION OF PREPARATORY/PRE-PROFESSIONAL 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 pre-professional education of individuals admitted to the NAAB-accredited degree program.

In the event a program relies on the preparatory/pre-professional 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

2013 Team Assessment: During the visit, the team learned that only one student in the accredited architectural program currently at AUS was admitted as a transfer student, and this individual's transcript was reviewed and given appropriate credit.

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

2013 Team Assessment: The visiting team found the requisite statement on the AUS web site.

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

2013 Team Assessment: The visiting team found the NAAB materials on the AUS web site.

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

[X] Met

2013 Team Assessment: The visiting team found the career development materials on the AUS web site.

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

2013 Team Assessment: The visiting team found the NAAB documents on the AUS web site.

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.

[X] Met

2013 Team Assessment: The visiting team found the required information about ARE pass rates on the AUS web site.

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 American University of Sharjah, *APR,* pp. 1

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

Reference American University of Sharjah, APR, pp. 1-5

C. Long-Range Planning (I.1.4)

Reference American University of Sharjah, APR, pp. 14-18

D. Self-Assessment (I.1.5)

Reference American University of Sharjah, APR, pp. 18-27

2. Conditions Met with Distinction

SPC A.3 Visual Communication Skills

The visiting team found numerous examples of innovative and well-crafted visual communication throughout the studio course work prepared by architectural students at AUS.

SPC A.6 Fundamental Design Skills

The visiting team found that the second-year curriculum and its integration of content from multiple classes displayed exemplary fundamental design skills.

SPC A.7 Use of Precedents

The visiting team saw regular and appropriate use of precedents through the course work of all years represented.

SPC B.7 Financial Considerations

The visiting team was impressed by the financial considerations as found in ARC 463 *Professional Practice* through use of pro-forma modeling.

3. The Visiting Team

Team Chair, representing the AIA
Michael Stanton, FAIA, LEED®AP
Stanton Architecture
555 De Haro Street
Suite 300
San Francisco, CA 94107
(415) 865-9600
(415) 235-5530 mobile
(415) 865-9608 fax
mstanton@stantonarchitecture.com

Representing the ACSA
Judith Kinnard, FAIA
Professor and Harvey Wadsworth Chair
School of Architecture
Tulane University
1502 Conery Street
New Orleans LA 70015
(504) 865-5389
jkinnard@tulane.edu

Representing the AIAS
Matthew A. Barstow
President and Chairman
The American Institute of Architecture Students
1735 New York Ave.
Washington, DC 20006
(202) 626-7363 direct
(202) 626-7472 office
(202) 626-7414 fax
BarstowMatt@aia.org

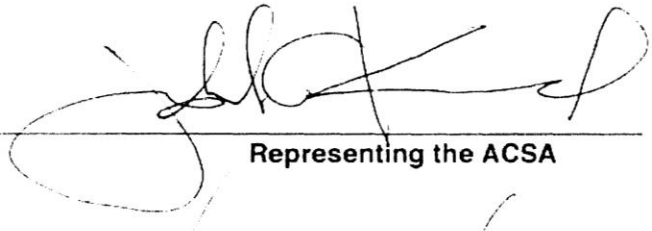
Representing the NCARB
Janet L. Hansen, AIA, NCARB, Principal
SMRT
144 Fore Street
Portland, ME 04104
(207) 772-3846
(207) 772-1070 fax
(207) 807-4676 mobile
jhansen@SMRTInc.com

IV. Report Signatures

Respectfully Submitted,

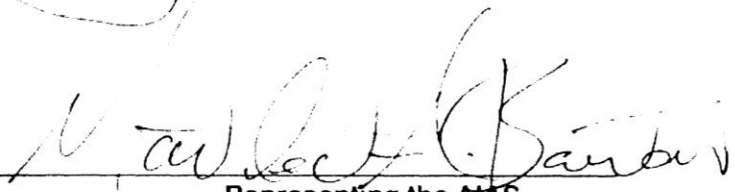
Michael Stanton, FAIA, LEED®AP
Team Chair

Representing the AIA



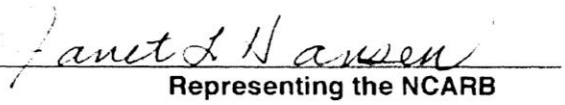
Judith Kinnard, FAIA
Team member

Representing the ACSA



Matthew A. Barstow
Team member

Representing the AIAS



Janet L. Hansen, AIA, NCARB
Team member

Representing the NCARB