## **Ball State University**

College of Architecture and Planning

### PART 2

**Conditions Not Met (VTR 4.)** 

### 6. Human Resources

VTR: "As the graduate program expands its enrollment, recruiting, advising, career planning, graduate assistantship and scholarship management, and the simple nature of graduate education suggests expanded staff and administrative resources. These needs are currently met as an overload to department staff that are already taxed. The modest teaching release for the graduate program director is tied to an equally modest (current) enrollment." (p. 11)

Student enrollment has increased in the last year from a total of 57 to a total of 81 students. To solve the problem of a "modest teaching release for the graduate program director", Dean Guillermo Vasquez de Velasco has approved loading the director for 6 hours (3 hours for administration and 3 hours for advising) rather than the former 3 hour total, and has approved a summer stipend for the director.

To reduce the overload for staff, which was also a problem cited by the visiting team in 2001, I have asked one faculty member to work with two graduate assistants to relieve to some significant extent the most onerous burden for the department's two staff members in the fall semester: the organization and paperwork associated with the annual field-trip week, during which all undergraduate and graduate studios take weeklong field trips integrated into their studio assignments and non-studio coursework as well. While this measure will mitigate staff overload somewhat it will not fully solve the problem. To this end I have asked the dean if the department can receive intermittent staff assistance from the college office.

## 13.17 Site Conditions

VTR: "This condition is only partially met. Learning outcomes of two studio courses (ARCH 401 & 501) demonstrate students' ability to analyze and respond to primarily built site conditions in the development of the design project. Strategies for responding to natural environments remain mostly unexplored, or undocumented for the team's review." (p. 19)

All studio instructors in the fifth year (ARCH 501) and most instructors in the second and fourth year (ARCH 201, 401) addressed at appropriate levels of sophistication responses to natural environments, through the filter of various issues associated with sustainability and through visible integration of building interiors and exteriors more tightly with the natural environments surrounding them. Both courses in building technology (ARCH 214 & 314) address this issue, as do the extensively re-organized courses in environmental systems (ARCH 273 & 373), with their increased focus on sustainability. More work needs to be done on this condition in the third year studios (ARCH 301), plans for which the studio instructors will be developing over the summer.

# 13.22 Building Service Systems

VTR: "This criterion is partially met. The curriculum matrix in the APR identified ARCH 214, ARCH 314 and ARCH 401 as the documentation for fulfilling this requirement...There is no evidence of a focused building service systems presentation and/or discussion in this course [ARCH 214]...No evidence was found of a larger and more appropriately comprehensive presentation of building service systems in this course [ARCH 314]. One of the syllabi in ARCH 401 refers to a focused consideration of...'environmental systems.' However, the evidence of that focus was not found. ARCH 373: Environmental Systems was not indicated in the curriculum matrix as contributing to the fulfillment of this criterion. However, it substantially fulfills the requirements for the basic principles and appropriate application and performance for plumbing, electrical distribution. However, no evidence was found in the syllabi, or documented student work that related to vertical circulation, communication, security and fire protection." (p. 21)

Professor Walter Grondzik—newly hired this past academic year and an internationally recognized expert in environmental systems—covers plumbing, electrical distribution, vertical circulation, communication, security, and fire protection in the lectures, readings, labs, exams, and analyses he requires of his students. ARCH 401, the studio dedicated to comprehensive design, reinforces this material in design and in the required notebook submission (see **13.28** below).

# 13.23 Building Systems Integration

VTR: "Work exhibited did not demonstrate the ability to integrate building systems. The student work addressed systems integration only at a small residential scale in course 314. This team felt that the criteria [sic] of 'ability' should be demonstrated on a large scale project where the building systems and life safety issues are more complex, requiring relevant principles to coordinate and resolve the integration of these systems..." (p. 21)

In the academic year 2008-09, Brian Hollars, an instructor with a proven record in systems integration will team with another instructor to teach both ARCH 214 and ARCH 314. The team will better prepare students for ARCH 401, the studio dedicated to comprehensive design and the course in which students during this past academic year demonstrated ability at systems integration (in their designs and in the required notebook submission), and the course in which they will continue to demonstrate that ability (see **13.28** below).

## 13.28 Comprehensive Design

VTR: "The comprehensive design studio as taught in the 401 studio is unclear in regard to satisfying its curricular agenda and pedagogy; this appears as a result of the 4+ 2 restructuring and a lack of requisite coordination and topic development for this studio. The student outcomes, required texts, and the topical/methodological focus of the studios differed considerably across the studio sections. A more comprehensive studio pedagogy and content is evidenced in the 501 studio." (p. 4)

## ARCH 401 Revised Fall 2007

The department focused this studio tightly on the NAAB criterion for comprehensive design. All students worked on one project for the entire fifteen weeks of the semester. All students had to prepare not only the same set of presentation drawings and 3-d and virtual models, but also a notebook that included process drawings, structural systems, environmental systems, envelope systems, life safety provisions, vertical circulation, research notes, and a narrative about how or why key decisions were made. To ensure that students addressed all aspects of comprehensive design, Brian Hollars, a builder, contractor, and architect who coordinated the ARCH 401 studios in the fall semester and taught one of them, was loaded for an additional three hours to consult in all ARCH 401 sections on issues of building technology. Walter Grondzik was loaded for three hours to consult in all ARCH 401 studios on issues in environmental systems. Professor Jack Wyman was loaded for three hours to consult on ADA and building code issues. Michele Chiuini, who teaches ARCH 418, the last of the three courses in the structures sequence, consulted on structural issues. So did Andrea Swartz, one of the ARCH 401 studio instructors as well as the principal instructor for the first course in the structures sequence. Karen Keddy, a new tenure-track faculty member with a Ph.D (University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee) in cultural and social issues in design, taught one section of ARCH 429, the second of three courses in the curriculum stream on cultural and social issues in design, and consulted in two of the ARCH 401 studios on these issues. Pamela Harwood, another ARCH 401 studio instructor who also teaches in the cultural and social issues stream, consulted on these issues in the other three ARCH 401 studios.

Moreover, each studio instructor clearly defined her or his pedagogical approach and research expectations for the students. The result of the novel loading scheme of studio consulting was an uncommon integration of all the major technological systems, and the cultural and design factors and considerations relevant to comprehensive design. There was also an uncommon degree of coordination among the studio sections, a coordination further reinforced by running the semester-long projects as a competition sponsored by Cripe Architects & Engineers of Indianapolis (\$2000 first prize, \$1000 second prize and \$500 prizes for two runners up). One way to summarize how students at high and low pass levels were able to demonstrate *ability* at comprehensive design is this: the exhibit of all the students' work on the second, third and floor floors of the CAP building at the end of the semester, an exhibit that included the notebooks,

showed the highest average level of buildable designs across all sections of a fourth-year studio that I have seen in my twenty years in the department.

### PART 3

**Causes for Concern (VTR 5.)** 

VTR: "The faculty and administration, however, were not well prepared to fully evidence and comprehensively document the new M. Arch degree-program." (p. 4)

The visiting team came towards the end of the first academic year of the M. Arch program, before the first class of students had entered their second year of study. Those students completed their second year of study and received degrees in May 2008. The program is fully in place and the department is prepared to document it completely.

VTR: "...a separate NAAB matrix for this program (called 'option 5' [for career-change students who have undergraduate degrees in fields other than architecture]) is necessary to fully comprehend and evaluate this degree-program." (p. 4)

Option 5 is also fully implemented, and a diagrammatic matrix has been developed to clearly represent it and the other four options or tracks. A separate NAAB matrix can be easily prepared for option 5 for the next team visit.

VTR: "The comprehensive design studio as taught in the 401 studio is unclear in regard to satisfying its curricular agenda and pedagogy..." (p. 4)

This cause for concern is fully addressed in PART 2, 13.28 Comprehensive Design.

VTR: "There is concern for the expanding administrative and academic advising needs for the graduate program. Presently this work is 'added on' to the current staff responsibilities. The concern for the staff work load was expressed in the last report..." (p. 5)

This concern is addressed in PART 2, 6. Human Resources.

VTR: "There are concerns for recruiting and retaining BSU's 'best students' while remaining committed to the diversity initiatives and preparing undergraduates for other excellent graduate schools. A clear plan or strategy for recruitment and retention in the graduate segment is needed and is under consideration." (p. 5)

The department in the past academic year offered early admission and a two-year assistantship to its best undergraduate students applying for the M. Arch degree (requirements: a minimum of 3.5 overall GPA, and 3.5 GPA in studio). For external recruitment: the website for the program has been made much more concise, and language carefully edited, and policies and procedures clarified (the revised version will be posted in early July). A new recruitment poster has been designed and is in the final

stage of production. The dean is examining ways to increase the recruitment budget for the graduate program. Plans are under discussion to recruit more aggressively at the small liberal arts colleges in the region (Earlham, Oberlin, Depauw, Wooster, Wittenburg, etc.) to add to the numbers of career-change students.

VTR: "With expansion to graduate education, and in light of faculty retirements, recruiting top-ranked faculty is a significant challenge. The modest support for faculty research travel also appears incongruent with the context and needs of graduate level faculty research and production." (p. 5)

The department is successfully recruiting top-ranked faculty. Walter Grondzik and Karen Keddy (see **PART 2, 13.28 Comprehensive Design**) are the two hires for academic year 2007-08. For 2008-09, the new department chair will be Mahesh Senagala, formerly Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Research in the College of Architecture at the University of Texas at San Antonio and 2007-08 President of ACADIA. The dean is examining ways congruent with the graduate program to expand faculty support for research and travel.