

Ball State University

Department of Architecture

Mahesh Senagala, Chairperson

Date of last accreditation/candidacy visit = Spring 2006

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## **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 from a total of 80 in 2008-2009 to a total of 94 students in 2009-2010. In 2008 we had reported enhanced loading for the program director and expanded graduate assistantship support for administration and teaching. Despite the economic recession and funding cuts in the state for higher education, our department has not seen any staff or faculty reduction. Currently no graduate faculty members are overloaded. However, the university has imposed a hiring freeze and do not foresee creation of new staff positions at least until the economy recovers.

In 2008 report we had mentioned the pursuit of additional support for our major annual field-trip week, now named ArchiTreks. ArchiTreks now receives new and additional staff support from the university budget office. This support relieves the department staff of at least 20% of the work previously handled in the department. We are further bolstered by the newly created college-level faculty coordinator for study abroad programs, which, we hope, will shift some coordination responsibilities from the department to the college.

#### **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)**

Natural environments as sites for architectural interventions are addressed in studios at all year levels. For instance, Prof. Tim Gray chose Christy Woods protected natural environment for a Chapel project in ARCH 301 junior studio. Prof. George Elvin chose Mounds State Park for the design of a Visitors' Center in ARCH 402/502 senior/graduate studio. We are sending a sample of syllabi in a separate email.

### **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—recently hired in 2007 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 undergraduate studio dedicated to comprehensive design, reinforces this material in design and in the required notebook submission (see **13.28** below). We are sending a sample of syllabi in a separate email.

### **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)**

As reported last year, ARCH 401 continues to be a studio where systems integration has been emphasized (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 continues to focus this studio tightly on the NAAB criterion for comprehensive design. 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.

As reported last year about the 2007-2008 academic year, there was also an uncommon degree of coordination in 2008-2009 as well among the studio sections, a coordination further reinforced by running a competition sponsored by Cripe Architects & Engineers of Indianapolis. 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 fourth floors of the CAP building at the end of the semester, an exhibit that included the notebooks, drawings and physical models, and showed the highest average level of systems integration coupled with overall architectural excellence across all sections of a fourth-year studio, whose work has been juried by external evaluators from architectural firms.

### PART 3

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

**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)**

Learning from three academic years of running this small program, the Option 5 “Career Change” M.Arch program is now being revised for better coordination with our course offerings in the regular M.Arch program. We expect a revised “Career Change” program to be approved in spring 2010. We would like to report about the revisions and anticipated learning outcomes in our report next year and include a comprehensive (and new) NAAB matrix.

**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)**

Our graduate program has seen a 75% surge in applications this academic year, mainly due to greater demand from outside Ball State (total 126 in 2008 to 72 in 2007). In addition to retaining most of our best, we are attracting students from China, Greece, North Africa, South America and India. Through market survey we understand our competition better. With this understanding, the College is scaling up the campaign to publicize our programs to national and international audience through print, web, video and other media. As a strategy, we are building greater distinction into our graduate experience, which will differentiate our program.

**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)**

In response to a recent faculty search, we received 20 applications. The department continues to recruit top quality faculty. With the recruitment of Joshua Coggeshall from Los Angeles, we have added to the strength of our already strong design studio faculty. Prof. Coggeshall brings with him twenty years of practice and teaching experience from such offices as Morphosis, Frank Gehry Associates, and Guthrie Buresh Architects. Eight of our faculty members hold PhDs and provide excellent support for graduate-level research.

Despite the widespread economic hardship in the country and funding cuts at the university, our department still provides a total travel budget of \$16,218, for the second year in a row. We plan to maintain the same level of funding for years to come. Further, at least 40% of our faculty members support their travel from the grant funds they receive for their research.