

The University of North Carolina at Charlotte  
School of Architecture  
Christopher Jarrett, SoA Director  
Last Accreditation: February 2010

## **PART II – NARRATIVE REPORT**

### **SECTION 1.4 – CONDITIONS NOT MET**

**Bachelor of Architecture Program**

**Master of Architecture Program**

#### **13.14 – Accessibility (ability)**

Ability to design both site and building to accommodate individuals with varying physical abilities. *Although the program demonstrates improvement in the level of student understanding of accessibility issues in the design of site and building conditions, the work does not consistently display the required ability level.*

- Following up from last year, an additional step in further addressing this unmet condition was hiring an additional adjunct faculty member (AIA practicing professional). The SoA Director met again with key faculty twice to build on the three successful action steps enacted last year:
- Step One: Review ADA Law. Better understand definitions of persons protected by the ADA; review the 4 major federal laws that require accessibility in the built environment, including 1) the ABA, 2) the Fair Housing Act, 3) section 504 of the Rehab Act and 4) the ADA.
- Step Two: Bring in a consultant. Jennifer Perry, Compliance Specialist of the United Spinal Association, held a workshop for the second year in the SoA on accessibility [1-5pm, Friday, Sep 30th]. The workshop was directed at students in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Year and 5<sup>th</sup> Year [comprehensive design] studios of the undergraduate program and in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Year [comprehensive design] studios of the graduate program. The Workshop was sponsored by five architectural firms in Charlotte: HDR, Perkins+Will, Little, LS3P, and FreemanWhite. Workshop stressed that the disability population is growing and accessible features in the built environment are critical as a part of good design for all; emphasized to students to think critically about accessibility requirements in design work - not just about “meeting the code”; explained design requirements in ADA are rooted in a civil rights law; reviewed with students studies of human dimensions and the range of physical abilities of the differently-abled including the effects of auditory and sight impairment; demonstrated to students what to look for if they were doing a site review of a building to determine accessibility compliance with ADA-AG–Accessibility Guidelines.
- Step Three: Develop Exercises. Increase evidence of compliance through analysis and design diagrams, programming, design, and development of comprehensive projects in undergraduate and graduate studios. As last year, students performed a site and building assessment for accessibility compliance on their own design studio project.

#### **13.25 Construction Cost Control (understanding)**

Understanding of the fundamentals of building cost, life-cycle cost, and construction estimating.

*Although the program provided evidence of a class speaker presenting information about Construction Cost Control through handouts in the Professional Practice course (Arch 4112/5112), the level of understanding is not evident in student exercises, exams, assignment results, or in other courses.*

- This unmet condition continues to receive focused attention. SoA Director met with key faculty again this past summer to review unmet condition and to follow up on the two action steps developed last year.
- Step One: Review curriculum. This past year it was determined to deliver introductory lectures and cost control source material in Professional Practice, and implement student exercises.
- Step Two: Bring in a consultant. Dick Perlmutter, AIA, with over 25 years of professional experience, was hired in part to develop construction cost control exercises that were implemented in our Professional Practice course. This effort will be complimented by specific questions on cost control on future exam(s) beginning next spring.

## **> SECTION 1.5 – CAUSES OF CONCERN**

### **A. Accessibility**

*The two previous visits (1998 and 2004) have also found this criterion to be not met and there is a cause of concern.*

See comments above.

### **B. Leadership Transition**

*Since this visit is the first to occur after the transition to a new structure as the College of Art and Architecture from the previously independent College of Architecture, and occurred 6 months after the hiring of Director Jarrett, the team encourages the school to pay attention to an ongoing leadership transition in a way that maintains the same independence and quality of the school as before the transition to the College of Art and Architecture*

The school continues to pay attention to the ongoing leadership transition in a way that maintains the same independence and quality of the school before the transition to the College of Art and Architecture. Concerted effort continues to be in progress to delegate full budget control and program planning to Director Jarrett. As Dean, Ken Lambla continues to demonstrate a serious commitment to maintaining the quality of the Bachelor of Architecture and Master of Architecture programs through various forms of administrative and financial support.

### **C. Financial Resources**

*The team underscores that the school's financial planning is critical to maintain the quality of the program given the known reductions in budgets over the next several years and the uncertainty of the global economy as an externality. This planning is also necessary to make available opportunities for faculty research and development as mandated by the university's mission as a research institution.*

In times of reduced budgets, financial planning is increasingly critical to maintaining the quality of our programs. As reported last year, the College of Arts and Architecture in collaboration with the School of Architecture restructured the financial operations of the School. This restructuring led to the development of a new position, Business Services Coordinator (BSC), a higher-level position than the School's previous "account technician." A new in-house interim "business services coordinator" was assigned to the School of Architecture this past summer. The Dean initiated a search for a permanent budget coordinator this fall, resulting in successful external recruitment in October.

The State Legislature approved this past year a “tuition increment” for graduate study in the School of Architecture. This funding will provide financial assistance and academic enhancement programming for students and faculty. Also, the College supported two funding streams in support of SoA faculty scholarship and research development, including faculty travel, participation in conferences and workshops, equipment, materials and supplies. The College also supported facility upgrades in excess of \$250,000, completed this past fall.