



National
Architectural
Accrediting
Board, Inc.

2024 Visiting Team Report

University at Buffalo – The State
University of New York
School of Architecture and
Planning

M.Arch.

3.5-year Program: undergraduate degree in any
major + 112 graduate credit hours

2-year Synthesis and Integration Track:
undergraduate degree in architecture from a
regionally or nationally accredited institution with a
minimum of five studios and 44 or more credits of
core NAAB criteria already met + 64 graduate credit
hours

4+2 Research Studio Track: undergraduate degree
in architecture from a regionally or nationally
accredited institution with a minimum of seven
studios and 44 or more credits of core NAAB
criteria already met + 64 graduate credit hours

Continuing Accreditation
March 4-6, 2024

Contents

<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
I. Summary of Visit	3
II. Progress Since the Previous Site Visit	4
III. Program Changes	4
IV. Compliance with the 2020 Conditions for Accreditation	4
1. Context and Mission	4
2. Shared Values of the Discipline and Profession	6
3. Program and Student Criteria	7
4. Curricular Framework	17
5. Resources	21
6. Public Information	28
V. Appendices	31
1. Team PC/SC Matrix	31
2. The Visiting Team	34
VI. Report Signatures	35

I. Summary of Visit

a. Acknowledgments and Observations

The NAAB visiting team would like to thank the University at Buffalo's Department of Architecture for its assistance and hospitality during our accreditation visit. In particular, the team wants to recognize the efforts of the Chair of the Department of Architecture, Korydon Smith, for being extremely helpful in leading the program's preparation and organization for the team visit. The team especially appreciated Professor Smith's timely responses to requests for information and the organization of both the digital and on-site team rooms. The team would also like to recognize the many staff hours that went into making this visit possible. The team wants to make sure to thank Sidney Landis for coordinating all of the team's logistics, and Gregory Delaney and Stephanie Cramer for the tour of the program's facilities. The team would also like to thank the students who assisted Gregory in mounting the exhibition – choosing to show the work of every student in the program speaks volumes to the culture that exists at the university. The team also enjoyed being able to meet with everyone in person and appreciated the many thoughtful discussions with students, faculty, staff, administration, and professional architects throughout the site visit in Buffalo.

The NAAB team would like to highlight some of the program's unique characteristics that stood out during the visit. The first is the program's commitment to student support services. Recognized during the previous accreditation visit as an area for needed improvement, the program embraced the NAAB's desire for continuous improvement in this area. What the team observed the visit is a robust team of dedicated staff and clinical faculty who support students throughout their academic journeys and beyond. Adjectives such as "miraculous" and "super awesome" were used to describe the academic and career advising team. The librarian, Rose Orcutt, is known by name and the entire fabrication team teaches students so much about what it means to engage in the craft of making. The students appreciate the faculty and truly value the relationships they build. The students feel supported – they are clearly aware of everything the program and its people do to support them in their work.

The second highlight for the program is what was described as a "Plurality of Thought" and the sense of community that is created by it. This plurality of thinking fosters a culture of open communication, constructive and respectful conversations, and a deep appreciation for the diverse viewpoints and life experiences of every member of the UB community. In each of our meetings, it was evident that there exists a deep, mutual respect between faculty, staff, and students. The program is built around a "culture of care," where lifelong relationships are built and nurtured. Staff are seen as experts and colleagues; faculty are seen as flexible and accommodating, while still maintaining excellence; and students are seen as earnest and engaged with an interest in making the world and the profession better in the future.

A third area the team would like to highlight is the deep connections to the community that are evident in the program. There is a palpable sense of collegiality and camaraderie within the department, but the team was also struck by the reciprocal commitment between the local practicing community and the program. The students spoke often of their opportunities to engage with the professional community and the willingness of practitioners to be receptive and accessible. The program maintains deep ties to local industry, which further deepens the culture of making that exists here. The program's long history in community engaged work deeply connects the faculty and students to the city of Buffalo and its people.

Throughout the visit, it was quite clear that the University at Buffalo's Department of Architecture is focused on supporting everyone in their community – students, staff, faculty, and the people of Buffalo. While you all may be "Buffalo Humble," you have a lot to be proud of and there are many things here that deserve celebration.

b. Conditions with a Team Recommendation to the Board as Not Achieved (*list number and title*)

PC.6 Leadership and Collaboration

II. Progress Since the Previous Site Visit

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

Previous Team Report (2015): This criterion is Not Met because of an absence of evidence in student studio work related to zoning laws and principles. The evidence in student work revealed a lack of ability in the proper consideration of the study and analysis of the impact of zoning on an architectural design. This important element of the criterion, defined as “a review of the relevant laws and standards and assessment of existing buildings,” was partially treated in building code analysis performed in ARC 504 Comprehensive Design; however, no evidence was found—including in the review of additional materials requested by the team—to indicate the inclusion of zoning principles and regulations in student projects. Thus, this was found to be an insufficient treatment of this area of the Pre-Design criterion. The team concluded that the absence of this evidence is of particular concern for an architecture program that takes the rich urban context of the City of Buffalo as its source for many design assignments.

2021 IPR Board Review: After reviewing the 5-year Interim Progress Report (IPR) submitted by State University of New York at Buffalo, the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB) has concluded that the program has demonstrated satisfactory progress toward addressing deficiencies identified in the 2-Year Interim Progress Report.

2024 Team Analysis:

SPC B.1 Pre-Design has been eliminated from the current 2020 Conditions, although elements of this criterion are incorporated into SC.3 Regulatory Context and SC.5 Design Synthesis. Both SC.1 and SC.5 are met for the M.Arch. program.

III. Program Changes

If the Accreditation Conditions have changed since the previous visit, a brief description of changes made to the program because of changes in the Conditions is required.

2024 Team Analysis:

Beginning in 2020, the program undertook a comprehensive curriculum review in response to the new NAAB Conditions. This was a multi-stage process that included research into peer programs and the state of the profession, outreach sessions with faculty and students, and an online survey administered to alumni. In spring 2022, the directors and curriculum committees presented a report with recommendations for discussion and voting. A revised curricular sequence was presented to the university in fall 2023, with a plan for implementation in fall 2024, pending New York state approval.

IV. Compliance with the 2020 Conditions for Accreditation

1—Context and Mission (*Guidelines, p. 5*)

To help the NAAB and the visiting team understand the specific circumstances of the school, the program must describe the following:

- The institutional context and geographic setting (public or private, urban or rural, size, etc.), and how the program’s mission and culture influence its architecture pedagogy and impact its development. Programs that exist within a larger educational institution must also describe the mission of the college or university and how that shapes or influences the program.
- The program’s role in and relationship to its academic context and university community, including how the program benefits—and benefits from—its institutional setting and how the

program as a unit and/or its individual faculty members participate in university-wide initiatives and the university's academic plan. Also describe how the program, as a unit, develops multidisciplinary relationships and leverages unique opportunities in the institution and the community.

- The ways in which the program encourages students and faculty to learn both inside and outside the classroom through individual and collective opportunities (e.g., field trips, participation in professional societies and organizations, honor societies, and other program-specific or campus-wide and community-wide activities).

Team Findings:

Met

Program Summary Statement of 1 – Context and Mission

The University at Buffalo (UB) is uniquely situated in the Great Lakes region at the busiest international border between the United States and Canada, and, with more than 450 undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs, is the most comprehensive public research university in the northeastern US. UB is a flagship institution in the 64-campus SUNY system, the largest system in the country; is a member of the prestigious AAU; and is ranked among the top 40 public universities in the nation. The Department of Architecture excels in faculty research, ranking in the top five nationally according to Academic Analytics, while delivering a top-tier architectural education. With above-average ARE pass rates of alumni, the department maintains pride as a pathway to architecture and allied professions. With an enrollment of approximately 500 undergraduate and graduate students, the department serves a racially diverse student body, hosts many first-generation and international students, and has the highest percentage of Pell-eligible students among all AAU architecture programs. Faculty are also deeply engaged in the city of Buffalo, both addressing the significant challenges that residents face and building on the region's legacy of social and technological innovation. The values of the department align with those of the institution, and architecture faculty have played a significant role in the leadership of university-wide initiatives. The department's research centers, faculty, and students have received significant national and international awards.

2024 Team Analysis:

The APR describes the University at Buffalo (UB) as a public institution located in Buffalo, New York, a city known for its history of technological innovation combined with a reputation for welcoming immigrant and migrant communities. At the same time, it is one of the most impoverished and segregated cities in the country. The university was founded in 1846 as a private medical college and merged with the SUNY system in 1962. Today, UB enrolls more than 30,000 students. UB's mission as a "diverse, inclusive scholarly community" that seeks to "impact and positively change the world, both locally and globally," speaks to its location in the city of Buffalo.

The Department of Architecture played an active role in shaping UB's comprehensive strategic plan – UB2020 – and have played substantive roles in several initiatives across campus. This includes the development of interdisciplinary centers on campus, the creation of the Experiential Learning Network, and enhanced engagement in the Buffalo-Niagara region.

The traditions and context of the city of Buffalo contribute to the identity of the architecture programs at UB, informing the scholarly and professional work of the program's faculty as well as its approach to architectural education. The School of Architecture and Planning was founded in the late 1960s with the vision of creating graduates capable of "remaking the social landscape." As confirmed during the site visit, the city of Buffalo serves as an expanded classroom for the Department of Architecture. Undergraduate students are introduced to the city early and participate in design studios that deepen their understanding of the city and teach students how to design for resiliency amidst racial, economic, and social inequalities. A large portion of the M.Arch. program's curriculum is delivered through the five Graduate Research Groups (GRGs) – centered on ecological issues, design for diversity and inclusion, material innovation,

digital and embedded technologies, and urban design. The GRGs combine theory- and techniques-oriented seminars with specialized research studios and align with faculty research clusters in the department. The GRGs allow faculty and students to engage in important, challenging, and risky “place-based” topics, informed by collaboration with partners in areas such as environmental justice, affordable housing, refugee health, and disaster resilience.

2—Shared Values of the Discipline and Profession (Guidelines, p. 6)

The program must report on how it responds to the following values, all of which affect the education and development of architects. The response to each value must also identify how the program will continue to address these values as part of its long-range planning. These values are foundational, not exhaustive.

Design: Architects design better, safer, more equitable, resilient, and sustainable built environments. Design thinking and integrated design solutions are hallmarks of architecture education, the discipline, and the profession. (p.7)

Environmental Stewardship and Professional Responsibility: Architects are responsible for the impact of their work on the natural world and on public health, safety, and welfare. As professionals and designers of the built environment, we embrace these responsibilities and act ethically to accomplish them. (p.7)

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: Architects commit to equity and inclusion in the environments we design, the policies we adopt, the words we speak, the actions we take, and the respectful learning, teaching, and working environments we create. Architects seek fairness, diversity, and social justice in the profession and in society and support a range of pathways for students seeking access to an architecture education. (p.7)

Knowledge and Innovation: Architects create and disseminate knowledge focused on design and the built environment in response to ever-changing conditions. New knowledge advances architecture as a cultural force, drives innovation, and prompts the continuous improvement of the discipline. (p.8)

Leadership, Collaboration, and Community Engagement: Architects practice design as a collaborative, inclusive, creative, and empathetic enterprise with other disciplines, the communities we serve, and the clients for whom we work. (p.8)

Lifelong Learning: Architects value educational breadth and depth, including a thorough understanding of the discipline’s body of knowledge, histories and theories, and architecture’s role in cultural, social, environmental, economic, and built contexts. The practice of architecture demands lifelong learning, which is a shared responsibility between academic and practice settings. (p.8)

Team Findings:

Met

2024 Team Analysis:

The APR provides a response to each of the Shared Values, aligning each with the context of the city and university, faculty expertise, programs and initiatives, curricular integration, and facilities to support each value. While the APR does not state how the Shared Values relate to its existing strategic plan (developed in 2019), it does describe how they will be integrated into the school’s 2025 strategic planning process.

Environmental Stewardship and Professional Responsibility: The APR describes how the shared value of Environmental Stewardship and Professional Responsibility is addressed at both the student learning as well as the faculty level. Aspects of this value are included in the curriculum for all three professional degree tracks, as confirmed in materials provided by the program. The site visit confirmed that faculty have the opportunity to be involved in several sustainability initiatives, including the RENEW

Institute and Community for Global Health Equity. In addition, there are university-wide initiatives and investments with regard to renewable energy and recycling.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: The APR describes, and the site visit confirmed, how the program considers this shared value as one its greatest strengths and cites the university and department faculty as international leaders in EDI research, teaching, service, and practice. The university's Center for Urban Studies is housed in the School of Architecture and Planning. A number of the department's faculty conduct research on spatial justice and equity. Student organizations provide an opportunity and platform for advocacy and the school's lecture series continues to focus on spatial justice. In the classroom, faculty integrate inclusive pedagogical approaches in their courses, regardless of the content. The school has leveraged the expertise of its IDEA Center to bring universal design concepts to Hayes and Crosby Halls.

Knowledge and Innovation: As described in the APR, aspects of this value were evident in both the curriculum as well as in student opportunities. The program has established cross disciplinary research opportunities with several other disciplines such as natural sciences, social sciences, and fine arts. The program includes well regarded research centers and labs, and the Department of Architecture ranks in the top five nationally in federally funded research. There also have been multiple faculty publications since the last accreditation cycle. Faculty may apply to the School of Architecture and Planning "Formworks" program, which provides seed funding for research projects, including resources for early phase work, dissemination of completed work, and ambitious transdisciplinary projects. For students, the "Big Projects Studio" began in the 2023-2024 academic year in collaboration with philanthropic support from major multi-national firms in the area.

Leadership, Collaboration, and Community Engagement: The APR describes how the program has expanded its presence in the community with initiatives such as CAREworks grants (Community Activated Research that is Equitable) and "Big Projects Studio" on high-impact social architecture. Student organizations include the African American Students of Architecture and Planning (AASAP), founded in 2020, as well as AIAS, NOMAS, and Alpha Rho Chi. Many community-based volunteer initiatives also exist for faculty and students. Each track of the professional program has at least one required course that focuses on impactful community-engagement. Through interviews with students, faculty, associate deans, and alumni, the team confirmed a strong connection to the professional community, local industry, and community partners. Through meetings and additional information provided during the site visit, the team found that many studios focus on teamwork and collaboration, allowing them to expand their skills and prepare for the workplace.

Lifelong Learning: The department encourages continuing education of all students, faculty, and staff through lectures, exhibitions, and other public programs. The program prepares students beyond classroom learning through a range of domestic trips, and approximately half of all students in the 4+2 program study abroad to experience diverse contexts and cultures. Lifelong learning is advanced through integrative, multi-modal education. Meetings during the site visit confirmed that the school's lecture series is free and open to the public, offering AIA Learning Units. The school has received a \$5 million endowment to establish the Rudy Bruner Center for Urban Excellence, which will maintain and research an archive of architectural projects, carry out externally funded projects to advance urban design research, and publish articles and books.

3—Program and Student Criteria (*Guidelines, p. 9*)

These criteria seek to evaluate the outcomes of architecture programs and student work within their unique institutional, regional, national, international, and professional contexts, while encouraging innovative approaches to architecture education and professional preparation.

3.1 Program Criteria (PC) (*Guidelines, p. 9*)

A program must demonstrate how its curriculum, structure, and other experiences address the following criteria.

The program has developed its assessment plan for the Program Criteria in coordination with the university's Office of Curriculum, Assessment, and Teaching Transformation. The assessment plan includes a four-phase, multi-modal approach to program assessment. The program assesses the PCs at multiple points in the curriculum and has identified at least one culminating course for each PC. In the Synthesis and Integrated Studio Track of the M.Arch., the program relies on preparatory education as the Culminating course for some PCs. Non-curricular activities that play a central contribution in students' understanding have been identified for most PCs. The program uses non-curricular activities to reinforce content, but not as a formal point of assessment. The program provided evidence of their approach to assessment in the APR as well as through additional materials provided in the digital team room, including the Assessment Plan.

For each criterion, the visiting team identified the points of assessment in each of the three tracks of the professional program: the 4+2 Research Studio Track, the 2-yr. Synthesis and Integration Studio Track, and the 3.5-yr. Track.

PC.1 Career Paths—How the program ensures that students understand the paths to becoming licensed as an architect in the United States and the range of available career opportunities that utilize the discipline's skills and knowledge. (p.9)

Team Findings:

Met

2024 Team Analysis:

The program ensures student understanding of **PC.1 Career Paths** through a course and co-curricular experiences. A full-time clinical faculty member coordinates professional development workshops, external scholarship and fellowship applications, alumni engagement, and internship opportunities. The professional practice course focuses on contractual obligations, ethics, code of conduct, architect's responsibilities, and emerging types of methods in architectural practice.

The criterion is assessed in the following culminating course:

- ARC 582: Professional Practice (all program tracks)

The team reviewed the files provided in the digital team room for the course listed above, as well as additional secondary courses identified by the program for this criterion. These materials included syllabi, lecture presentations, reading assignments, exams, and quizzes. The team confirmed the program's approach to this criterion in multiple meetings with faculty, staff, local practitioners, and students.

Outcomes from 2022 and 2023 show that all benchmarks were met or exceeded. No Actionable outcomes will be implemented for ARC 482/582.

This criterion is also assessed in the preprofessional program for students in the Research track, specifically within AED 199: UB Seminar, a required one-credit course for students in the major. Following assessment of the course in 2022 and 2023, the program will increase the credit hours for the course to expand the content, specifically to include architecture's connections with other disciplines and alternative career paths.

Supplemental activities for this criterion include career services, academic advising, and the Graduate Research Groups (GRGs).

PC.1 is scheduled to be functionally assessed biannually, following the process outlined in APR Section 5.3. In phase 2 (naturalistic assessment), the plan will include interviews with randomized students; phase 3 (critical assessment) will include the integration of a peer-assessment module.

PC.2 Design—How the program instills in students the role of the design process in shaping the built environment and conveys the methods by which design processes integrate multiple factors, in different settings and scales of development, from buildings to cities. (p.9)

Team Findings:

Met

2024 Team Analysis:

The program ensures student understanding of **PC.2 Design** through multiple courses and co-curricular experiences. The program is committed to design as a creative and reflective inquiry, with an emphasis on pluralistic approaches to architecture.

The criterion is assessed in the following culminating courses:

- ARC 302: Architecture Design Studio 6 (Research Studio track)
- ARC 503/603: Architecture Design Studio 3 (Synthesis and Integration and 3.5-yr. tracks)

The team reviewed the files provided in the digital team room for the courses listed above, as well as additional secondary courses identified by the program for this criterion. These materials included syllabi, lecture presentations, assignments, reading assignments, workshops, and projects. The team confirmed the program's approach to this criterion in multiple meetings with faculty, staff, and students.

Outcomes from 2022 and 2023 show that most benchmarks were met or exceeded. No actionable outcomes will be implemented for these courses.

The criterion is also assessed at the understanding level in a number of secondary courses throughout the curriculum. Actionable outcomes for these courses include:

- ARC 312: Architecture Media 4 – changes to the teaching team and student assignments
- ARC 512: Architecture Media 2 – implementation of a Digital Tutoring Center to support students
- ARC 605/606/607/608 – assessment of qualitative differences across studio sections

Supplemental activities for this criterion include the Graduate Research Groups (GRGs) and Atelier Week.

PC.2 is scheduled to be functionally assessed biannually, following the process outlined in APR Section 5.3. In phase 2 (naturalistic assessment), the plan will include a faculty review of a randomized sample of student portfolios; phase 3 (critical assessment) will include the integration of a peer-assessment module.

PC.3 Ecological Knowledge and Responsibility—How the program instills in students a holistic understanding of the dynamic between built and natural environments, enabling future architects to mitigate climate change responsibly by leveraging ecological, advanced building performance, adaptation, and resilience principles in their work and advocacy activities. (p.9)

Team Findings:

Met

2024 Team Analysis:

The program ensures student understanding of **PC.3 Ecological Knowledge and Responsibility** through multiple courses and co-curricular experiences. The program addresses this criterion through studios, courses, and programs that foster curiosity and understanding about the interrelationships between built and natural environments.

The criterion is assessed in the following culminating courses:

- ARC 473/573: Environmental Systems 2 (all program tracks)
- ARC 575: Environmental Systems 3 (all program tracks)

The team reviewed the files provided in the digital team room for the courses listed above, as well as additional secondary courses identified by the program for this criterion. These materials included syllabi, lecture presentations, and course assignments. The team confirmed the program's approach to this criterion in multiple meetings with faculty, staff, and students.

Outcomes from 2022 and 2023 show that all benchmarks were met or exceeded. No actionable outcomes were indicated in the APR and assessment plan.

Supplemental activities for students include the Research and Education in eEnergy, Environment, and Water (RENEW) Institute that focuses on complex energy and environmental issues as well as allied social and economic ramifications.

PC.3 is scheduled to be functionally assessed biannually, following the process outlined in APR Section 5.3. In phase 2 (naturalistic assessment), the plan will include a faculty review of a randomized sample of student portfolios; phase 3 (critical assessment) will include the integration of a peer-assessment module.

PC.4 History and Theory—How the program ensures that students understand the histories and theories of architecture and urbanism, framed by diverse social, cultural, economic, and political forces, nationally and globally. (p.9)

Team Findings:

Met

2024 Team Analysis:

The program ensures student understanding of **PC.4 History and Theory** through multiple courses in the curriculum. In these courses, students are provided with a foundation in the canonical Western narratives, while also developing critical analytic skills by which to challenge these traditional narratives.

The criterion is assessed in the following points in the curriculum:

- ARC 231/531: Architectural History 1 (Research Studio and 3.5-yr. tracks)
- ARC 234/534: Architectural History 2 (Research Studio and 3.5-yr. tracks)
- ARC 362/562: Architectural Theory (Research Studio and 3.5-yr. tracks)
- ARC 5XX/6XX: Intellectual Domain Seminars (all tracks)

The team reviewed the files provided in the digital team room for the courses listed above, as well as additional secondary courses identified by the program for this criterion. These materials included syllabi, lecture presentations, writing assignments, and quizzes/exams. The team confirmed the program's approach to this criterion in multiple meetings with faculty, staff, and students.

Outcomes from 2022 and 2023 show that all benchmarks were met or exceeded. Actionable outcomes include assessment of qualitative differences in the Intellectual Domain seminars.

Supplemental activities include the Banham Fellowship, which supports design and scholarly work that positions architecture in social-cultural material critique, and the Stratigakos Fellowship, which supports research on the built environment as a vehicle for the creation of more inclusive communities.

PC.4 is scheduled to be functionally assessed biannually, following the process outlined in APR Section 5.3. In phase 2 (naturalistic assessment), the plan will include a faculty review of a randomized sample of student portfolios; phase 3 (critical assessment) will include the integration of a peer-assessment module.

PC.5 Research and Innovation—How the program prepares students to engage and participate in architectural research to test and evaluate innovations in the field. (p.9)

Team Findings:

Met

2024 Team Analysis:

The program ensures student understanding of **PC.5 Research and Innovation** through multiple courses and co-curricular experiences. The program places emphasis on technological, material, and social entrepreneurship and innovation, all hallmarks of the university as a whole.

The criterion is assessed in the following culminating courses:

- ARC 605/606/607/608: Research Studio (all program tracks)

These studios offer several options for Graduate Research Groups (GRGs), each with a differing focus. The diversity of research studio offerings allows students to select an area of specialized interest.

The team reviewed the files provided in the digital team room for the courses listed above, as well as additional secondary courses identified by the program for this criterion. These materials included syllabi, studio assignments, and reading and research assignments. The team confirmed the program's approach to this criterion in multiple meetings with faculty, staff, and students.

Outcomes from 2022 and 2023 show that all benchmarks were met or exceeded. It was noted that pass rates were assessed across all sections of the courses listed above. Actionable outcomes will include an assessment of the qualitative difference across the studio sections.

Supplemental activities for students include opportunities include the UB Innovation Hub and Blackstone Launchpad, as well as school centered research centers. It was also noted that students are provided with instruction on research methods as part of orientation with the library and subsequent associated assignments.

PC.5 is scheduled to be functionally assessed biannually, following the process outlined in APR Section 5.3. In phase 2 (naturalistic assessment), the plan will include a faculty review of a randomized sample of student portfolios; phase 3 (critical assessment) will include the integration of a peer-assessment module.

PC.6 Leadership and Collaboration—How the program ensures that students understand approaches to leadership in multidisciplinary teams, diverse stakeholder constituents, and dynamic physical and social contexts, and learn how to apply effective collaboration skills to solve complex problems. (p.9)

Team Findings:

Not Met

2024 Team Analysis:

The program partially ensures student understanding of **PC.6 Leadership and Collaboration** through multiple courses and co-curricular experiences. The program builds on the university's focus on interdisciplinary collaboration through structured peer-learning experiences.

The visiting team did not find evidence of student understanding and assessment of leadership in multidisciplinary teams, diverse stakeholder constituents, and dynamic physical and social contexts. Although the team found evidence of student understanding in some coursework, it was not consistent across all studio sections.

Student understanding of collaboration is assessed in the following culminating courses:

- ARC 605/606/607/608: Research Studio (all program tracks)

The team reviewed the files provided in the digital team room for the courses listed above, as well as

additional secondary courses identified by the program for this criterion. These materials included syllabi, studio assignments, lecture presentations, workshops, writing and reading assignments. The team confirmed the program's approach to this criterion in multiple meetings with faculty, staff, and students, and through additional material provided to the team during the visit.

The criterion is also assessed at the understanding level with regard to collaboration in a number of courses throughout the curriculum:

- ARC 102: Architecture Design Studio (Research Studio track)
- ARC 301: Architecture Design Studio 5 (Research Studio track)
- ARCH 504/604: Architecture Design Studio 4 (Synthesis and Integration and 3.5-yr. tracks)

Outcomes for 2022 and 2023 show the students exceeding the benchmarks as described for collaboration. The benchmarks provided did not indicate appropriate criteria and methodology for assessment of leadership understanding.

Supplemental activities for the students include organizations such as the American Institute of Architecture Students (AIAS), National Organization of Minority Architecture Students (NOMAS), Alpha Rho Chi (APX), and the African American Students of Architecture and Planning (AASAP).

PC.6 is scheduled to be functionally assessed biannually, following the process outlined in APR Section 5.3. In phase 2 (naturalistic assessment), the plan will include interviews with a randomized sample of students; phase 3 (critical assessment) will include the integration of a peer-assessment module.

PC.7 Learning and Teaching Culture—How the program fosters and ensures a positive and respectful environment that encourages optimism, respect, sharing, engagement, and innovation among its faculty, students, administration, and staff. (p.9)

Team Findings:

Met

2024 Team Analysis:

While the program introduces student understanding of **PC.7 Learning and Teaching Culture** through formal coursework, it is evident to the visiting team that the program assesses its learning and teaching culture through ongoing and regular meetings with faculty, staff, and students.

Within the curriculum, the program introduces this criterion in the first year of each track or prior to enrollment through a review of preparatory education. As described in the APR, the program reinforces the values in all courses and non-curricular experiences across the continuum of student life. The only formal assessment point, however, occurs in the first year for students in the 3.5 yr. track and the 2-yr. Research tracks. Students in the 2-yr. Synthesis and Integration track are assessed through an evaluation of preparatory education.

The criterion is formally assessed at one point in the curriculum for two of the three tracks:

- ARC 101: Architecture Design Studio 1 (Research Studio track)
- ARC 501: Architecture Design Studio 1 (3.5-yr. track)

The team reviewed the files provided in the Digital team room for the courses listed above. These materials included syllabi, lecture presentations, writing assignments, exams, focus group outcomes, and minutes from meetings with elected ARC student representatives in the program. The team confirmed the program's approach to this criterion in multiple meetings with faculty, staff, and students. These meetings confirmed a vibrant and positive learning and teaching culture.

Non-curricular activities that reinforce this criterion include academic advising, ARC Student Representatives, and Atelier Week. The elected student representatives meet monthly with administrations and provide direct feedback on areas in need of improvement.

After assessing this criterion in the context of required courses in 2022 and 2023, the program is shifting to a more qualitative approach to receive continuous feedback relative to this criterion. Actionable outcomes from the first year of assessment include providing new advising and other services for students in the 3.5-yr. track. The program is also expanding the credit hours and course content for AED 199, a required course in the preprofessional program for students in the Research Studio track.

PC.7 is scheduled to be functionally assessed biannually, following the process outlined in APR Section 5.3. In phase 2 (naturalistic assessment), the plan will include interviews with a randomized sample of students; phase 3 (critical assessment) will include the integration of a peer-assessment module.

PC.8 Social Equity and Inclusion—How the program furthers and deepens students' understanding of diverse cultural and social contexts and helps them translate that understanding into built environments that equitably support and include people of different backgrounds, resources, and abilities. ([p.9](#))

Team Findings:

Met

2024 Team Analysis:

The program introduces students to **PC.8 Social Equity and Inclusion** in required history and theory courses as well as core design studios. Within the studios through strategies for creating inclusive environments. The program emphasizes the relationship of design to the changing nature of society in the U.S. and the ways in which diverse populations have affected designed environments. The program also emphasizes the design of inclusive environments.

The criterion is assessed in the following points in the curriculum:

- ARC 211: Diversity and Design (Research Studio track)
- ARC 503/603: Architecture Design Studio 3 (Synthesis and Integration and 3.5-yr. tracks)

The team reviewed the files provided in the digital team room for the courses listed above, as well as additional secondary courses identified by the program for this criterion. These materials included syllabi, lecture presentations, studio briefs and rubrics, and other assignments. The team confirmed the program's approach to this criterion in multiple meetings with faculty, staff, and students, and through additional materials provided during the site visit.

Outcomes from 2022 and 2023 show that benchmarks were met or exceeded in ARC 503/603. Benchmarks were not fully met in ARC 211. Actionable outcomes may include revised project briefs to ensure that the outcomes for architecture students in the course are appropriate for this criterion.

PC.8 is scheduled to be functionally assessed biannually, following the process outlined in APR Section 5.3. In phase 2 (naturalistic assessment), the plan will include a faculty committee review of randomized sample of student essays; phase 3 (critical assessment) will include the integration of a peer-assessment module.

3.2 Student Criteria (SC): Student Learning Objectives and Outcomes ([Guidelines, p. 10](#))

A program must demonstrate how it addresses the following criteria through program curricula and other experiences, with an emphasis on the articulation of learning objectives and assessment.

The program has developed its assessment plan for the Student Criteria in coordination with the university's Office of Curriculum, Assessment, and Teaching Transformation. The assessment plan includes a four-phase, multi-modal approach to program assessment. The program assesses most SCs at multiple points in the curriculum and has identified at least one culminating course for each SC. For SC.5 and SC.6 the program uses one culminating course to assess student ability, rather than multiple assessments throughout the curriculum. The program provided evidence of their approach to assessment

in the APR as well as through additional materials provided in the Digital team room, including the Assessment Plan.

For each criterion, the visiting team has identified the points of assessment in each of the three tracks of the professional program: the 4+2 Research Studio Track, the 2-yr. Synthesis and Integration Studio Track, and the 3.5-yr. track.

SC.1 Health, Safety, and Welfare in the Built Environment—How the program ensures that students understand the impact of the built environment on human health, safety, and welfare at multiple scales, from buildings to cities. ([p.10](#))

Team Findings:

Met

2024 Team Analysis:

The program introduces students to **SC.1 Health, Safety, and Welfare in the Built Environment** in core design studios through strategies for creating inclusive environments that support individual well-being. Design studios address public health and environmental impacts at multiple scales, while environmental systems courses provide specialized analytical tools.

The criterion is assessed in the following points in the curriculum:

- ARC 575: Environmental Systems 3 (all program tracks) – analytical tools for HSW
- ARC 403: Architecture Design Studio 7 (Research Studio track) – HSW across scales
- ARC 503/603: Architecture Design Studio 3 (Synthesis and Integration and 3.5-yr. tracks) – HSW across scales

The team reviewed the files provided in the digital team room for the courses listed above, as well as additional secondary courses identified by the program for this criterion. These materials included syllabi, lecture presentations, studio briefs, and other assignments. The team confirmed the program’s approach to this criterion in multiple meetings with faculty, staff, and students, and through additional materials provided during the site visit.

Outcomes from 2022 and 2023 show that benchmarks were met or exceeded in most of the courses above. Benchmarks were not fully met in ARC 573. Actionable outcomes include conducting a qualitative assessment to determine the lower outcomes for graduate students.

SC.1 is scheduled to be functionally assessed biannually, following the process outlined in APR Section 5.3. In phase 2 (naturalistic assessment), the plan will include a faculty review of a randomized sample of student project submissions; phase 3 (critical assessment) will include the integration of a peer-

SC.2 Professional Practice—How the program ensures that students understand professional ethics, the regulatory requirements, the fundamental business processes relevant to architecture practice in the United States, and the forces influencing change in these subjects. ([p.10](#))

Team Findings:

Met

2024 Team Analysis:

The program ensures student understanding of **SC.2 Professional Practice** by placing an emphasis on professional ethics, the regulatory context, and evolving business practices. Students are encouraged to learn about and develop their creative and meaningful paths through the profession.

The criterion is assessed in the following culminating course:

- ARC 482/582: Professional Practice (all program tracks)

The team reviewed the files provided in the Digital team room for the course listed above, as well as additional secondary courses identified by the program for this criterion. These materials included syllabi, quizzes/exams, lecture notes, and reading assignments. The team confirmed the program's approach to this criterion in multiple meetings with faculty, staff, local practitioners, and students.

Outcomes from 2022 and 2023 show that all benchmarks were met or exceeded. No action plan was noted.

SC.2 is scheduled to be functionally assessed biannually, following the process outlined in APR Section 5.3. In phase 2 (naturalistic assessment), the plan will include interviews with a randomized sample of students; phase 3 (critical assessment) will include the integration of a peer-assessment module.

SC.3 Regulatory Context—How the program ensures that students understand the fundamental principles of life safety, land use, and current laws and regulations that apply to buildings and sites in the United States, and the evaluative process architects use to comply with those laws and regulations as part of a project. (p.10)

Team Findings:

Met

2024 Team Analysis:

The program ensures student understanding of **SC.3 Regulatory Context** through multiple courses. Principles of life safety, land use, and current regulations related to buildings and sites are introduced in core design studios through the study of zoning codes during the site analysis and schematic design and to building codes in the design development phase.

The criterion is assessed in the following courses:

- ARC 403: Architecture Design Studio 7 (Research Studio track)
- ARC 482/582: Professional Practice (all program tracks)
- ARC 502: Architecture Design Studio 2 (3.5-yr. track)
- ARC 575: Environmental Systems 3 (all program tracks)

The team reviewed the files provided in the digital team room for the courses listed above, as well as additional secondary courses identified by the program for this criterion. These materials included syllabi, lecture presentations, assignments, exams and quizzes. The team confirmed the program's approach to this criterion in multiple meetings with faculty, staff, local practitioners, and students.

Outcomes from 2022 and 2023 show that all benchmarks were met or exceeded. No actionable outcomes will be implemented in 2023 and 2024.

SC.3 is scheduled to be functionally assessed biannually, following the process outlined in APR Section 5.3. In phase 2 (naturalistic assessment), the plan will include interviews with a randomized sample of students; phase 3 (critical assessment) will include the integration of a peer-assessment module.

SC.4 Technical Knowledge—How the program ensures that students understand the established and emerging systems, technologies, and assemblies of building construction, and the methods and criteria architects use to assess those technologies against the design, economics, and performance objectives of projects. (p.10)

Team Findings:

Met

2024 Team Analysis:

The program ensures student understanding of **SC. 4 Technical Knowledge** in multiple courses throughout the curriculum. The program places emphasis on the relationship between meeting design ambitions and meeting structural, environmental, material, and other performative requirements.

The criterion is assessed in the following courses:

- ARC 241/541 Environmental Systems 1 (Research Studio and 3.5-yr. tracks)
- ARC 352/552 Structures 1 (Research Studio and 3.5-yr. tracks)
- ARC 453/553 Structures 2 (all program tracks)
- ARC 555: Structures 3 (all program tracks)
- ARC 442/542: Construction Technology (all program tracks)
- ARC 473/573: Environmental Systems 2 (all program tracks)
- ARC 575: Environmental Systems 3 (all program tracks)

The team reviewed the files provided in the digital team room for the courses listed above, as well as additional secondary courses identified by the program for this criterion. These materials included syllabi, lecture presentations, assignments, exams, and quizzes. The team confirmed the program's approach to this criterion in multiple meetings with faculty, staff, local practitioners, and students.

Outcomes from 2022 and 2023 show that benchmarks were not met in the following courses: ARC 241/541, ARC 453/553, ARC 442, and ARC 573. Actionable outcomes including a qualitative assessment to determine why some students are struggling with the content, followed by pedagogical changes and appropriate course staffing changes.

SC.4 is scheduled to be functionally assessed biannually, following the process outlined in APR Section 5.3. In phase 2 (naturalistic assessment), the plan will include a faculty review of a randomized sample of student project submissions; phase 3 (critical assessment) will include the integration of a peer-assessment module.

SC.5 Design Synthesis—How the program ensures that students develop the ability to make design decisions within architectural projects while demonstrating synthesis of user requirements, regulatory requirements, site conditions, and accessible design, and consideration of the measurable environmental impacts of their design decisions. (p. 12)

Team Findings:

Met

2024 Team Analysis:

The program ensures student understanding of **SC.5 Design Synthesis** through a culminating course experience. Synthesis design studio projects have more pluralistic considerations, including socio-cultural and environmental factors. Students asked to make design decisions through processes of synthesizing various user requirements, researching regulatory requirements, considering site conditions, and implementing knowledge of accessible design.

The criterion is assessed in the following culminating courses:

- ARC 301: Architecture Design Studio 5 (Research Studio track)
- ARC 503/603: Architecture Design Studio 3 (Synthesis and Integration Studio and 3.5-yr. tracks)

The team reviewed the files provided in the Digital team room for the courses listed above. These materials included syllabi, lecture presentations, reading assignments, project descriptions, and student work. The team confirmed the program's approach to this criterion in multiple meetings with faculty, staff, and local practitioners.

Outcomes from 2022 and 2023 show that criterion-based rubric benchmarks were used and faculty utilized these rubrics to assess student progress and to deliver guidance. Actionable outcomes will be

implemented in fall 2023 for ARC 301 and ARC 503/603 by introducing a mid-term evaluation form to be completed by faculty and guest critics as a way to provide additional feedback to students.

SC.5 is scheduled to be functionally assessed biannually, following the process outlined in APR Section 5.3. In phase 2 (naturalistic assessment), the plan will include a faculty review of a randomized sample of student portfolios; phase 3 (critical assessment) will include the integration of a peer-assessment module.

SC.6 Building Integration—How the program ensures that students develop the ability to make design decisions within architectural projects while demonstrating integration of building envelope systems and assemblies, structural systems, environmental control systems, life safety systems, and the measurable outcomes of building performance. (p. 12)

Team Findings:

Met

2024 Team Analysis:

The program ensures student understanding of **SC.6 Building Integration** through a culminating course. The projects and assignments shared by the program in the culmination studio show an understanding and application of all aspects of a building design across multiple engineering and life safety systems within an appropriate context and demonstration.

The criterion is assessed in the following culminating courses:

- ARC 302: Architecture Design Studio 6 (Research Studio track)
- ARC 504/604: Architecture Design Studio 4 (Synthesis and Integration and 3.5-yr. tracks)

The team reviewed the files provided in the digital team room for the courses listed above. These materials included syllabi, lecture presentations, reading assignments, and student work. The team confirmed the program's approach to this criterion in multiple meetings with faculty, staff, and local practitioners.

Outcomes from 2022 and 2023 show that all benchmarks were met or exceeded. No Actionable outcomes will be implemented in 2023 and 2024.

SC.6 is scheduled to be functionally assessed biannually, following the process outlined in APR Section 5.3. In phase 2 (naturalistic assessment), the plan will include a faculty review of a randomized sample of student portfolios; phase 3 (critical assessment) will include the integration of a peer-assessment module.

4—Curricular Framework *(Guidelines, p. 13)*

This condition addresses the institution's regional accreditation and the program's degree nomenclature, credit-hour and curricular requirements, and the process used to evaluate student preparatory work.

4.1 Institutional Accreditation *(Guidelines, p. 13)*

For the NAAB to accredit a professional degree program in architecture, the program must be, or be part of, an institution accredited by one of the following U.S. regional institutional accrediting agencies for higher education:

- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)
- Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE)
- New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE)
- Higher Learning Commission (HLC)
- Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)
- WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC)

Team Findings:

Met

2024 Team Analysis:

The University at Buffalo is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE). The university has maintained continuous accreditation since 1921; its last site visit was in 2014. Information on UB's regional accreditation is found on the university's website, at the link provided by the program.

4.2 Professional Degrees and Curriculum *(Guidelines, p. 13)*

The NAAB accredits professional degree programs with the following titles: 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 optional studies.

- 4.2.1 **Professional Studies.** Courses with architectural content required of all students in the NAAB-accredited program are the core of a professional degree program that leads to licensure. Knowledge from these courses is used to satisfy Condition 3—Program and Student Criteria. The degree program has the flexibility to add additional professional studies courses to address its mission or institutional context. In its documentation, the program must clearly indicate which professional courses are required for all students. *(p.13)*
- 4.2.2 **General Studies.** An important component of architecture education, general studies provide basic knowledge and methodologies of the humanities, fine arts, mathematics, natural sciences, and social sciences. Programs must document how students earning an accredited degree achieve a broad, interdisciplinary understanding of human knowledge. In most cases, the general studies requirement can be satisfied by the general education program of an institution's baccalaureate degree. Graduate programs must describe and document the criteria and process used to evaluate applicants' prior academic experience relative to this requirement. Programs accepting transfers from other institutions must document the criteria and process used to ensure that the general education requirement was covered at another institution. *(p.14)*
- 4.2.3 **Optional Studies.** All professional degree programs must provide sufficient flexibility in the curriculum to allow students to develop additional expertise, either by taking additional courses offered in other academic units or departments, or by taking courses offered within the department offering the accredited program but outside the required professional studies curriculum. These courses may be configured in a variety of curricular structures, including elective offerings, concentrations, certificate programs, and minors. *(p.14)*

NAAB-accredited professional degree programs have the exclusive right to use the B. Arch., M. Arch., and/or D. Arch. titles, which are recognized by the public as accredited degrees and therefore may not be used by non-accredited programs.

The number of credit hours for each degree is outlined below. All accredited programs must conform to minimum credit-hour requirements established by the institution's regional accreditor.

- 4.2.4 **Bachelor of Architecture.** The B. Arch. degree consists of a minimum of 150 semester credit hours, or the quarter-hour equivalent, in academic coursework in general studies, professional studies, and optional studies, all of which are delivered or accounted for (either by transfer or articulation) by the institution that will grant the degree. Programs must document the required professional studies courses (course numbers, titles, and credits), the elective professional studies courses (course numbers, titles, and credits), the required number of credits for general studies and for optional studies, and the total number of credits for the degree.
- 4.2.5 **Master of Architecture.** The M. Arch. degree consists of a minimum of 168 semester credit hours, or the quarter-hour equivalent, of combined undergraduate coursework and a minimum of 30 semester credits of graduate coursework. Programs must document the required professional studies classes (course numbers, titles, and credits), the elective professional studies classes (course numbers, titles, and credits), the required number of credits for

general studies and for optional studies, and the total number of credits for both the undergraduate and graduate degrees.

- 4.2.6 **Doctor of Architecture.** The D. Arch. degree consists of a minimum of 210 credits, or the quarter-hour equivalent, of combined undergraduate and graduate coursework. The D. Arch. requires a minimum of 90 graduate-level semester credit hours, or the graduate-level 135 quarter-hour equivalent, in academic coursework in professional studies and optional studies. Programs must document, for both undergraduate and graduate degrees, the required professional studies classes (course numbers, titles, and credits), the elective professional studies classes (course numbers, titles, and credits), the required number of credits for general studies and for optional studies, and the total number of credits for the degree.

Team Findings:

Met

2024 Team Analysis:

Evidence of the minimum requirements for NAAB accredited degrees is found in the 2023 APR and on the program website. The M.Arch. program contains professional studies, general studies, and optional studies as prescribed in 4.2.1, 4.2.2, and 4.2.3.

4.2.5 The M.Arch. program has three tracks:

- Research Studio track – a 2-year (four semester) track for students with a preprofessional degree from the University at Buffalo (128 credits). This track is also available to students from other programs with substantial NAAB-allied coursework.
 - For the B.S. Arch, students must complete 128 credit hours. This includes 81 required professional cr. hrs., 45 general students credit hours, and 3 professional electives. The general studies courses are flexible and allow for optional studies)
 - Required credit hours for the M.Arch.: 64 graduate credit hours (49 professional credit hours; 15 optional credit hours)
- Synthesis and Integration track – a 2-year (four semester) track for students with a preprofessional degree in architecture or, in some exceptional cases, professional degrees from other countries.
 - Required credit hours: 64 graduate credit hours (62 professional credit hours; 2 optional credit hours)
- 3.5-yr. track – a seven semester track for students with undergraduate degrees in any major.
 - Required credit hours: 112 graduate credit hours (103 professional credit hours; 9 optional credit hours)

The M.Arch. title is used appropriately, and all tracks have the appropriate minimum credit hour requirements for the accredited professional degree.

In a review of the evidence for optional studies, inconsistencies were identified in the APR report and the website regarding the number of credit hours allowable for optional studies in the Synthesis and Integration track. During the site visit, the visiting team confirmed the number of optional studies credits listed above for each track.

While it may appear that there are not sufficient optional studies in the Synthesis and Integration track, the visiting team confirmed that the curriculum allows for sufficient flexibility within the professional credit hour requirement. The Graduate Research Groups (GRGs) required for all students are based on a lottery system, which allows students to select the two required GRG studios (ARC 605/7 and ARC 606/8; 14 credits hours in total) based upon their interests. In interviews with faculty and students the visiting team confirmed that student preferences are accommodated. Additionally, although students are required to enroll in an Intellectual Domain seminar as well as a Technical Methods seminar. Students can select from a menu of options for these courses based on their interests. The sum of the available optional

studies is 22 credit hours. Therefore, the program demonstrates sufficient academic flexibility in all degree tracks and allows students to develop a diverse range of expertise.

4.3 Evaluation of Preparatory Education *(Guidelines, p. 16)*

The NAAB recognizes that students transferring to an undergraduate accredited program or entering a graduate accredited program come from different types of programs and have different needs, aptitudes, and knowledge bases. In this condition, a program must demonstrate that it utilizes a thorough and equitable process to evaluate incoming students and that it documents the accreditation criteria it expects students to have met in their education experiences in non-accredited programs.

- 4.3.1 A program must document its process for evaluating a student's prior academic coursework related to satisfying NAAB accreditation criteria when it admits a student to the professional degree program.
- 4.3.2 In the event a program relies on the preparatory education experience to ensure that admitted students have met certain accreditation criteria, the program must demonstrate it has established standards for ensuring these accreditation criteria are met and for determining whether any gaps exist.
- 4.3.3 A program must demonstrate that it has clearly articulated the evaluation of baccalaureate-degree or associate-degree content in the admissions process, and that a candidate understands the evaluation process and its implications for the length of a professional degree program before accepting an offer of admission.

Team Findings:

Met

2024 Team Analysis:

The program has processes in place to ensure compliance with 4.3 Evaluation of Preparatory Education. The team evaluated documents and met with program directors and staff to confirm these processes. Student files were made available to the team, including college transcripts, portfolios, a program developed NAAB Audit Form to determine the appropriate track in the professional program, and course waiver evaluation and approval forms.

4.3.1 There are processes in place for the review and evaluation of prior academic coursework related to satisfying NAAB criteria. During the site visit, it was confirmed that the program has a consistent process of reviewing the preparatory education of all applicants. The graduate recruitment director initiates an initial review and collects supporting documentation in the form of syllabi, course descriptions and portfolios. Each preparatory education credit is reviewed by both a trained staff member and a full-time faculty member who oversees accreditation compliance, while all requests for course waivers are reviewed by the Director of Graduate Studies and the faculty teaching the related academic coursework. All decisions are communicated to students and all evaluations of preparatory education are managed in Slate, a CRM communications system.

4.3.2 The evaluative process for an applicant's professional degree competencies and coursework, which would result in placement into one of the program's four-semester tracks begins with a staff review of studios and other professional coursework. As part of the process described in 4.3.1, faculty review the applicant's transcript and portfolio to determine competency in foundational coursework in architectural design, architectural history, and building technologies.

The program uses a two-step process to determine if students meet the minimum of 44 credits in architecture and five architecture studios from an accredited or equivalent institution. The program reviews the applicants' portfolio for architectural design competencies that have prepared students to enroll in the Synthesis and Integration track. The program also reviews applicants' transcripts to evaluate for equivalencies in ARC 552/553: Structures 1 and 2, ARC 541: Environmental Systems 1, and ARC 531/534: Architectural History 1 and 2. The program ensures that preparatory education is an academic equivalent and meets the requirements of the SC and PC embedded in the courses waived.

4.3.3 The evaluative process and offer of admission provided to the student confirms the program duration and cost. Letters of admission clearly indicate the length of the program for students.

5—Resources

5.1 Structure and Governance *(Guidelines, p. 18)*

The program must describe the administrative and governance processes that provide for organizational continuity, clarity, and fairness and allow for improvement and change.

5.1.1 **Administrative Structure:** Describe the administrative structure and identify key personnel in the program and school, college, and institution.

5.1.2 **Governance:** Describe the role of faculty, staff, and students in both program and institutional governance structures and how these structures relate to the governance structures of the academic unit and the institution.

Team Findings:

Met

2024 Team Analysis:

The program has appropriately described its administrative processes and governance to ensure compliance with this condition. The team confirmed the content in the APR through meetings with program and school leadership during the site visit.

5.1.1 The University at Buffalo is part of the State University of New York (SUNY) system. The university is led by President Satish Tripathi and Provost Scott Weber. The School of Architecture and Planning is organized into two departments: Architecture and Urban and Regional Planning. Dean Julia Czerniak, with support from five associate deans, oversees the college. A director oversees each department. The Department of Architecture is led by Korydon Smith. The director of graduate programs in Architecture (including the M.Arch. program) is Joyce Hwang; the director of the undergraduate program is Jin Young Song.

5.1.2 The directors of undergraduate and graduate studies (both tenured) each lead their respective curriculum committees. Other committees include the Tenure and Promotion Committee and the Accreditation Coordination team. The program has established a six-person accreditation team to implement their assessment plan as it relates to the NAAB conditions. At the institutional level, the UB Faculty Senate and UB Professional Staff Senate provide recommendations to the president.

Faculty meet regularly and are actively engaged in the governance of the program. Although part-time faculty do not have a formal vote in some matters, they describe their engagement and feel they are solicited for advice and feedback throughout the decision-making process.

Student governance exists at all levels in the university structure. While they do not hold voting rights in department-level decisions, elected student representatives provide regular feedback on curricular, pedagogical, and student-life decisions. Students are also involved in faculty searches and other activities within the department.

While staff do not play a formal role in decision-making within the program, the team confirmed during the site visit that they are often involved in the meetings with faculty and program leadership as decisions are being made. Additionally, the staff commented that they were often solicited for feedback and seen as vital contributors to the success of the program and its students.

5.2 Planning and Assessment *(Guidelines, p. 18)*

The program must demonstrate that it has a planning process for continuous improvement that identifies:

5.2.1 The program's multiyear strategic objectives, including the requirement to meet the NAAB Conditions, as part of the larger institutional strategic planning and assessment efforts.

- 5.2.2 Key performance indicators used by the unit and the institution.
- 5.2.3 How well the program is progressing toward its mission and stated multiyear objectives.
- 5.2.4 Strengths, challenges, and opportunities faced by the program as it strives to continuously improve learning outcomes and opportunities.
- 5.2.5 Ongoing outside input from others, including practitioners.

The program must also demonstrate that it regularly uses the results of self-assessments to advise and encourage changes and adjustments that promote student and faculty success.

Team Findings:

Met

2024 Team Analysis:

In the APR, and confirmed in meetings during the site visit, the program demonstrated that it has a planning process in place to allow for continuous improvement.

5.2.1 The program has regularly provided evidence in documentation and meetings supporting the goal of multi-year strategic objectives including the requirement to meet the NAAB Conditions.

5.2.2 Key Performance Indicators are described in the APR, including several factors related to students, faculty, and other university functions. A more detailed explanation of the KPIs was provided in documents provided in the digital team room.

5.2.3 In the APR, the program provided evidence that it is progressing toward its mission and objectives. The program regularly reports its progress to the dean of the school, indicating goals and objectives that have been met, partially met, and not met.

5.2.4 The program continues to address its objectives and has identified its strengths, challenges, and opportunities. The program's strengths include the GRG curriculum, supporting students' career advancement, and scholarship emergency funds provided to students. Opportunities for improvement include continuing to invest in facilities and equipment, notably the renovation of Parker Hall and its fabrication facilities.

5.2.5 Regular meetings with the Dean's Council ensures the school's strategic vision is being met and improved upon. In meetings during the site visit, it was confirmed that practitioners are regularly asked for input by the program and that they are actively engaged in studio reviews and other opportunities to assist students. The program also conducts alumni surveys to gain feedback.

5.3 Curricular Development (Guidelines, p. 19)

The program must demonstrate a well-reasoned process for assessing its curriculum and making adjustments based on the outcome of the assessment. The program must identify:

- 5.3.1 The relationship between course assessment and curricular development, including NAAB program and student criteria.
- 5.3.2 The roles and responsibilities of the personnel and committees involved in setting curricular agendas and initiatives, including the curriculum committee, program coordinators, and department chairs or directors.

Team Findings:

Met

2024 Team Analysis:

In the APR, and confirmed in meetings during the site visit, the program demonstrated that it has in place a process for assessing its curriculum. The program's assessment plan and related processes were developed in consultation with the university's Office of Curriculum, Assessment, and Teaching

Transformation. The School of Architecture and planning has an Academic Services staff member who works directly with the program and faculty on assessment.

5.3.1 The APR describes a four-phase, multi-modal approach to program assessment. In this plan, there is a clear relationship between course assessment and curricular development. Through the materials provided in the Digital team room and through on-site meetings, the team confirmed the process by which the program developed learning outcomes for the NAAB program and student criteria and how the program engages in continuous assessment of student learning relative to these criteria. The program also described its reflective evaluation of the assessment plan and the ways in which it can be improved to support student learning.

5.3.2 The program has described the roles and responsibilities of the personnel involved in setting the curricular agenda and initiatives for the accredited degree programs. The following are the committees and positions involved:

- Director of Graduate Studies: Charged to oversee all tracks of the M.Arch. program, chair the graduate curriculum committee, advance curricular and pedagogical transformations, coordinate teaching assignments, work with the graduate programs coordinator (advisor), and facilitate the resolution of student issues.
- M.Arch. Curriculum Committee: Charged to assess and inform curricula, courses, and pedagogy for the three M.Arch. program tracks; and to assist with student recruitment, advisement, and success.
- M.S. Program Committee: Charged to assess and inform curricula, courses, and pedagogy for the M.S. program; and to assist with student recruitment and advisement.
- M.Arch./MUP Program Committee: Charged to assess and develop curricula, teaching, and learning for the M.Arch./MUP Dual-degree Program; to assist with student recruitment; to assist with admissions; and to assist with student advisement.
- M.Arch./MFA Program Committee. Charged to assess and inform curricula, courses, and pedagogy for the three M.Arch. program tracks; and to assist with student recruitment and advisement.

The program also describes the role of the university, the SUNY system, and the state of New York in the review and approval of all curricular changes.

5.4 Human Resources and Human Resource Development *(Guidelines, p. 19)*

The program must demonstrate that it has appropriate and adequately funded human resources to support student learning and achievement. Human resources include full- and part-time instructional faculty, administrative leadership, and technical, administrative, and other support staff. The program must:

- 5.4.1 Demonstrate that it balances the workloads of all faculty in a way that promotes student and faculty achievement.
- 5.4.2 Demonstrate that it has an Architect Licensing Advisor who is actively performing the duties defined in the NCARB position description. These duties include attending the biannual NCARB Licensing Advisor Summit and/or other training opportunities to stay up-to-date on the requirements for licensure and ensure that students have resources to make informed decisions on their path to licensure.
- 5.4.3 Demonstrate that faculty and staff have opportunities to pursue professional development that contributes to program improvement.
- 5.4.4 Describe the support services available to students in the program, including but not limited to academic and personal advising, mental well-being, career guidance, internship, and job placement.

Team Findings:

Met

2024 Team Analysis:

In the APR, and confirmed in meetings during the site visit, the program demonstrated that it has appropriate and adequately funded human resources to support student learning and achievement.

5.4.1 During the site visit, it was confirmed that faculty workloads are appropriate and equitable. In addition to requirements for research and service, the typical teaching load for a tenure-stream faculty member is two courses per semester, with a balance based on the size or credit hour load of the assigned courses. Full-time clinical faculty are hired to teach specialized coursework and often take on important service responsibilities in the program. Adjunct faculty are hired to teach on semester-long contracts, with no service or research requirements. In the curriculum, 49% of courses are taught by tenure-stream faculty, 23% by clinical faculty, and 29% by adjunct faculty.

5.4.2 Elaine Chow is the NCARB Advisor for the department. The APR states that she counsels and advises students. During the site visit, it was confirmed that students are aware of her role and often consult with her on questions about career advising and NCARB.

5.4.3 The program actively supports faculty and staff in their professional development. The department chair meets with faculty annually, or as needed throughout the semester, to discuss their work and the ways in which they can be supported. Additionally, all tenure-track faculty have a mentoring committee that meets at least once per semester to discuss the faculty member's progression toward tenure. All new tenure-track faculty receive a startup package to support their scholarly work. The school has also implemented an internal seed-funding program to support faculty in their research. All professional staff receive reviews annually to discuss their professional development. During the site visit, it was confirmed that sufficient funds are available to staff for further professional development opportunities.

5.4.4 In multiple meetings during the site visit, it was confirmed that the advising staff is very involved in student life and are proactive in ensuring student success and progression through the program. Students are fully aware of academic and career advising opportunities available to them, which includes internship opportunities and access to the professionals. These services have greatly been expanded since the last accreditation visit.

5.5 Social Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion *(Guidelines, p. 20)*

The program must demonstrate its commitment to diversity and inclusion among current and prospective faculty, staff, and students. The program must:

- 5.5.1 Describe how this commitment is reflected in the distribution of its human, physical, and financial resources.
- 5.5.2 Describe its plan for maintaining or increasing the diversity of its faculty and staff since the last accreditation cycle, how it has implemented the plan, and what it intends to do during the next accreditation cycle. Also, compare the program's faculty and staff demographics with that of the program's students and other benchmarks the program deems relevant.
- 5.5.3 Describe its plan for maintaining or increasing the diversity of its students since the last accreditation cycle, how it has implemented the plan, and what it intends to do during the next accreditation cycle. Also, compare the program's student demographics with that of the institution and other benchmarks the program deems relevant.
- 5.5.4 Document what institutional, college, or program policies are in place to further Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action (EEO/AA), as well as any other social equity, diversity, and inclusion initiatives at the program, college, or institutional level.
- 5.5.5 Describe the resources and procedures in place to provide adaptive environments and effective strategies to support faculty, staff, and students with different physical and/or mental abilities.

Team Findings:

Met

2024 Team Analysis:

In the APR and with additional materials provided to the team during the visit, the program demonstrated its commitment to diversity among current and prospective faculty, staff, and students.

5.5.1 In 2022, the associate dean for inclusive excellence was awarded a total of \$30,000 in CAREworks program, which supports academic and/or creative projects with community partnerships. A lecture series, two symposia, and an exhibition were conducted in 2022 and 2023 that further the ethos of equity, diversity, and inclusion. Related research centers and groups include the Community for Global Health Equity, the IDEA Center, the Food Systems Planning and Healthy Communities Lab, and the Regional Institute. Through additional information provided by the program during our visit, the program demonstrated their commitment to DEI on resource allocation by citing examples from the perspective of faculty, staff and students. The program provides guidance in conducting equitable faculty searches and there are regular reviews for current faculty to ensure salary parity. Faculty and staff receive annual performance reviews and may also participate in training and workshops related to DEI. Students have resources such as EAB Early Alert System, Inclusive Pedagogy, and Sexual Harassment Training.

5.5.2 The program has made a concerted effort to increase the gender and racial diversity of faculty and staff through the University at Buffalo's "inclusive search plan" at the School of Architecture and Planning. In the APR, the program notes that it has a higher percentage of female faculty (41.5%) compared to other institutions and the profession. This percentage is also higher than the gender breakdown presented in the 2022 NAAB Annual Report. Racial and ethnic diversity among the faculty and staff remains a challenge, as their percentages align with overall numbers for licensed architects (80% white). All departmental staff identify as white.

5.5.3 Strategic Plan 2019- 2024 indicates their #1 goal is to "Promote Equity, Inclusion and Diversity" with an action plan to create inclusive environments, gender equity, racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic equity, focused racial equity, build EID capacity, support work-life balance and reinforce governance. Student demographics are more diverse than the program's faculty: 44% of students identify as female and 53% white in the accredited programs. UB has one of the highest diversity indices (0.60) compared to their AAU peers. Strategies for increasing diversity in the M.Arch. program include tracking applicant-pool diversity, providing scholarships, fundraising, supporting work/life balance, and highlighting the work and success of underrepresented students.

5.5.4 In 2020, the school refocused the work of the Racial Equity and Social Justice Committee to further emphasize equitable hiring practices, ethical student recruitment, and the recovery and representation of underrepresented histories and places. The CAREworks program was launched in 2022 to support academic and/or creative projects with community partners. Other programs at the university that carry out work on equity, diversity, and inclusion are the Community of Global Health Equity, the IDEA Center, the Food Systems Planning and Healthy Communities Lab and the Regional Institute. Information about EEO/AA can be found on the university's website, along with their best practices and university policies.

5.5.5 The Department of Architecture houses one of the world's leading research centers on design for disability, the IDEA Center, and resides in exemplary facilities that meet accessibility codes and illustrate various inclusive design practices. As part of the interviews with staff, the visiting team confirmed the process by which students receive accommodations in their coursework. Several of the faculty and staff working in the student area have participated in training on mental health to provide appropriate referrals to the UB Counseling Center, where students have access to crisis counseling. During the site visit, students confirmed that faculty, academic advisors, and other staff are all supportive in making accommodations toward student needs with mental health, deadlines, cultural holidays, and other personal conflicts.

5.6 Physical Resources *(Guidelines, p. 21)*

The program must describe its physical resources and demonstrate how they safely and equitably support the program's pedagogical approach and student and faculty achievement. Physical resources include but are not limited to the following:

- 5.6.1 Space to support and encourage studio-based learning.
- 5.6.2 Space to support and encourage didactic and interactive learning, including lecture halls, seminar spaces, small group study rooms, labs, shops, and equipment.
- 5.6.3 Space to support and encourage the full range of faculty roles and responsibilities, including preparation for teaching, research, mentoring, and student advising.
- 5.6.4 Resources to support all learning formats and pedagogies in use by the program.

If the program's pedagogy does not require some or all of the above physical resources, the program must describe the effect (if any) that online, off-site, or hybrid formats have on digital and physical resources.

Team Findings:

Met

2024 Team Analysis:

5.6.1 The architecture program is housed in three buildings (Hayes, Crosby and Parker Halls) located in close proximity to each other. The architecture and planning library is part of the Abbott Library, which is also nearby. Both Hayes and Crosby Halls have undergone significant renovations. Parker Hall is scheduled for a major renovation, with design beginning in 2023, construction planned to start in 2026, and completion anticipated in 2029. For students, dedicated workspace is provided with secure storage. The recent renovations also provided power and IT support at each studio desk. Production equipment is available in key locations through the studio spaces. There are critique and gathering spaces available throughout the studio areas, with some dedicated to individual studios and others available for reservation for presentations and critiques.

5.6.2 Classroom and lab space is available across the program's buildings, including three computer labs with typical design software available to students as well as printing capabilities. AV equipment is available to students to borrow as needed. A materials shop is available to students that includes machinery and dedicated space for metal, wood, fabric, and ceramics. A digital fabrication lab is available to all students. The university has recently funded the development of a building environmental visualization lab.

5.6.3 For faculty, full-time members have dedicated offices available, while adjunct faculty have access to shared office space. Faculty have access to several collaboration spaces as well as six dedicated research center spaces.

5.6.4 In addition to the above, the program also offers three "living learning landscapes" to provide access for student collaboration. There are also two gallery spaces available. There are multiple types of teaching and learning spaces available, from small group gathering spaces to larger lecture halls.

The items above were noted in the APR and confirmed in meetings and during the site tours.

5.7 Financial Resources *(Guidelines, p. 21)*

The program must demonstrate that it has the appropriate institutional support and financial resources to support student learning and achievement during the next term of accreditation.

Team Findings:

Met

2024 Team Analysis:

As described in the APR, the program's budget is established through the annual resource planning process, which is completed at the university-wide level. During the site visit, it was confirmed that there are three layers to the budget process:

- A historical budget layer that defines a base budget
- A tuition performance layer that relies on a rolling three-year average of tuition targets
- A strategic investment layer that is a part of the annual resource planning process (ARPP)

Historically, 80-85% of the base budget comes from tuition, fees, and state tax allocation. The remainder comes from philanthropy, indirect cost recovery (ICR), service centers, and other sources. In the tuition performance layer, the decanal unit receives 70% of the tuition and fees. The strategic investment layer generally comes from one-time funds, rather than recurring investments. An example is the one-time investment from the provost's office to support educational and research technologies. There has also been an allocation from the State University capital construction fund to provide for the furniture, fixtures and equipment for the 2023 renovation of Crosby Hall.

In addition to the funding described above, the program is continuing to increase its philanthropic outreach and fundraising efforts and has shown an increased success in these efforts. The program has also used its industry connections to provide sponsorship opportunities for both studios and spaces, as well as allowed use of fabrication lab spaces for outside partners for established fees.

The largest expenditure for the program is faculty and staff salaries, including adjunct and graduate teaching staff. Funds for the program have continued to increase since 2018. Funding is expected to continue to increase to benefit student learning into the accreditation term.

5.8 Information Resources *(Guidelines, p. 22)*

The program must demonstrate that all students, faculty, and staff have convenient and equitable access to architecture literature and information, as well as appropriate visual and digital resources that support professional education in architecture.

Further, the program must demonstrate that all students, faculty, and staff have access to architecture librarians and visual resource professionals who provide discipline-relevant information services that support teaching and research.

Team Findings:

Met

2024 Team Analysis:

As described in the APR and confirmed in multiple meetings during the site visit, the program has demonstrated that all students, faculty, and staff have convenient and equitable access to information resources.

Most of the architectural collection is housed in the Abbott Library on South Campus. A small Reading Room is located on the first floor of Hayes Hall. Intended as a quiet study area, it contains current periodicals and course reserve materials. Items available for circulation are located in the Abbott Library and the main library on North Campus. The Inter Plus Library Loan system allows for quick access to resources housed in the North Campus library. The librarian is active in the Association of Architecture School Librarians (AASL) and works to ensure that the library has the most relevant journals according to AASL. Although the program does not maintain a traditional materials library, students have access to materials in the fabrication labs.

There is one full-time librarian dedicated to architecture and planning who maintains office hours in the Abbott Library, in close proximity to Crosby and Hayes Halls. The librarian assembles specialized

collections for faculty to support teaching and research. She also leads research-focused workshops for all new graduate students during orientation to provide information on the resources and services available through the library. In addition, she meets one-on-one with students to facilitate how the library can support them in their research and coursework. During the site visit, students confirmed their use of the library and its resources. They find the library resources and the librarian to be very accessible. In meetings, it was confirmed that librarians with other subject matter expertise support the faculty and students in the program as needed.

Students confirmed that they have access to all necessary software required in courses. Students have access to software in dedicated computer labs. They are also able to purchase software for their personal computers, noting the program's willingness to help secure discounts for students.

6—Public Information

The NAAB expects accredited degree programs to provide information to the public about accreditation activities and the relationship between the program and the NAAB, admissions and advising, and career information, as well as accurate public information about accredited and non-accredited architecture programs. The NAAB expects programs to be transparent and accountable in the information provided to students, faculty, and the public. As a result, all NAAB-accredited programs are required to ensure that the following information is posted online and is easily available to the public.

6.1 Statement on NAAB-Accredited Degrees (Guidelines, p. 23)

All institutions offering a NAAB-accredited degree program or any candidacy program must include the *exact language* found in the NAAB *Conditions for Accreditation, 2020 Edition*, Appendix 2, in catalogs and promotional media, including the program's website.

Team Findings:

Met

2024 Team Analysis:

A Statement on NAAB-accredited Degrees containing the exact language found in the NAAB *Conditions for Accreditation, 2020 Edition*, Appendix 2, is publicly available on the Accreditation Information page of the program's website.

6.2 Access to NAAB Conditions and Procedures (Guidelines, p. 23)

The program must make the following documents available to all students, faculty, and the public, via the program's website:

- a) *Conditions for Accreditation, 2020 Edition*
- b) *Conditions for Accreditation* in effect at the time of the last visit (2009 or 2014, depending on the date of the last visit)
- c) *Procedures for Accreditation, 2020 Edition*
- d) *Procedures for Accreditation* in effect at the time of the last visit (2012 or 2015, depending on the date of the last visit)

Team Findings:

Met

2024 Team Analysis:

As provided in the APR, and confirmed on the program's website, all required documents are publicly available. The documents are:

- *Conditions for Accreditation* (2009 and 2020)
- *Procedures for Accreditation* (2012 and 2020)

6.3 Access to Career Development Information *(Guidelines, p. 23)*

The program must demonstrate that students and graduates have access to career development and placement services that help them develop, evaluate, and implement career, education, and employment plans.

Team Findings:

Met

2024 Team Analysis:

The APR describes, and the team confirmed during meetings with student support staff, that the program offers access to several services related to career development and placement. The program has two career advisement coordinators in place who coordinate virtual career fairs, mock interview sessions and portfolio review courses. The program also provides access to alumni career ambassadors through its career advisement website. Students have access to the university-wide UB Career Design Center, which also offers resume and placement services.

6.4 Public Access to Accreditation Reports and Related Documents *(Guidelines, p. 23)*

To promote transparency in the process of accreditation in architecture education, the program must make the following documents available to all students, faculty, and the public, via the program's website:

- a) All Interim Progress Reports and narratives of Program Annual Reports submitted since the last team visit
- b) All NAAB responses to any Plan to Correct and any NAAB responses to the Program Annual Reports since the last team visit
- c) The most recent decision letter from the NAAB
- d) The Architecture Program Report submitted for the last visit
- e) The final edition of the most recent Visiting Team Report, including attachments and addenda
- f) The program's optional response to the Visiting Team Report
- g) Plan to Correct (if applicable)
- h) NCARB ARE pass rates
- i) Statements and/or policies on learning and teaching culture
- j) Statements and/or policies on diversity, equity, and inclusion

Team Findings:

Met

2024 Team Analysis:

As provided in the APR, and confirmed on the program's website, all required documents are publicly available. The program provides the following:

- Interim Progress Reports (2017 and 2020)
- Architecture Program Report (2014)
- Visiting Team Report (2015) and related NAAB Decision Letter (2015)
- Program's Response to the Visiting Team Report (2015)
- NCARB ARE pass rates for graduates of the University's accredited program
- Studio Culture Policy
- The program's statements on Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity and Inclusive Excellence

The team notes that Plans to Correct were not in effect at the time of the last accreditation visit.

6.5 Admissions and Advising *(Guidelines, p. 24)*

The program must publicly document all policies and procedures that govern the evaluation of applicants for admission to the accredited program. These procedures must include first-time, first-year students as well as transfers from within and outside the institution. This documentation must include the following:

- a) Application forms and instructions

- b) Admissions requirements; admissions-decisions procedures, including policies and processes for evaluation of transcripts and portfolios (when required); and decisions regarding remediation and advanced standing
- c) Forms and a description of the process for evaluating the content of a non-accredited degrees
- d) Requirements and forms for applying for financial aid and scholarships
- e) Explanation of how student diversity goals affect admission procedures

Team Findings:

Met

2024 Team Analysis:

As provided in the APR, and confirmed on the program's website, the following documents are made publicly available or at request:

- Applications forms and instructions
- Admissions requirements and admissions procedures, including policies and processes for evaluation of transcripts and portfolios
- Forms and a description of the process for evaluating the content of a non-accredited degrees
- Requirements and forms for applying for financial aid and scholarships
- Explanation of how student diversity goals affect admission procedures

Students are directed to Joyce Hwang, director of graduate programs, should they have any questions.

6.6 Student Financial Information (*Guidelines, p. 24*)

- 6.6.1 The program must demonstrate that students have access to current resources and advice for making decisions about financial aid.
- 6.6.2 The program must demonstrate that students have access to an initial estimate for all tuition, fees, books, general supplies, and specialized materials that may be required during the full course of study for completing the NAAB-accredited degree program.

Team Findings:

Met

2024 Team Analysis:

As provided in the APR, and confirmed on the program's website, all required documents are publicly available.

6.6.1 The program provides links on their website to financial aid opportunities such as where to receive state aid and scholarships. Every student has access to current resources on the website and can contact the financial aid office to ask questions that may arise.

6.6.2 The program provides access on the website to estimated costs of attendance per program in undergraduate or graduate programs. The site lists tuition, fees, book costs, supplies, etc. The site shows the costs for all programs so that students can compare the cost of their degree to the costs paid by students in other programs.

Appendix 2. The Visiting Team

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VI. Report Signatures

Respectfully Submitted,



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