University of Hartford

Interim Progress Report for Year Two

November 15, 2019

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF 2017 NAAB VISIT

CONDITIONS NOT MET

2017 VTR
None

STUDENT PERFORMANCE CRITERIA NOT MET

2017 VTR
B.5 Structural Systems C.3 Integrative Design

Interim Progress Report

University of Hartford
College of Engineering, Technology, and Architecture, Department of Architecture
M. Arch. [Preprofessional degree + 64 credits]
Year of the previous visit: 2017

Please update contact information as necessary since the last APR was submitted.

Chief administrator for the academic unit in which the program is located:
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Individual submitting the Interim Progress Report:
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Seth H. Holmes, Architecture Graduate Program Director, sholmes@hartford.edu; 860-768-4764

Current term of accreditation: 8-year term, 2017-2025

Text from the most recent VTR or APR is in the gray text boxes. Type your response in the designated text boxes.

1. Progress in Addressing Not-Met Conditions and Student Performance Criteria

B.5 Structural Systems

***2017 Visiting Team Assessment*:** Evidence of student achievement at the ability level was not demonstrated in ARC 621 Master's Thesis or elsewhere. The team requested additional evidence, which was provided by the department. The team was still unable to locate the appropriate material.

University of Hartford, 2019 Response: To improve the student's ability to design and apply structural systems in building design, the program has revised the course content and delivery in the ARC 611 Architectural Studio III course, which now focuses primarily on integrative design with a strong emphasis on structural design integration. The ARC 611 course now includes two design problems that specifically require structural design integration and documentation for both a large (Steel and Concrete) and a small building (Heavy Timber). Furthermore, the program continues to link the course content from the ARC 523 Advanced Structural Systems course with student design projects in the ARC 521 Architectural Studio II course (which runs concurrently to ARC 523). The ARC 611 and ARC 523 syllabi are included in the appendix. Additionally, the final project requirements from the Fall 2018 semester's ARC 611 course are also included as an example of the program's effort to address the concerns over student's ability to demonstrate structural systems application and integration in design.

C.3 Integrative Design

***2017 Visiting Team Assessment*:** Evidence of student achievement at the prescribed level was insufficient in student work prepared for ARC 611 Architectural Studio III and ARC 621 Master's Thesis. The team requested additional evidence, which was provided by the department. The team was still unable to locate the appropriate material.

University of Hartford, 2018 Response: The faculty discussed the NAAB's concern over the Integrative Design SPC and recognized that this category needed early focus within the studio sequence of the M.Arch program. Therefore, the ARC 611 Architectural Studio III course was identified as the appropriate studio to emphasize integrative design, given that students will have completed both ARC 513 Advanced Building Systems and ARC 523 Advanced Structural Systems, and would be taking ARC 512 Advanced Site Planning concurrently with ARC 611. The studio now has three distinct design problems, each addressing integrative design process in various ways. The first project starts out small with a group design problem focused on developing an urban pocket park. For this project, students are asked to iteratively investigate small structural systems, landscape and green infrastructure systems, and material systems as they relate to the outdoor program needs of the park. The second project has small groups design a larger (~25,000SF) academic building. At the beginning of the design phase, each team member researches a specific system category (effectively acting as a consultant) and reports to the team about the pros/cons of applying various systems to the specific design problem (i.e. which structural systems are applicable for a particular academic building type, in a particular location, with particular programmatic needs). Following the group systems analysis, the team iteratively develops their building design using the selected systems and dividing the group documentation requirements according to their systems categories. In the final project, individual students use the integrative design approach to develop a small ~7,500SF building with a focus on heavy timber construction. In this project, each student must research various systems (site, wood structure types and methods, and passive/active environmental controls) prior to making design decisions; all systems research is presented and collected into a 'pool of information' for

the entire studio class. As a group, the students evaluate the system 'baselines' needed in relation to their project program, location, and climate. Once the design process begins, each student evaluates the variety of systems from the studio's pool of data as they relate to their particular design requirements, baseline systematic needs, and programmatic design solutions. Appropriate design documentation is demonstrated through written descriptions, diagrams, plans, wall and building sections, and systems details. The NAAB Matrix will be revised to place greater focus on integrative design in ARC 611 in lieu of ARC 621 Master's Thesis. The revised ARC 611 syllabus is attached in the appendix along with example project requirements.

2. Changes or Planned Changes in the Program

Please report such changes as the following: faculty retirement/succession planning; administration changes (dean, department chair, provost); changes in enrollment (increases, decreases, new external pressures); new opportunities for collaboration; changes in financial resources (increases, decreases, external pressures); significant changes in educational approach or philosophy; changes in physical resources (e.g., deferred maintenance, new building planned, cancellation of plans for new building).

University of Hartford, 2019 Response: The following items have changed or are planned changes related to the M.Arch program:

2.1 –Graduate program director change.

In July 2017, Professor Daniel Davis stepped down as the Graduate Program Director and was replaced by Associate Professor Seth H. Holmes. At the time of the transition, Seth was an Assistant Professor but has since been promoted and tenured in February 2018. As the Graduate Program Director, Seth is responsible for managing the program curriculum oversight and assessment, accreditation documentation, admissions, and student advising. Seth works closely with the department chair (James Fuller), college staff, and university staff to provide financial and human resources, manage staffing, marketing, recruiting, admissions, etc. Since becoming the graduate program director, Seth has worked on numerous items including, but not limited to, the following:

- Wrote the proposals for the two new tracks in the M.Arch programs and spearheaded their approval processes.
- Worked with the chair and graduate admissions office, and office of marketing and communication on an integrated online advertising campaign
- Visited numerous undergraduate institutions, AIAS forum, and other events for recruiting.
- Worked with the chair to develop new management workflows for running the department and the program.

2.2 – M.Arch Track 1; new 3-semester "accelerated" track approved.

In July 2018, the NAAB approved a substantial change to the University of Hartford M.Arch program to add another track for completing the degree. The new 48-credit / 3-semester "accelerated" track was created to provide undergraduate architecture students currently at the University of Hartford to begin taking graduate architecture courses during their senior year using pre-existing electives. Qualified students (>3.4 GPA) take 16 credits of graduate coursework during their bachelor's degree, then matriculate into the new "Track 1 M.Arch" where they take 3 sequential semesters (Summer, Fall, Spring) to complete their M.Arch degree. The combined 48-credit M.Arch Track 1 and the 16-credits of graduate coursework is equivalent to the existing 64-credit M.Arch degree (renamed to M.Arch Track 2). The current fall 2019 semester has 4 students matriculated in the Track 1 program; additionally 6 seniors are taking their first graduate courses with the intent of beginning the accelerated M.Arch Track 1 in summer 2020. The reason for this change was to stay competitive with other institutions and to increase enrollment in the M.Arch program. The letter from the NAAB granting this change is included in the appendix.

2.3 – M.Arch Track 3; new 7-semester (3.5 year) track approved.
In July 2019, the NAAB approved a substantial change to the University of Hartford M.Arch program to add a third track for completing the degree. The M.Arch Track 3 is a 7-semester, 113-credit M.Arch degree track for students without a pre-professional degree in architecture. The M.Arch Track 3 program utilizes the same NAAB Matrix as Track 1 and Track 2. In addition to the 64 credits of graduate courses required by Track 1 and 2, the Track 3 requires students to complete 49 credits of prerequisite courses. These prerequisite courses consist of three studios, three structures course, two history courses, and one course each in building systems, materials and methods, construction documents, and computer applications. The program is designed to allow for advanced standing for students with qualified equivalent pre-professional prerequisite coursework. The reason for this change was to stay competitive with other institutions and to increase enrollment in the program.

2.4 – CETA Dean change
In July 2018, Louis Manzione, the Dean of the College of Engineering, Technology, and Architecture (CETA), left the university. The existing CETA Associate Dean, Hisham Alnajjar, was promoted to Interim Dean and the university conducted a national search for a new permanent Dean. Seth Holmes represented the Department of Architecture faculty on the search committee. The university appointed Interim Dean Alnajjar as the new Dean of CETA in July 2020. Dean Alnajjar has a BS, MS, and PhD in electrical engineering.

2.5 – Additional structures professor hired.
In fall 2017, the college hired Assistant Professor Yang Yang to teach structures courses in CETA for both civil engineering and architecture. Professor Yang holds a joint position in both departments and has 1/3 of his teaching time committed to architecture structures courses. Professor Yang currently teaches undergraduate architecture structures courses, but can teach in the graduate program as needed. The addition of Professor Yang to the Department provides more consistency to the teaching of structures within the curriculum and grants the other full-time structures instructor, Assistant Professor Timothy Adekunle, more time to develop and improve the structures curriculum in both the undergraduate and graduate programs. In particular, Professor Adekunle has more time to provide one-on-one desk crits in the graduate studios to advise students on their ability to integrate structural systems into their design projects. Professor Yang's CV is included in the Appendix.

2.6 – One Assistant Professor of Architecture search underway.
In the fall 2019, Assistant Professor of Architecture Imdat As abruptly departed the University of Hartford and the Department of Architecture. The Provost and CETA Dean quickly approved a search to replace Professor As' position. The faculty search is for a Tenure Track position at the Assistant Professor level with a start date of Fall 2020. The search team chair is Architecture Professor Michael J. Crosbie. The Department is currently filling the teaching vacancies left by Assistant Professor As' departure through overload contracts and adjunct positions.

2.7 – Another Assistant Professor faculty position still vacant.
In May of 2013, Assistant Professor of Architecture Dariel Cobb left the University of Hartford and the Department of Architecture. Assistant Professor Cobb's specialization was in Theory and Criticism. At the time of her departure, the university was experiencing a hiring freeze due to budgetary reasons; therefore, a faculty search was not approved at that time. However, though the hiring freeze was lifted in 2014/15, to date the Dean and Provost have not approved a search to replace the faculty position vacated by Assistant Professor Cobb. The position has now been vacant for 6.5 years. This vacancy was noted in the 2017 VTR under L2.1 Human Resources and Human Resource Development.

2.8 – M.Arch enrollment decreased, but improving.
The first year enrollment in the M.Arch program has fluctuated since March 2017. The Department saw a dramatic drop in first year M.Arch enrollment from the high of 22 new students in 2014 to a low of 4 new students in 2017. However, the implementation of the new Track 1

program has proven fruitful in recruiting new students to the program in just the first year and a half since its implementation. The table below indicates new matriculations into the M.Arch program since September 2016. Please note that new matriculations are counted for Summer (Track 1) and Fall (Track 2 + 3). The Track 1 numbers also indicate in parenthesis the number of undergraduate UHart seniors conditionally accepted into the Track 1 and taking the prerequisite graduate course requirements during that same fall term.

New matriculations into the M.Arch program by year				
Year	*Track 1*	*Track 2*	*Track 3*	***Total***
2016	n/a	7	n/a	**7**
2017	n/a	4	n/a	**4**
2018	0 (+4 Sr.)	6	n/a	**6** (+4 Sr.)
2019	4 (+6 Sr.)	7	0	**11** (+6 Sr.)

Numerous ongoing marketing and recruiting efforts by the program and the department over the past year are designed to increase the enrollment moving forward.

2.9 – Administrative staffing needed.
The VTR noted in section 1.2.1 that the department does not have a dedicated administrative assistant (AA) and shares an AA with the other three departments in the college, which are all located in another building across campus. The department's leadership (Fuller and Holmes) spoke with Dean Alnajjar and requested additional administrative help for the department and its programs, ideally a dedicated staff member. The Dean was provided with a list of the necessary duties and ongoing tasks that the department requires from any AA assigned to the department. Though limited AA time is available for the department, the department leadership stressed to the Dean that this is difficult to manage given the remote nature of the department's facilities and the AA's time splitting between multiple departments. To date, this issue has not been resolved, but the department leadership will continue to pursue the creation of a more dedicated AA position to help better manage the department and its programs.

2.10 – University administration leadership changes.
In July 2017, university president Walter Harrison retired. Following a search during the 2016/17 academic year, Gregory S. Woodward was hired and started as university president in July 2017. In October 2018, the Interim Provost H. Frederick Sweitzer was promoted to Provost.

3. Summary of Activities in Response to Changes in the 2014 NAAB Conditions

University of Hartford, 2019 update: Not Applicable as the Conditions have not changed since the University's March 2017 NAAB visit.

4. Appendix (include revised curricula, syllabi, and one-page CVs or bios of new administrators and faculty members; syllabi should reference which NAAB SPC a course addresses)

University of Hartford, 2019 update: The following items are attached in the appendix:

1. The course syllabus and project requirements for ARC 611, Architectural Studio III.
2. Example project requirements from ARC 611 (Project 3, Fall 2018).
3. Course syllabus and project requirements for ARC 523, Advanced Structural Systems.
4. The CV for Assistant Professor Yang Yang.
5. The approval letter from the NAAB granting a second "accelerated" track (Track 1) for qualified University of Hartford undergraduate architecture program graduates.
6. The approval letter from the NAAB granting a third track (Track 3) for students with an undergraduate degree in a discipline other than architecture.