Two-Year Progress Report
Architectural Studies (BAS), Master of Architecture (MArch, MArch Co-op, MArch Water)
October 2020

Background

The last review process began in 2016 and covered the Honours Bachelor of Architectural Studies (BAS), Master of Architecture (MArch), Master of Architecture (MArch Co-op), and Master of Architecture (MArch Water), all programs delivered by the School of Architecture. The School of Architecture submitted a Self-Study to the Associate Vice-President, Academic and the Associate Vice-President, Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs on September 21, 2016, and the external review as per our IQAP requirements was combined with the accreditation visit by the [Canadian Architectural Certification Board (CACB)](#). Given that the University would receive the Visiting Team Report (VTR) from the CACB, only one additional arm's-length external reviewer was selected to represent our institutional interests and provide a report. This external reviewer accompanied the CACB Visiting Team in an extensive site visit that took place over four days in February 2017.

The Reviewer's Report was received on June 14, 2017. The School of Architecture submitted a Program Response, endorsed by the Dean of Engineering, on September 21, 2017. The Final Assessment Report, received on 22 June 2018, was based on information extracted from the Self-Study, the Reviewer's Report, and the Program's Response. After review by the School of Architecture and Faculty of Engineering, the Final Assessment Report was approved by Senate Undergraduate Council in May 2019 and Senate in June 2019. This Two-Year Progress Report offers an update on our implementation progress.

The review highlighted the strength of the national and international reputation of the School of Architecture, the considerable success of some of our Architecture faculty members through prominent exhibitions and publications, as well as the high desirability and employability of graduates from both the BAS and MArch programs. The review also contained a number of recommendations that are listed below, together with an update on our progress on implementation.

Progress on Implementation Plan and Recommendations

1. **Detailed auditing of faculty loads (teaching and administrative) over five year spans**

   Status: *completed / in progress.*
   *(*Teaching load audit *completed*; administrative load audit *in progress*).

   Details: We have now been tracking teaching assignments over the past two years, based on a framework we developed and approved in March 2018. This assessment, which is ongoing, is tracked annually and an average is computed over three years. The calculation of faculty teaching load also accounts for graduate supervision.

   The administrative load is not yet formally categorized, nor tracked as clearly. While we have completed our addendum to faculty performance and evaluation, and clarified expectations for architecture faculty seeking tenure and promotion, we are still in the process of developing a clearer approach to the tracking and accounting of internal and external service.

2. **Limiting the MArch Thesis to one or two terms with set deadlines and prominent external examiners**

   Status: *in progress*.

   Details: While the reviewer recommended limiting the MArch Thesis to one to two terms, it would in fact be detrimental to the program both financially and in relation to the dynamism of the student body. It would also be in contradiction with the current model. The Waterloo Architecture Thesis is set to be flexible and take between a minimum of three terms to a maximum of six terms. The School intends to maintain this flexibility, which enables their students to yield very strong work and engage in field research both in Canada and abroad. Instead, the School has focused on improving the structure of the graduate degree and establishing additional benchmarks to ensure that the majority of students can complete their thesis in a maximum of six terms.

   Over the past two years, the Graduate Office has developed clear communication to faculty and students about program lengths and limits to extension. We no longer grant extensions beyond six terms, unless there are extenuating circumstances that justify an exception to this rule. The number of extensions granted to students beyond term six decreased by nearly 70% over the past two years, going from 29 petitions submitted in Fall 2018, down to 9 in Winter 2020. To better support students towards completion, we have established additional benchmarks (interim reviews or presentation). We have also introduced a final thesis presentation in the form of final thesis reviews, to provide an option other than the formal thesis defense. The reviews might be more suitable to students who have artefact-based

thesis, thus helping them to complete within four to six terms. In December 2019, we had the highest number of students presenting in those reviews (18 students), and the expectation is that students electing to present in term four will complete within the six terms. Still, the School must continue to improve the structure of the graduate degree so that unless there are exceptional circumstances, all students complete within six terms.

3. **Limiting the number of Thesis students supervised by one Faculty member (e.g. three students)**

   Status: *completed.*

   Details: We have implemented a balloting system that ensures a more even distribution of the supervisory load, while still maintaining good fit between students and faculty members. First tested in Fall 2017, the system resulted in a balanced distribution of students amongst faculty for the past three academic years (2017-2018, 2018-2019 and 2019-2020). While the number of students supervised by faculty members ranged quite broadly until 2016, every faculty member is now assigned a minimum of two students and a maximum of five, based on the outcome of the balloting system (the median in 2018 was 3, with an average of 2.83; and 4 in 2019, with an average of 3.21). With the limit of six terms to the MArch, this means a maximum of six to eight graduate students per faculty member at any given time. For students, this structured and transparent approach to the allocation of supervisors has also been beneficial. There is a clear two-week period when all students are invited to meet potential supervisors, and the confirmation of supervisor is based on preferences expressed both by the students and supervising faculty members. All in all, the students seem to have been rather appreciative of this new approach.

4. **Setting minimum enrolment in graduate electives**

   Status: *completed.*

   Details: Architecture aims for enrolments of 12 to 15 students in graduate elective courses. As of Winter 2017, graduate electives which do not meet an enrolment of 10 students within two weeks of the beginning of the term are normally either not offered, or not counted as part of a faculty member's teaching load. A course with lower enrolment may be offered under exceptional circumstances, so long as the average enrolment in graduate electives during that term remains above 10 overall.

5. **Auditing and re-distributing credit load for cultural history and technology courses in the undergraduate program to better reflect course demands**

   Status: *completed.*

Details: In May 2018, the School of Architecture faculty voted to reduce the total credit count from 29.5 credits to 28 credits, eliminating one course in the 1A term and 2 courses in upper years, while integrating a greater proportion of elective courses. This change took effect for the incoming first year cohort in September 2019. This was achieved by eliminating some redundancies in the technology stream, and revisiting the content and delivery in some of the cultural history courses. While the School continues to monitor the outcome of this change on the cultural history and technology stream, we consider that we have addressed this concern.

6. **Achieving greater alignment with the University's strategic direction toward transformative research and entrepreneurship; encouraging and emphasis on architectural innovation that stems from interdisciplinary research; supporting new ideas and initiatives with informal and formal events that cross communities; offering structured mentoring and grant-writing support**

   Status: *completed/in progress*

   Details: In September 2018, we created a position of Associate Director, Research, to promote the awareness of current interdisciplinary research as well as its growth, working to better support funding applications, motivate additional publications and ensure greater dissemination. Over the past two years, there has been an increasing number of faculty members applying for and being successful in obtaining Tri-Council funding. Our strategic plan, completed in Fall 2019, aligns with the University in the focus on developing disciplinary and inter-disciplinary potentials of architecture research within the University, as well as the creation of programs and facilities that foster innovative and interdisciplinary research.

7. **Careful auditing resources (human, equipment, space) when implementing new programs and initiatives in light of the new budget model**

   Status: *completed/in progress*

   Details:
   The School of Architecture and the Faculty of Engineering have been monitoring closely the impact of the Waterloo Budget Model on recent projects and potential initiatives. We re-visited the hiring schedule of new faculty members for the collaborative program in Architectural Engineering and reviewed the required number of net new staff and faculty positions. As part of this analysis, the School is in the process of updating the roles and responsibilities in the different staff positions in Cambridge so as to create efficiencies and a new position in advancement and communication. This is a direct response to the fundraising plan drafted by Engineering Advancement that indicated the need to have a fundraising

professional work directly to support advancement in Architecture. We have also carefully considering our space and equipment needs in light of our recent and projected growth (design-build collaboration with First Nations, growth in the graduate program, collaborative program in Architectural Engineering, and new faculty research in materials and fabrication). We have just completed a space audit for the School that reveals a current need for an additional 20,000 square feet. We are now looking at the next steps and drafting a project to expand our existing facilities and provide faculty and graduate students with more adequate research and fabrication space. While we have undertaken this careful auditing of human resources, space and equipment, this process will necessarily be ongoing as we continue to grow and engage in new projects.

8. **Revisiting the name and vision statement of the Faculty of Engineering to be more inclusive of the School of Architecture. The main vision statement "to become a truly world-class school of engineering," does not accommodate the aims of the School of Architecture, the only non-engineering unit in the Faculty**

Status: *completed.*

Details:
The Faculty of Engineering completed its strategic plan, which now includes direct references to Architecture and Design. The vision specifically refers to architects ("Above all, our engineers and architects are committed to serving society, and building a better future for generations to come"), and some of its aspiration likewise include references to architecture either explicitly (e.g. "Become the world leader in work-integrated graduate studies in engineering and architecture"), or implicitly ("Offer the single best engineering and design education experience in Canada").

Updated Implementation Plan

	Recommendations	Proposed Actions	Responsibility for Leading and Resourcing (if applicable) the Actions	Timeline for addressing Recommendations
1.	Detailed auditing of faculty loads (teaching and administrative) over five- year spans;	Develop clearer guidelines for administrative load; Continue to track teaching load.	Director, with Administrative Officer (no resource required)	Completed and ongoing since 2018 for teaching load; to be completed by December 2020 for service.
2.	Limiting the MArch Thesis to one or two terms with set deadlines and prominent external examiners;	Limiting the thesis to one or two terms is not feasible, and thus, the School will focus on limiting the thesis to a maximum of six terms.

Continue to clarify and clearly communicate expectations; explore directed thesis and thematic research options. | Director, Architecture Graduate Office and Graduate committee (no resource required) | Ongoing – proportion of students above six terms to be reduced under 10% by January 2021. |
3.	Limiting the number of thesis students supervised by one faculty member (e.g. three students);	Continue to use balloting system.	Graduate Office (no resource required)	Completed
4	Setting minimum enrolments in graduate electives;	Completed – continue to maintain minimum enrolment is 10 in graduate elective, unless exceptional circumstances dictate otherwise.	Director	Completed
5	Auditing and re-distributing credit load for cultural history and technology courses in the undergraduate program to better reflect course demands	Continue to review and implement changes as necessary	Director, Undergraduate officer and Undergraduate Committee continue to monitor (no resource required)	Completed

6	Achieving greater alignment with the University's strategic direction toward transformative research and entrepreneurship; encouraging and emphasis on architectural innovation that stems from interdisciplinary research; supporting new ideas and initiatives with informal and formal events that cross communities; offering structured mentoring and grant-writing support;	Strengthen support for multidisciplinary and architecture research.	Director & Associate Director, Research, in collaboration with Associate Dean, Research and Office of Research.	Completed (and ongoing): strengthen support and track progress over the next two years (2020-21 and 2021-22).
7	Careful auditing resources (human, equipment, space) when implementing new programs and initiatives in light of the new budget model;	Conducted audit; continue to monitor.	Director, Administrative Officer, Financial Officer, Faculty Finance Officer, and Plant Operations	Completed (and ongoing)
8	Revisiting the name and vision statement of the Faculty of Engineering to be more inclusive of the School of Architecture. The main vision statement "to become a truly world-class school of engineering," does not accommodate the aims of the School of Architecture, the only non-engineering unit in the Faculty.	Completed: new Engineering Strategic Plan and vision refer more explicitly to architecture ("revisiting the name" of the Faculty of Engineering does not appear to be an option!).	n.a.	Completed

The Department Chair/Director, in consultation with the Dean of the Faculty shall be responsible for monitoring the Implementation Plan.

Date of next program review: _____ **2023/24**
                                                        Date

Signatures of Approval:

_____ October 1ˢᵗ, 2020
Chair/Director   Date

_____
AFIW Administrative Dean/Head (For AFIW programs only)   Date

Mary Wells

_____ May 4, 2021
Faculty Dean   Date

Note: AFIW programs fall under the Faculty of ARTS; however, the Dean does not have fiscal control nor authority over staffing and administration of the program.

Dan DeVidi

_____ November 1, 2020
Associate Vice-President, Academic   Date
(For undergraduate and augmented programs)

John M. Cacell

_____ November 1, 2020
Associate Vice-President, Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs   Date
(For graduate and augmented programs)