**NAAB 2008 Visiting Team Report (VTR)** outlined 2012

**Section I. Summary of Team Findings**

1. **Team Comments**

The VTR offers a general positive assessment of the School.

1. **Progress Since the Previous Site Visit (2002)**

***Criterion 12.11 - Non-Western Traditions*** NOT MET in 2002. In 2008 the VTR recognizes various initiatives including BED integration of non-Western Traditions into HT courses that help meet the criterion but fell short.

Referral to 2008 ***Section II, 13.9*** The VTR recognizes “great deal of improvement”but no evident documentation. Suggests outreach to China, Middle East and African Nations. MET WITH CONCERN.

***Criterion 12.14 - Accessibility*** In 2002 the VTR noted a lack of ability design in compliance with ADA and felt the knowledge of support courses was not being applied to Design Studios (even 5th and 6th year). Designs should achieve total and free access to the building.

The 2008 VTR reiterates importance of “total access” to the building a seeks students capacity for complete manipulation of the site to achieve that end. NOT MET.

***Criterion 12.24 - Building Code Compliance*** (2002 SPC removed in 2008 removed and distributed under other SPC’s) Unacceptable exiting patterns, insufficient stairways and wrong-swinging doors.

Referral to 2008 ***Section II, 13.20 Life-Safety*** The VTR states a continued concern for students understanding the impact that life safety concerns, fire protection, smoke compartmentalization and egress have on the planning of a building. METwith continued concerns about Life Safety understanding.

**CAUSES FOR CONCERN** taken from 2002 VTR

**2002 *Condition 1.1, - Architectural Education and the Academic Context.*** The VTR observed a need for communication among faculty members and between faculty and students. The VTR observed the need for a stronger “academic master plan" with connections among fiscal, personnel, management and curricular issues.

Referral to 2008 ***Section II, 1, 1.1 Architecture Education and the Academic Context*** – VTR praises the EdA at multiple levels such as interaction with other departments/campuses, participation of faculty, students and administrators in governance, publications, promotion of conservation of historical buildings on campus, public and pro-bono projects, mandate to globalize, etc. MET with one concern - enhance communication between faculty and students and reiterates the need for communication between “distant faculty sectors”.

**2002 *Condition 1.5 - Architecture Education and Society.*** The VTR suggests stronger link between urban design and architecture due to the densely populated island.

Referral to 2008 ***Section II, 1, 1.5 - Architecture, Education and Society*** The VTR praises the Taller Comunitario and student awareness of social and ethical implications of design towards society and the environment, respectively. MET with a suggestion of additional commitment to social and environmental concerns on the global scale.

**2002 *Condition 2 - Self-Assessment.*** The VTR stresses issues of communication, integration and assessment that require further attention and stresses the need for an “academic master plan” that incorporates the assessment of needed faculty, operating, staffing and facility resources. Deficiency still lies in the lack of a formal strategy to integrate the faculty into a cohesive group that builds on each other’s areas and biases.

Referral to 2008 ***Section II, 2 - Self-Assessment Procedures*** NAAB vouches for assessment strategies beyond individual course evaluations such as faculty, student and graduates’ views on the program’s curriculum. The Integration strategies still requires attention in order to elevate the program’s academic offering to a higher level. The team also comments on the student’s limited participation in the development of program guidelines (such as studio culture). Team also comments on lack of clarity among faculty members as to tenure track assignments and advancement opportunities. MET.

**2002 *Condition 4 - Social Equity****.* The VTR calls for an increase tenure-track faculty lines and seek to increase the presence of women in faculty positions yet recognizes EdA’s effort to include women in tenure track positions.

Referral to 2008 ***Section II, 4 - Social Equity*** Puerto Rico’s location and bilingual education is unique in NAAB’s roster of schools which offers a commendable diversity. The fact that the majority of our students are female is mentioned. VTR applauded UPR faculty evaluation forms, human diversity and resources policies in the UPR in general. The VTR also praised the amount of practicing architects teaching in the School. MET.

**2002 *Condition 6 - Human Resource Development.***The VTR identifies a need for greater communication between students and faculty and the need to increase tenure-track faculty lines with a proactive inclusion of women faculty. The administration and senior faculty should be more proactive advising new faculty as to opportunities within the institution. The VTR recommends annual rather than semester appointments.

Referral to2008 ***Section II, 6 – Human Resource Development*** The VTR seeks proof of adequate human resources for a professional degree program and notes the importance of “adequate time for tutorial exchange” between teacher and student. The VTR also advocates for faculty’s time for research, scholarship and practice. Notes difficulties of access to resources by students. MET.

**2002 *Condition 7 - Physical Resources*** Although the school was relocating to the new building the VTR expresses concerns as to little improvement to physical resources and “program disruption during the move.

Referral to 2008 ***Section II, 8 - Physical Resources*** The VTR expresses “operational concerns” in terms of safety issues in the areas of the model shop, wind tunnel and “other areas” that are not specified. As to the model shop the VTR highlighted concerns of space for projected new equipment, necessary new human resources and extend schedule for the students. The report also noted need to better acclimatize library and archive collections, as well as building systems in general. The VTR also note acoustic issues in classroom environments. The VTR felt all issues were in the process of being addressed.

1. **Conditions WELL MET**

1.2 Architecture Education and Students

1.4 Architecture Education and the Profession

1.5 Architecture Education and Society

9 Information Resources

13.3 Graphic Skills

13.10 National and Regional Traditions

13.24 Building Materials and Assemblies

13.30 Architectural Practice

1. **Conditions Not Met**

13.13 Human Diversity

13.14 Accessibility

1. **Causes of Concern**

2 Program Self-Assessment Procedures

5 Studio Culture

7 Human Resource Development

13.1 Speaking and Writing Skills

13.9 Non-Western Traditions

13.15 Sustainable Design

13.17 Site Conditions

13.20 Life Safety

13.23 Building System Integration

13.26 Technical Documentation

13.28 Comprehensive Design

**Section II. Compliance with the Conditions for Accreditation**

1. **Program Response to the NAAB Perspectives**

**1.1 Architecture Education and the Academic Context MET**

See Section I - Causes for Concern - *Condition 1.1.*

**1.2 Architecture Education and Students WELL MET**

Students are exceptionally active in student organizations such as CLEA, AIAS, RGB, CSI, OPEA and are seen as “bridge builder” between the 2 schools (in 2008) and that they are proud of and concerned with their education.

**1.3 Architecture Education and Registration MET**

School should establish a relationship with the Registration Board although commitment to licensure is evident in faculty profile. EdA should be more proactive in creating awareness of IDP, Registration Board, CAAPPR and mobility services and issues. Follow-up should be given to graduates as to licensure.

**1.4 Architecture Education and the Profession WELL MET**

The Dean is quoted in believing that, “the students should be leaders in their region”. Student involvement in other university programs, professional disciplines and architectural programs is applauded. The passion of faculty members towards the art of building is noted.

**1.5 Architecture Education and Society WELL MET**

See *Section I - Causes for Concern - Condition 1.5.*

**2.0 Program Self-Assessment Procedures MET WITH CONCERNS**

See *Section I - Causes for Concern - Condition 2.*

**3.0 Public Information MET**

The VTR notes a commitment to include the exact language of the NAAB Conditions of Accreditation in the EdA’s website in addition to appearing in its catalogue. The VTR also suggests that the mission and other information be included.

**4.0 Social Equity MET**

See *Section I - Causes for Concern - Condition 4.*

**5.0 Studio Culture MET WITH CONCERNS**

The VTR calls for a more coherent and cohesive studio policy; the one “studio culture policy” in 2008 was the result of multiple policies. In the report the Center for Design Research initiative to chart and develop studio culture was commended.

**6.0 Human Resources MET**

The VTR highlights student’s difficulties to access resources and the need for extended hours in the photo lab, wood shop and computer lab facilities. The report offers general statistics of the program and notes the importance of recruiting faculty from “beyond the island to enhance the program’s regional and global reach.

**7.0 Human Resource Development MET WITH CONCERN**

The VTR notes the outstanding lecture and exhibition series, as well as, special study trips and joint studios. Due to the costly investment that students make to participate in these international activities, the School should provide funding to lessen the economic burden.

**8.0 Physical Resources MET**

The VTR expresses “a few operational concerns”. The team is concerned with safety issues in the model shop (overcrowding & new equipment will requires additional staffing and improve hours), media lab, wind tunnel and other facilities. Heavy construction activities in the loading dock area need to be more organized. There is a need to properly acclimatize school facilities.

**9.0 Information Resources WELL MET**

AACUPR and library are well seen. VTR notes the importance of transferring the slide collection into a digital format.

**10.0 Financial Resources MET**

VTR mentions anticipated financial growth given the initiatives. There will be a need to explore alternative revenues such as, independent fund raising (100% of income for the school), alumni contributions (expresses need for alumni database), research grants, facilities rentals (including labs for the use of professional community). Additional investment is suggested for the technical labs and facilities of the school.

**11.0 Administrative Structure MET**

Reiterates the need for autonomy within the required accreditation of the Middles States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSACS), the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools for NAAB requirements. The VTR notes good faculty leadership and highlights photography, computing, woodshop, AACUPR, CIUDAD, iESCALA, IMDICE and CIDI.

**12.0 Professional Degrees Curriculum MET**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 4 + 2 TOTAL HOURS | 194 hours |
| Undergraduate Hours (BED) | 138 hours |
| Graduate Hours (MArch) | 56 hours |
|  |  |
| **INCLUDES:** |  |
| Undergraduate Hours |  |
| Liberal Studies Requirements: | 46 hours |
| Electives: | 12 hours |
| Professional Studies: | 80 hours |
|  |  |
| Graduate Hours |  |
| Liberal Studies Requirements: | 3 hours |
| Electives: | 18 hours |
| Professional Studies: | 35 hours |

The VTR recommends a “formal advisory system” to ensure that the students get the most out of the curricular changes occurring in the program due to the mandate of undergraduate curricular revisions. In addition, the VTR states that the proposed 3-1/2 year Master in Architecture and the expanded MArch with specialties in urban planning, historic preservation and project management are initiatives currently “outside” of the accredited degree as accredited by NAAB. The current program as summarized by the VTR is as follows:

**13.0 Student Performance Criteria**

The following are the Student Performance Criteria established by NAAB to assess the knowledge acquired by the students throughout their education at the School:

**13.1 Speaking and Writing Skills MET WITH CONCERNS**

The VTR considers student’s writing skills adequate for a “professional” degree but once the program forms part of el DEGI there is an elevated standard of critical thinking and writing skills beyond what is traditionally expected of an architecture school.

**13.2 Critical Thinking Skills MET**

No comments.

**13.3 Graphic Skills WELL MET**

The VTR expresses a high level of skill in a “variety of graphic media” rendering and analytical models of building assemblies.

**13.4 Research Skills MET**

No comments.

**13.5 Formal Ordering Skills MET**

No comments.

**13.6 Fundamental Skills MET**

No comments.

**13.7 Collaborative Skills MET**

No comments.

**13.8 Western Traditions MET**

No comments.

**13.9 Non-Western Traditions MET WITH CONCERNS**

See *Section I – 2, Criterion 12.11 Non-Western Traditions*.

**13.10 National and Regional Traditions WELL MET**

The VTR notes an “exemplary” depth and commitment to local historical, cultural and social concerns and sees the School’s depository of traditional building forms as a reiteration of these values.

**13.11 Use of Precedents MET**

No comments.

**13.12 Human Behavior MET**

No comments.

**13.13 Human Diversity NOT MET**

The VTR indicates an inability to verify this criterion due to lack of proof and were informed that these issues were covered in courses offered in other departments.

**13.14 Accessibility NOT MET**

The VTR observed in student work a recognition of the need for accessibility but not the required level of application; solutions seemed as afterthoughts rather than an integral part of the design process. Also refer to *Section I – 2, Criterion 12.14 Accessibility*.

**13.15 Sustainable Design MET WITH CONCERN**

The VTR applauds commitment to Solar Decathlon and the integration of LEED certifications as part of the School’s course offerings, as well as, sustainable design strategies in urban design studios. The report notes a lack of effective integration of sustainable systems into design studio projects.

**13.16 Program Preparation MET**

No comments.

**13.17 Site Conditions MET WITH CONCERNS**

The VTR states that although there is a “general conceptual responsiveness” to site conditions there is room for improvement in the integration of site conditions that could inform the design development of studio projects.

**13.18 Structural Systems MET**

No comments.

**13.19 Environmental Systems MET**

No comments.

**13.20 Life-Safety MET WITH CONCERN**

See *Section I – 2, Criterion 12.11 Building Code Compliance*.

**13.21 Building Envelope MET**

No comments.

**13.22 Building Service Systems MET**

No comments.

**13.23 Building Systems Integration MET WITH CONCERNS**

The VTR understands that the student work selected does no “rise to the desired level of ability” required in terms of the integration of multiple building systems into a design project.

**13.24 Building Materials and Assemblies WELL MET**

The VTR notes that ARQU 6361 Building Anatomy illustrates a “high level of success” in meeting the aspired level of understanding.

**13.25 Construction Cost Control MET**

No comments.

**13.26 Technical Documentation MET WITH CONCERNS**

The VTR perceived that although the students know how to document their projects the team did not have sufficient documentation of their ability to write outline specifications.

**13.27 Client Role in Architecture MET**

No comments.

**13.28 Comprehensive Design MET WITH CONCERNS**

The VTR states that it is not fully met; student work did not illustrate comprehensive solutions in studio projects.

**13.29 Architect’s Administrative Roles MET**

No comments.

**13.30 Architectural Practice WELL MET**

The VTR highlights the sequence of three courses as “outstanding” in revealing the “intricacies of the professional practice in the real world”.

**13.31 Professional Development MET**

The VTR states that although licensure basics are being explained the role of internship, registration and mobility are not being fully explained.

**13.32 Leadership MET**

No comments.

**13.33 Legal Responsibilities MET**

No comment.

**13.34 Ethics and Professional Judgment MET**

No comment.