September 2020

**M.Arch. Assessment Plan**

LEARNING OUTCOMES

**Outcome 1. Theory, Concepts, and Critique (Knowledge)**

Students who complete a degree in Architecture will have knowledge of the field including history, theories, concepts, and approaches. Students will:

1.1 Develop a thorough and critical understanding of various theoretic positions in architecture and its related fields (art, history, philosophy, technology)

1.2 Develop of a critical understanding of architectural history and theory against the context of culture and society at large, including pressing issues such as social equity, global citizenship, ecological resilience, and agency. And Position themselves as architects with regard to both the profession and civic society, politics and ethics

1.3 Analise, compare and construct theoretical positions in architecture in written and oral discursive formats

1.4 Develop a Deep engagement with theory as a primer for design including How to build an argument, construct a question, propose a research agenda, conduct formal analysis to solve architectural design problems of various scales and complexities.

**Outcome 2. Professional Practice, Communication, and Critical Thinking (Skills)**

Students who graduate with a degree in Architecture will have an understanding of where the profession is headed and what the challenges for the profession are, of different forms of practice and the ability to question modes of practice and project delivery. Students will:

* 1. Demonstrate the ability to execute an architectural project through all of its phases from research to design, including the development and critique of a design process and the proposal of a viable and buildable design or rigorous open exploration driven by more theoretical considerations.
  2. Communicate effectively in written and oral and visual formats in a manner appropriate to their audience and develop a high level of architectural communication, understanding the latest advancements in digital design and its integrated fabrication.
  3. Develop leadership and collaboration skills to facilitate and coordinate client, engineers, codes, contractor, etc. as well as navigate interest of groups that are invisible to the profession.
  4. Develop various methods for the professional representation of their work, be equipped to defend it, and understand and respond to feedback in productive ways
  5. Develop information and visual literacy: critically assess and evaluate the validity, reliability, and appropriateness of precedents and sources

**Outcome 3. Social Responsibility in a Diverse World (Values)**

As an academic field of study, Architecture emerged from a long history of formal and informal methods and economies. Students will learn to value the activist potential of the field, to think and act at various scales, and to be cognizant of their positionality in relationship to others. Students will:

* 1. Use knowledge of the historic and contemporary role and differential effects of architecture on local and global systems to develop or advocate for informed action to solve complex problems in society.
  2. Understand how to generate and interpret complex community based information to inform their building designs. They will be able to analyze diverse communities and cultural phenomena and interpret the same in architectural terms.
  3. See themselves as part of a global community that is interdependent and intertwined by:
     1. Meaningfully engaging with others in class and in the larger community;
     2. Identifying their own cultural patterns and putting them into comparison with cultural patterns different from their own;
     3. Adapting design methods and communication skills imaginatively and flexibly to unfamiliar ways of being, thinking, seeing, and acting.

**5.1: Learning outcomes assessment procedures**

A requirement of the University is to provide Expected Learning Outcomes (ELOs) and Outcomes Assessments (OAs) for all programs of academic study as well as individual courses. As a part of our Curriculum reimagination we are in the process of rewriting our ELOs as well as providing additional layers of assessment to ensure that the new curriculum is appropriately taught. (see Appendix J for a current draft of our program ELOs). In addition to tracking student information (recruitment, quality of students, retention, graduation rates), and employer satisfaction (through our advisory committee, extensive contact with and surveys of our professional community, and the participation of local professionals in the review of student work throughout the semester), The data and information sources used to assess outcomes include year-end individual student exit surveys conducted by the Chair, online evaluations of all courses (administered by the University), surveys completed by jurors for the final capstone studios, and the end of semester all-faculty reviews of student work. Additionally, in February and March 2013, in preparation for our curriculum reimagination project, then SoA Associate Chair Mimi Locher conducted four discussions – one each with members of the professional community, students, faculty, and adjunct faculty – to define the “ideal Utah architectural graduate.”

In addition, with the new curriculum we are in the process of formalizing our semester assessments of ELOs by incorporating our end of semester all-faculty reviews into a two-phase assessment process in which we assess ELOs at the beginning of each semester and then use the faculty review to gather, analyze, and interpret evidence of actual outcomes. The following proposal is a draft:

**Assessing Expected Learning Outcomes**

Before the beginning of each semester, Division faculty and instructors will provide the Chair with syllabi for the courses they will teach. The Chair will then organize a workshop in which faculty are grouped in their areas of expertise. Groups will evaluate the syllabi based on the mapping of objectives as developed in the new curriculum.

The working groups will: 1) discuss how to map specific expected learning outcomes onto courses based on the new curriculum/objective maps. 1) identify gaps in how current course offerings fulfill learning outcomes across their area; 2) make proposals to the faculty on how to fill those gaps and further develop their syllabi.

In the course of teaching and student assessment, faculty will evaluate whether learning outcomes have been met.

**AND:**

**Systematically Gathering, Analyzing, and Interpreting Evidence**

Taking into consideration the programs professional accreditation process for evaluating student performance, the faculty has developed a feasible assessment process to provide useful ongoing feedback for necessary curricular adjustments and future resource planning.

At the end of each semester the faculty will perform a direct summative evaluation. Direct proof of learning is concrete, observable, clear evidence of what students have or have not learned. Summative assessment will take place after the completion of each semester and be used for documenting and presenting student learning outcomes to internal and/or external stakeholders.

The process will entail staggering the assessment of one or two student learning outcomes per semester over a three-semester period. Each semester, appraisal of the selected learning outcomes will occur through an end of the year retreat in which student work for specific courses that are expected to cover the selected learning outcome will be a presented and assessed by the full faculty. Courses selected for review will present examples of both low and high achieving student projects and their rubrics for assessment and discussion. This entails employing a qualitative analysis that is more flexible and naturalistic in searching for recurring patterns and themes. The goal is not precision in measurement, but truthful information about what students have learned and how it is manifest in the design, communication, and analysis of their projects and papers.

Student learning assessment will occur after the semester is over and independent from the instructor’s individual assessment of a student’s work. To ensure further anonymity and confidentiality, the faculty presenting the work will remove students’ names and any other potential identifiers from assignments.

**5.2 Outcomes assessment feedback**

This year we conducted a series of teaching development workshops for the first time to help implement the roll-out of the new curriculum. This series of four workshops was designed to enhance our innovative new undergraduate and graduate curricula, engage faculty and instructors with important pedagogical theories and practices, and assist them with writing syllabi and assessment rubrics to ensure that the ELOs developed for the new curriculum were a central guiding aspect of the development of new courses. These workshops were for all SoA tenured, tenure-track, career line, and adjunct faculty teaching in the 2018-19 academic year.

Workshop schedule and topics:

SoA Teaching Training Series, Part I:

Curriculum re-imagination overview, pedagogical theories and practices (learning objectives and outcomes, transparency, accessibility, power dynamics, etc.), introduction to syllabus writing.

SoA Teaching Training Series, Part II:

Syllabus workshop (peer to peer review) – *please bring complete drafts of your course syllabi*, introduction to writing assessment rubrics.

SoA Teaching Training Series, Part III:

Assessment rubrics workshop (peer to peer review) – *please bring drafts of assessment rubrics for your course assignments.*

SoA Teaching Training Series, Part IV:

TA and faculty mentoring – if you have a TA assigned to your course, please be prepared to meet with your TA (bring a description of the TA’s duties - TAs will be present for TA training and discussion with faculty); if you do not have a TA, you will meet with others teaching in your area.

Parts II and III were specifically designed to allow for the assessment of the ELO’s and their relationship to syllabus development. Overall the teaching training series was very successful. Faculty and instructors explored the importance of ELOs for their courses and over the course of the training series syllabi were developed with appropriate ELOs and projects and assignments designed to provide students with appropriate opportunities to learn and illustrate their mastery of the ELO’s. As we move forward we will continue to offer our training series, however once the pedagogical theories and practices are fully adopted as a part of our teaching culture, the series may be less extensive focused on assessing the ELO’s and their role in structuring syllabi and learning activities.

Our end of semester all-faculty reviews of student work are a long-standing method of evaluating the effectiveness of our curriculum. One clear concrete example of how this methods works is sequence of reviews that we conducted leading up to our most resent NAAB accreditation in 2016. Here we focused on particular Student Performance Criteria (SPC) required for professional accreditation for each review. This allowed the faculty to prepare for the accreditation assigning SPCs appropriately, and developing particular assignments and rubrics to ensure that student work showed evidence of meeting SPCs. Our Design Development studio was created as a direct result of this process. After evaluating student work in graduate level studios in our end of semester evaluation in the spring of 2015, the faculty determined that there was not adequate evidence to meet several SPCs required by NAAB. As a solution a working group of faculty was created to design a course and a series of exercise that would allow students to show their mastery of building codes, skin assemblies, large scale wall sections, and project scheduling and delivery. In our new curriculum this studio has developed into our Professional Integration Studio This semester is focused in integrating the conceptual design process and professional design development processes that allow for the consultation with allied trades including engineers, codes, contractors, etc.… Studio and systems application courses are given equal weight and coordinated throughout the semester to ensure that our students are capable of designing and developing buildings from conception to delivery.