



**Holy Spirit University of Kaslik
Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts
Department of Architecture**

Visiting Team Report

Visit Three for Substantial Equivalency

Master of Architecture

(193 semester credit hours, or 6 years)

(undergraduate: 138 semester credits + 55 graduate semester credits)

The National Architectural Accrediting Board
March 31–April 3, 2019

Vision: The NAAB advances educational quality assurance standards and processes that anticipate the needs of academic programs, the profession, and society, to promote a better built environment.

Mission: The NAAB develops and maintains an accreditation system in professional degree education that enhances the value, relevance, and effectiveness of the profession of architecture.

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I. Summary of Team Findings

1. Team Comments and Visit Summary

The NAAB visiting team wishes to thank the entire Department of Architecture, the Faculty of Applied and Fine Arts, and the USEK community for their hospitality and warm friendship during our stay on campus. Provost Georges Yahchouchi has been an exceptional host and has been available to the team before and during our visit. His engagement is an expression of his commitment to the Department of Architecture and the USEK community. Dean Paul Abi Khattar Zgheib and Architecture Chair Antoine Fichfich were very gracious with their time and helped the team understand the place of the college and department within the larger scholarly and creative community of USEK. All the faculty and students we met have been open and responsive to our many questions and willingly shared their perspectives. Last, we wish to thank three people—Associate Dean Robert Karam, Sylvie Sebaaly, and Nathalie Bouldoukian—who have extended the greatest kindness to the team. They responded to our every need during the visit.

Professor Victor Takchi and his small group, especially Sarah Zgheib, did an excellent job preparing the team room and the digital files of student work products. The team room's projects and course work were well organized and annotated. This facilitated the visiting team's review of materials and documents, making our task more enjoyable.

The visiting team found the students in the program to be well-spoken and thoughtful in their comments and assessments of the architecture program. They were enthusiastic about their education and the preparation they were receiving for their future in the profession. They mentioned in their meeting with the visiting team the importance of design in transforming the world and the significance of sustainability as a major challenge for this century. They feel they are being well educated by their faculty to think both broadly and technically. The students expressed affection for their faculty and suggested they were open to facing greater challenges in their education.

It was clear to the visiting team that the faculty are collegial and a tightly knit community of creatives. They hold a common vision for the school and work through informal debate and formal administrative structures to realize the changes that will lead to greater excellence.

USEK has implemented an effective self-assessment program that includes input from students as well as peer and practitioner assessment of student work products. This "360" assessment of learning achievement is complemented by an equally impressive effort to develop and enhance the craft of teaching. Faculty participate in a mandatory pedagogical training program that includes workshops on syllabus writing, assessment practices, active learning techniques, and use of electronic course management tools.

The Department of Architecture benefits from exceptional support services from the university that augment its delivery of services to the students, including advising, internships, career advancement, and teaching innovation. The program also has successfully capitalized on the relationship it has built with the profession over many years. Local professionals who met with the visiting team have a high opinion of USEK graduates and work hard to advance the program through direct participation in the school's course work and as members of the Architecture Advisory Board.

The school has much to be proud of as it confront the future. The university is experiencing an exciting time under its current leadership and is building on traditional strengths even as it strives to innovate for tomorrow. The team observed thoughtful and careful change in teaching and learning, research and creative activity, and service to the Lebanese people and beyond. The university is weaving a rich tapestry, and the Department of Architecture is an essential and important thread in the evolving fabric.

2. **Conditions Not Met**
B6 *Comprehensive Design*
B11 *Building System Integration*

3. **Progress Since the Previous Visit**

A.4. Technical Documentation: *Ability* to make technically clear drawings, write outline specifications, and prepare models illustrating and identifying the assembly of materials, systems, and components appropriate for a building design.

Visit Two Team Assessment: Although the visiting team found the evidence that the aspects of making technically clear drawings and making a variety of effective models, the criterion is not yet met because the program will not have introduced curriculum on preparing outline specifications until the spring of 2018. Therefore, this criterion is **Not Yet Met**.

Visit Three Team Assessment (2019): *This criterion is now met.*

B.2. Accessibility: *Ability* to design sites, facilities, and systems to provide independent and integrated use by individuals with physical (including mobility), sensory, and cognitive disabilities.

Visit Two Team Assessment: The APR has indicated that this SPC will be incorporated into the Studio Sequence beginning Spring 2018, in studio courses such as ARCH485. Codes are reviewed in ARCH 470 – Standards, Codes, and Building Laws. However, since this SPC must be demonstrated at the level of *Ability*, it and therefore exhibited in studio work, it is **Not Yet Met**.

Visit Three Team Assessment (2019): *This criterion is now met.*

B.3. Sustainability: *Ability* to design projects that optimize, conserve, or reuse natural and built resources, provide healthful environments for occupants/users, and reduce the environmental impacts of building construction and operations on future generations through means such as carbon-neutral design, bioclimatic design, and energy efficiency.

Visit Two Team Assessment: The APR indicates that the courses ARCH420 – Sanitary and Mechanical Equipment and ARCH 425 – Electrical and Lighting will be changed to cover this criterion. Although the APR states that “students in this program have a sensibility about sustainable efforts taught throughout the curriculum,” this must be demonstrated at the level of *Ability* in the studio sequence. This criterion is therefore **Not Yet Met**.

Visit Three Team Assessment (2019): *This criterion is now met.*

B.5 Life Safety: *Ability* to apply the basic principles of life-safety systems with an emphasis on egress.

Visit Two Team Assessment: Although the team found evidence that this criterion was met in student high-pass work in ARCH475 Construction Document and Internship, Architectural Drawings for a residential project, adequate evidence was not found in minimum-pass work. The team also found some evidence in ARCH 490 – Final Design Studio, but, again, this was determined not to be adequate in minimum-pass studio work. **Not Met**.

Visit Three Team Assessment (2019): *This criterion is now met.*

B.6 Comprehensive Design: *Ability* to produce a comprehensive architectural project that

demonstrates each student's capacity to make design decisions across scales while integrating the following SPC:

A.2. Design Thinking Skills	B.2. Accessibility
A.4. Technical Documentation	B.3. Sustainability
A.5. Investigative Skills	B.4. Site Design
A.8. Ordering Systems	B.8. Environmental Systems
A.9. Historical Traditions and Global Culture	B.9. Structural Systems
B.5. Life Safety	

Visit Two Team Assessment: While the team attempted to review this criterion in a holistic manner in reference to ARCH490 – Final Design Studio, the preponderance of sub-categories under Criterion B.6 that were either Not Met (B5) or Not Yet Met (A4, B2, B3, B8) led the team to the conclusion that the Comprehensive Design criterion is **Not Met**.

Visit Three Team Assessment (2019): *This criterion is not met*

B.7 Financial Considerations: *Understanding* of the fundamentals of building costs, such as acquisition costs, project financing and funding, financial feasibility, operational costs, and construction estimating with an emphasis on life-cycle cost accounting.

Visit Two Team Assessment: This criterion is **Not Yet Met**. The program indicates that it is to be covered in three separate elective courses, among which every student must take one course. However, one of these courses, ARCH550 – Construction Management and Scheduling, will not offer this content until spring 2018 (and therefore not all students are exposed to or do course work related to this content), and evidence via student work was not provided for the other two courses aside from the curriculum.

Visit Three Team Assessment (2019): *This criterion is now met.*

B.8. Environmental Systems: *Understanding* the principles of environmental systems' design such as embodied energy, active and passive heating and cooling, indoor air quality, solar orientation, daylighting and artificial illumination, and acoustics; including the use of appropriate performance assessment tools.

Visit Two Team Assessment: The APR indicates that the course content for ARCH 420 – Sanitary and Mechanical Equipment and ARCH 425 – Electrical and Lighting will be changed to cover this criterion, taking effect in fall 2018. Therefore, this SPC is **Not Yet Met**.

Visit Three Team Assessment (2019): *This criterion is now met.*

C.3 Client Role in Architecture: *Understanding* of the responsibility of the architect to elicit, understand, and reconcile the needs of the client, owner, user groups, and the public and community domains.

Visit Two Team Assessment: This criterion is **Not Met**. The team reviewed the curriculum and student work in ARCH485 – Design Studio V, as well as in other courses, but did not find evidence that students had developed an adequate or thorough understanding of the Client Role in Architecture.

Visit Three Team Assessment (2019): *This criterion is now met.*

C.5. Practice Management: *Understanding* of the basic principles of architectural practice management such as financial management and business planning, time management, risk management, mediation and arbitration, and recognizing trends that affect practice.

Visit Two Team Assessment: The APR indicated that this criterion will be covered in a seminar within the Professional Internship (ARCH545) starting fall 2018. This SPC is therefore **Not Yet Met**. The program will need to consider how this can be satisfied in an internship context, in which the student is presumably in a different professional setting.

Visit Three Team Assessment (2019): *This criterion is now met.*

C.6. Leadership: *Understanding* of the techniques and skills architects use to work collaboratively in the building design and construction process and on environmental, social, and aesthetic issues in their communities.

Visit Two Team Assessment: The APR indicated that this criterion will be covered in a seminar within the Graduation Project Thesis (ARCH540) starting fall 2018. Therefore, this criterion is **Not Yet Met**.

Visit Three Team Assessment (2019): *This criterion is now met.*

C.7. Legal Responsibilities: *Understanding* of the architect's responsibility to the public and the client as determined by registration law, building codes and regulations, professional service contracts, zoning and subdivision ordinances, environmental regulation, and historic preservation and accessibility laws.

Visit Two Team Assessment: The course in which this material is delivered (ARCH470 – Standards, Codes, and Building Laws) presents a unique challenge to the program, in that it is required by law in Lebanon to be provided and documented entirely in Arabic (the official national language). The team was forced to conclude that this criterion is **Not Met**. Although the NAAB should recognize that the delivery of the course in Arabic is not likely to change, translation of course materials and student work in preparation of a subsequent visit would furnish a visiting team the evidence necessary to perform an evaluation of this SPC.

Visit Three Team Assessment (2019): *This criterion is now met*

C.8. Ethics and Professional Judgment: *Understanding* of the ethical issues involved in the formation of professional judgment regarding social, political and cultural issues, and responsibility in architectural design and practice.

Visit Two Team Assessment: The APR indicates that this criterion will be covered in a seminar within the Graduation Project Thesis (ARCH 540) starting fall 2018. Therefore, this SPC is **Not Yet Met**.

Visit Three Team Assessment (2019): *This criterion is now met.*

4. Causes of Concern

A. Workshop: The team reviewed the newly created plotting, laser cutter and 3-d printing facility in the Department of Architecture. The facility is now operational. However, the team heard from students the desire for a facility that permits the building of physical models and the exploration of full-scale assemblies. The exploration of a workshop that facilitates hands-on learning and digital making can serve as a complement to the digital representations being explored in their studio work. Such a facility could also assist with community outreach efforts and support the restoration practices being pursued by the Department of Architecture and bringing prestige to the USEK community.

B. Storage for Student Work: The department is in the process of obtaining storage lockers for

students to use so they do not need to transport all their work products between home and school (the lockers existing and are being transferred from another college to the Department of Architecture). However, the team was not able to assess whether the proposed solution would meet the needs of students. The lockers shown to the visiting team are rather modest in dimension and would not readily accommodate process models and construction materials to be stored.

- C. ***Chekka Regional Campus:*** The team visited both Chekka and Zahleh regional campuses and found the facilities to meet NAAB expectations. On both campuses students are taught by the same faculty that teach on the Main campus and follow the exact same syllabi. The two campuses use the same project reviewers of student work as are used to review the same course work as at the Kaslik campus. All three campuses use the same credentials and IT logons and have a common inter-library loan and catalog system. In every substantive way they are comparable. The visiting team believes that if these practices continue there is no future need to visit the two regional campuses. This is no longer a cause for concern.

II. Compliance with the Conditions for Substantial Equivalency

Part One (I): INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT AND COMMITMENT TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Part One (I): Section 1. Identity and Self-Assessment

I.1.1 History and Mission: *The program must describe its history, mission and culture and how that history, mission, and culture is expressed in contemporary context. Programs that exist within a larger educational institution must also describe the history and mission of the institution and how that history, mission, and culture is expressed in contemporary context.*

The substantially equivalent degree program must describe and then provide evidence of the relationship between the program, the administrative unit that supports it (e.g., school or college) and the institution. This includes an explanation of the program's benefits to the institutional setting, how the institution benefits from the program, any unique synergies, events, or activities occurring as a result, etc.

Finally, the program must describe and then demonstrate how the course of study and learning experiences encourage the holistic, practical and liberal arts-based education of architects.

[X] The program has fulfilled this requirement for narrative and evidence.

Visit Three Team Assessment: The 2019 Architecture Program Report provides a description of the history and mission of the institution. USEK is considered one of the best universities in Lebanon and 34th in the Arab region. This 2019 ranking is significant as the university jumped 27 places in its ranking since 2017. Worldwide, USEK is considered among the top 700 universities. It is a comprehensive university offering undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral education. As part of its mission it "provides a high quality American-style education to its students" (APR, p. 5) since 2015. USEK adopted the Carnegie credit and semester standards in 1998 (March 31 interview of Provost Yahchouchi).

Thirty-four years after the university's founding (1938) it launched the Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts that currently includes architecture, interior design, sacred art and conservation, visual communication, digital media, cinema and television, and contemporary art. The college's mission simultaneously advances an appreciation for the rich and diverse historical culture of the region while championing core values of freedom of thought and expression, respect for others' rights, differences and dignity, integrity and honesty, social commitment and responsibility, and the dedication, passion and excellence in performance (APR, p. 6).

The university views the architecture program as an essential component of its brand and the image of USEK (Provost Yahchouchi Interview, President Hobeika Interview). The provost believes the architecture program is the best in Lebanon and very high in the Middle East (March 31 interview, Provost Yahchouchi). Consequently, the university and its Board of Trustees have expressed a willingness to invest in the program so it can obtain even higher levels of excellence (March 31 interview, Provost Yahchouchi).

The Architecture Department provides emphasis to the USEK faculty's core values through professional education in architecture. This educational focus means the department plays a significant role in the country's profession—15% of all architects registered in Lebanon are USEK graduates (APR, p. 6). The program is proud that its Diploma of Master of Architecture is recognized by the French Minister of Culture as equivalent to the French Diploma in Architecture (APR, p. 7). The department contributes to the university through participation in the Academic Unit Council and direct interactions with the department chair, who is part of the Council. Its students have achieved substantial recognition in both national and international competitions. This achievement is an obvious point of pride to the faculty and the university's administration. The architecture faculty are very active in the preservation of historic structures in Lebanon and have contributed to the notoriety of USEK in the region and to the people of Lebanon (President Hobeika, April 1).

I.1.2 Learning Culture and Social Equity:

- *Learning Culture: The program must demonstrate that it provides a positive and respectful learning environment that encourages the fundamental values of optimism, respect, sharing, engagement, and innovation between and among the members of its faculty, student body, administration, and staff in all learning environments both traditional and nontraditional.*

Further, the program must demonstrate that it encourages students and faculty to appreciate these values as guiding principles of professional conduct throughout their careers, and it addresses health-related issues, such as time management.

Finally, the program must document, through narrative and artifacts, its efforts to ensure that all members of the learning community (faculty, staff, and students) are aware of these objectives and are advised as to the expectations for ensuring they are met in all elements of the learning culture.

- *Social Equity: The substantially equivalent degree program must first describe how social equity is defined within the context of the institution or the country in which it is located and then demonstrate how it provides faculty, students, and staff with a culturally rich educational environment in which each person is equitably able to learn, teach, and work.*

[X] The program has demonstrated that it provides a positive and respectful learning environment.

[X] The program has demonstrated that it provides a culturally rich environment in which each person is equitably able to learn, teach, and work.

Visit Three Team Assessment: The 2019 Architecture Program Report notes that the Studio Culture Policy (see <http://www.usek.edu.lb/current-students/regulations/studio-culture-policy>) is drafted to encourage transparency, respect, and a positive environment in order to prepare students for professional practice. The studio culture statement includes thirteen areas of behaviors and attitudes for students in studio such as: enthusiasm and positive attitude, self-reliance, and commitment to the community. Students are encouraged to pursue healthy lifestyles and reduce stress. The studio culture statements also acknowledge the collaborative responsibility for safety including the non-use of toxic materials and vandalism. The Studio Culture Policy is emailed to each student enrolled in a studio course each semester, presented at department meetings each semester, and posted in the studios in order to make it highly visible (visiting team observations and in meeting with students).

In the general meeting with the students the team asked for a response to knowledge of the school's Studio Culture Policy. The result was underwhelming. However, they reported a culture in studio and throughout the school of collegiality and healthy competition. In a visiting team luncheon with AIAS leaders they indicated a clear understanding of the Studio Culture Policy and agreement that it was being implemented within the department. At the school-wide student meeting, there was agreement among those attending that they have ample access to professors for questions and guidance outside of class. Students connect with other students outside of their course level, and there is an attitude of student-to-student mentorship within the program (team luncheon with students, April 2). Students report that shared spaces encourage social support and a sense of community. In fact, the AIAS has organized peer-to-peer tutorials for beginning students to help them advance their understanding and improve skills (team luncheon with students, April 2).

The teaching culture of the university includes a formal review process of all programs by outside reviewers (interview with Provost Georges Yahchouchi, March 31, and faculty meeting, April

1). Teaching is further supported by teaching and learning workshops to increase instructors' effectiveness, and faculty appreciate the pedagogical support (visiting team meeting with Faten El Hage, April 2). To stay current with the needs of the profession, most instructors engage in outside design work and utilize jurors from the profession (faculty meeting, April 1).

The 2019 Architecture Program Report explains that social equity is one of the core tenets of the program and the university. The university mission states that "USEK is committed to faith-based educational development of its students rooted in the Catholic tradition whereby spiritual values and ethics as well as respect for cultural and religious pluralism are promoted." The university follows the Catholic Maronite Order but embraces students and faculty of all religions.

Part of the ecclesiastical mission includes outreach particularly to the underserved. One of the ways they accomplish this is through the Regional University Centers in Chekka and Zahleh, which were developed to democratize education to remote areas of Lebanon. The regional campuses offer first- and second-year classes, and USEK provides bus service to the main campus for higher level classes. In meeting with students on the Zahleh and Chekka campuses (April 2), they expressed appreciation for being able to take classes close to home and in the more intimate atmosphere of the regional campuses. Based on interviews by the visiting team of instructors teaching at the Zahleh and Chekka campuses, the syllabi, curriculum, and jurors are identical to classes taught on the main campus.

The program further encourages social equity through history courses, which include regional architecture of different cultures to present a culturally integrated understanding of the built environment. Furthermore, the university promotes equity and diversity in faculty hiring and student recruitment. Female students comprise 47-50% of the student body in the architecture department, and non-Christians 13-17% (APR, p. 47).

I.1.3 Response to the Five Perspectives: Programs must demonstrate through narrative and artifacts, how they respond to the following perspectives on architecture education. Each program is expected to address these perspectives consistently within the context of its history, mission, and culture and to further identify as part of its long-range planning activities how these perspectives will continue to be addressed in the future.

- A. Architecture Education and the Academic Community.** That the faculty, staff, and students in the substantially equivalent degree program make unique contributions to the institution in the areas of scholarship, community engagement, service, and teaching.¹ In addition, the program must describe its commitment to the holistic, practical, and liberal arts-based education of architects and to providing opportunities for all members of the learning community to engage in the development of new knowledge.

[X] The program is responsive to this perspective.

Visit Three Team Assessment: USEK is seeking regional accreditation from the New England Commission for Higher Education (interview with Provost Yahchouchi, April 1). The institution had a draft eligibility visit in early 2019. The department provided ample evidence in the APR and on its website that the architecture students and faculty members were actively engaged in global education and faculty exchange (APR, pp. 7 and 10, <http://www.usek.edu.lb/en/faculty-of-fine-and-applied-arts/fbaaa-agreements-and-partnerships>). There is evidence that the faculty engage in diverse areas of scholarship that align with the Boyer Report¹ model of teaching, discovery, integration, and application. Most are active as practitioners (APR, Appendix 3: Faculty Résumés, and 95% of faculty survey conducted at faculty meeting). Their teaching scholarship is augmented by the newly formed Learning and Teaching Excellence Center (LTEC), which advances the delivery of course material through technology and emerging instructional pedagogy as well as offering opportunities for collaboration with American universities (APR, p. 26). The faculty

¹ See Boyer, Ernest L. *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*. Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. 1990.

attending the faculty meeting with the team were very appreciative of the support of the LTEC and were finding the new mobile tools to be extremely helpful to their course management efforts.

The faculty have direct control of the curriculum of instruction within the architecture degree program and enjoy a close working relationship with the college administration (meeting with faculty, April 1). The emphasis on professional education means that the faculty of architecture are held in high regard by the university administration and the Board of Trustees (visiting team dinner with local practitioners). The faculty's efforts in historic preservation are seen as a point of pride for the institution and a key way that they demonstrate the contributions of the university to the nation (interview with President Hobeika, Apr. 1).

- B. Architecture Education and Students.** That students enrolled in the substantially equivalent degree program are prepared to live and work in a global world where diversity, distinctiveness, self-worth, and dignity are nurtured and respected; to emerge as leaders in the academic setting and the profession; to understand the breadth of professional opportunities; to make thoughtful, deliberate, informed choices and; to develop the habit of lifelong learning.

[X] The program is responsive to this perspective.

Visit Three Team Assessment: The Department of Architecture places an emphasis on student opportunities to interact with the global architecture community through international and regional competitions (APR, p. 11), international programs and internships, and inviting guest jurors for the ARCH680A/B senior projects (APR, pp. 22-23; interview with Rima Mattar, Deputy President for International Affairs and Global Initiatives). These jurors are both academics and practitioners, representing a wide range of national and international universities and professional firms. In addition, the USEK AIAS chapter hosted the second-ever 2019 international conference, leading the way for international chapters and student leadership (APR, p. 12). Students have internships that help develop an understanding of the profession, practical experience, and future opportunities (APR, p.12 and April 1 meeting with Dr. Paul Abi Khattar Zgheib and Mr. Robert Karam). Through meetings and conversations with students (April 1), the team found the students expressed a desire to join the profession, a strong sense of collaboration, and collegial respect for their peers.

- C. Architecture Education and the Regulatory Environment.** That students enrolled in the substantially equivalent degree program are provided with a sound preparation for the transition to licensure or registration. The school may choose to explain in the APR the degree program's relationship with the process of becoming an architect in the country where the degree is offered, the exposure of students to possible internship requirements, the students' understanding of their responsibility for professional conduct, and the proportion of graduates who have sought and achieved licensure or registration since the previous visit.

[X] The program is responsive to this perspective.

Visit Three Team Assessment: The program provides the students with a comprehensive understanding of the requirements for registration in the Order of Engineering and Architecture (the Lebanese professional licensing organization), information on the regulations that govern architecture practice, and information on professional ethics. This information is provided through courses ARCH470 Standards, Codes, and Building Laws and ARCH545: Professional Internship (affirmed in an interview with student leaders).

Knowing that graduates are eligible to apply for registration in the Order upon successfully completing their curriculum, the program also administers a structured internship program that provides students with a hands-on understanding of professional practice by experiencing the daily application of their acquired knowledge in an office while continuing to develop their design and documentation skills (APR, p. 12 and review of student internship diaries). One indication of the success of this approach is that 15% (1,319) of the registered architects in Lebanon are USEK graduates. Of the 185 students who graduated in 2018, 162 have successfully completed the requirements and are registered in the Lebanese Order of Engineering and Architecture. (APR, p. 6 and Interview with Dr. Paul Zgheib and Robert Karam). The APR notes the Architectural Licensing Advisor, appointed by the university, offers information sessions to introduce students to the licensure requirements in the U.S.; however, in the student meeting with the visiting team, the students were not familiar with who was the Architectural Licensing Advisor (APR, p. 12 and student meeting, April 1).

- D. Architecture Education and the Profession.** That students enrolled in the substantially equivalent degree program are prepared: to practice in a global economy; to recognize the positive impact of design on the environment; to understand the diverse and collaborative roles assumed by architects in practice; to understand the diverse and collaborative roles and responsibilities of related disciplines; to respect client expectations; to advocate for design-based solutions that respond to the multiple needs of diverse clients and populations, as well as the needs of communities; and to contribute to the growth and development of the profession.

[X] The program is responsive to this perspective.

Visit Three Team Assessment: The Department of Architecture places a priority on professional education. It accomplishes this through two initiatives: professional internships in the last two years of study, and a distinguished faculty with substantial professional experience who use this experience to augment the content of their instruction. (APR, pp. 12, 14-16, confirmed at faculty meeting with visiting team). Internships require 240 hours of work in three areas: Construction Observation, Practice Management, and Technical Documentation (Interviews with Chair Fichfich and Dr. Takchi). Faculty members are also active in continuing education for the profession by offering seminars and organizing panel discussions (APR, p. 14). The team found numerous examples of practitioner feedback on course work and structure in the course portfolios (visiting team meeting with faculty). The use of practitioners to perform outside assessment as part of the self-assessment process established by the university appears to be providing feedback to course instructors on learning successes (interview of Advisory Board members).

- E. Architecture Education and the Public Good.** That students enrolled in the substantially equivalent degree program are prepared: to be active, engaged citizens; to be responsive to the needs of a changing world; to acquire the knowledge needed to address pressing environmental, social, and economic challenges through design, conservation, and responsible professional practice; to understand the ethical implications of their decisions; to reconcile differences between the architect's obligation to his/her client and the public; and to nurture a climate of civic engagement, including a commitment to professional and public service and leadership.

[X] The program is responsive to this perspective.

Visit Three Team Assessment: Students are introduced to their responsibilities to their community and society at large through general education courses (APR, p. 14) and through faculty engagement with the public sector. The faculty with student assistance has hosted

workshops, colloquia, conferences, and exhibits with their colleagues and in conjunction with local municipalities and national ministries. The program has hosted workshops on intercultural architecture, sustainability, emergency shelter, and housing. The faculty has also received a grant (in conjunction with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) for archeological work associated with 33 historic sites (APR, p.15 and interview with faculty). This work has brought considerable public appreciation to USEK (interview with Provost Yachouchi). Student course work in ARCH 680A: Senior Project II-A demonstrated a commitment to addressing social issues through architecture either through responding to floods in the region or addressing the pressing needs of re-settled populations in Lebanon. Finally, students have won numerous prestigious competitions that have brought to the foreground the efforts of the school to link architecture with international and global crises.

I.1.4 Long-Range Planning: *A substantially equivalent degree program must demonstrate that it has identified multi-year objectives for continuous improvement within the context of its mission and culture, the mission and culture of the institution, and the five perspectives. In addition, the program must demonstrate that data is collected routinely and from multiple sources to inform its future planning and strategic decision making.*

[X] The program's processes meet the standards as set by the NAAB.

Visit Three Team Assessment: The visiting team confirmed the strategic planning processes outlined in the 2019 APR at the faculty meeting and through administrator interviews (faculty meeting and interview of Dean Zgheib). The program has aligned its multiyear goals and annual objectives with the USEK Strategic Plan. It should be noted that the university strategic plan makes mention of the importance of architecture, design and performing arts in its quest for excellence. The process is underway to create a new College of Architecture and Design, which will further enhance architecture's key role within the university (interview with Provost Yachouchi and Architecture Chair Fichfich). The institution and all academic units use the assessment software Tk20 by Watermark to track achievement and contributions to the university's strategic goals (APR, p. 16). The faculty confirmed that the process of external peer review of student work products has contributed to the advancement of the curriculum and course content (faculty meeting with visiting team).

I.1.5 Self-Assessment Procedures: *The program must demonstrate that it regularly assesses the following:*

- *How the program is progressing toward its mission.*
- *Progress against its defined multiyear objectives (see I.1.4 Long-Range Planning) since the objectives were identified and since the last visit.*
- *Strengths, challenges, and opportunities faced by the program while developing learning opportunities in support of its mission and culture, the mission and culture of the institution, and the five perspectives.*
- *Self-assessment procedures shall include, but are not limited to:*
 - *Solicitation of faculty, students', and graduates' views on the teaching, learning and achievement opportunities provided by the curriculum.*
 - *Individual course evaluations.*
 - *Review and assessment of the focus and pedagogy of the program.*
 - *Institutional self-assessment, as determined by the institution.*

The program must also demonstrate that results of self-assessments are regularly used to advise and encourage changes and adjustments to promote student success as well as the continued maturation and development of the program.

[X] The program's processes meet the standards as set by the NAAB.

Visit Three Team Assessment: The Department of Architecture has defined a series of student outcomes that are separate from but aligned with the NAAB SPC. This effort is part of the university-wide program—the Process of Student Outcomes Comprehensive Evaluation for Continuous Improvement Assessment—a multidimensional and layered assessment process (interview with Provost Yahchouchi). Internally the assessment process uses faculty rubrics, peer faculty assessment, self-reflection, student course surveys, and graduate exit interviews (APR, p. 19, and faculty meeting with visiting team). Externally, they rely on alumni and employer surveys and “industry advisors” who assess the achievement-based objectives for graduates of the program. (APR, p. 21, and faculty meeting with visiting team). The information gleaned from these sources is reviewed annually and forms the basis for curricular change and course content improvement. The visiting team found the implemented process to be robust and meets the NAAB expectation.

PART ONE (I): SECTION 2—RESOURCES

I.2.1 Human Resources and Human Resource Development

- *Faculty & Staff:*
 - *A substantially equivalent degree program must have appropriate human resources to support student learning and achievement. This includes full- and part-time instructional faculty, administrative leadership, and technical, administrative, and other support staff. Programs are required to document personnel policies which may include but are not limited to faculty and staff position descriptions².*
 - *Substantially equivalent programs must document the policies they have in place to further social equity or diversity initiatives appropriate to the cultural context of the institution.*
 - *A substantially equivalent degree program must demonstrate that it balances the workloads of all faculty and staff to support a tutorial exchange between the student and teacher that promotes student achievement.*
 - *A substantially equivalent degree program must demonstrate it is able to provide opportunities for all faculty and staff to pursue professional development that contributes to program improvement.*
 - *Substantially equivalent programs must document the criteria used for determining rank, reappointment, tenure, and promotion as well as eligibility requirements for professional development resources.*

[X] Human resources (faculty and staff) are adequate for the program.

Visit Three Team Assessment:

The university has policies for faculty personnel that include rank definitions, promotion criteria, assessment process, policy on development opportunities (APR, p. 26 provides a list), including professional development leave, etc. (see Faculty Bylaws at <http://www.usek.edu.lb/en/teaching-personnel/faculty-bylaws?parent=1>). Furthermore, USEK is leading in the national project “Professional Standards Framework for Excellence in Teaching and Learning in Lebanese Universities/E-TALEB,” which supports faculty development and the implementation of professional standards (APR, p. 27).

The USEK strategic plan makes special mention of the institution’s mission to promote the “respect for cultural and religious pluralism” (Strategic Directions and Roadmap 2018-2022, p. 5). The team found evidence of the university’s emphasis on social equity and diversity within the strategic plan 2018-2022 document for the university (see Strategic Plan 2018-2022, p. 8)². USEK’s mission, rooted in spiritual value, ethics, and respect, supports and promotes equity and diversity among the faculty and students (APR, p. 8). This commitment is reinforced in the assessment rubric for the hiring of new faculty (full and part time) that assesses a candidate’s willingness to accept cultural differences and diversity (APR, p. 24).

The team found evidence through faculty interviews, student discussions, direct observation, and by the review of faculty comments on student papers that demonstrate there is a tutorial exchange between students and faculty that promotes student achievement. The students, during the student meeting on April 1, also confirmed this is a part of the existing culture at USEK. Faculty stated there is a balance between teaching workloads, service and their own professional development.

Faculty have an opportunity to obtain funding for their continued development, attend workshops and seminars, and access computers, books, and databases (APR, p. 27, p. 41; and meeting with Dr. Faten Hage, Associate Professor and Deputy President for Teaching and Learning, April 2). Administrative staff and faculty members have opportunities to participate in training workshops and conferences as well as to benchmark best practices at other international universities” (APR, p. 26).

² A list of the policies and other documents to be made available in the team room during a substantial equivalency visit is in Appendix 4 of the 2012 Conditions for Substantial Equivalency.

Full-time faculty are evaluated annually by their supervisor and uses the Self-reflection Survey. These assessments are submitted yearly to the university president. The Peer Committee also evaluates this report. Staff assessment can lead to raises, training or reallocation (APR, p. 25).

- **Students:**
 - *A substantially equivalent program must document its student admissions policies and procedures. This documentation may include but is not limited to application forms and instructions, admissions requirements, admissions decisions procedures, financial aid and scholarships procedures, and student diversity initiatives. These procedures should include first-time, first-year students as well as transfers within and outside of the university.*
 - *A substantially equivalent degree program must demonstrate its commitment to student achievement both inside and outside the classroom through individual and collective learning opportunities.*

[X] Human resources (students) are adequate for the program.

Visit Three Team Assessment:

The team reviewed the program's student admissions policies and procedures in the online catalog (<https://www.usek.edu.lb/en/admission/for-undergraduate-studies> and <http://www.usek.edu.lb/en/social-service-office/scholarships-and-financial-aids?parent=1>).

The visiting team found evidence of individual and collective learning opportunities through the faculty meeting and faculty interviews, student meetings, and direct observation, the team room and in the advising effort as described by the Department Head Antoine Fichfich. Career services and internships are available to students through the Career Services Center (<http://www.usek.edu.lb/cso>).

I.2.2 Administrative Structure and Governance

- **Administrative Structure:** *A substantially equivalent degree program must demonstrate it has a measure of administrative autonomy that is sufficient to affirm the program's ability to conform to the conditions for substantial equivalency. Substantially equivalent programs are required to maintain an organizational chart describing the administrative structure of the program and position descriptions describing the responsibilities of the administrative staff.*

[X] Administrative structure is adequate for the program.

Visit Three Team Assessment: The architecture program is located within the Department of Architecture. The department is administered by a department head who is a member of the Academic Unit Council, the administrative and deliberative body under the dean of the Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts (interview with Chair Antoine Fichfich and Dean Paul Abi Khattar Zgheib). The Academic Unit Council judges the equivalence of studies concerning the admission of students and looks into and proposes development for the student selection requirements, files of students on probation, curricula issues and the general implementation of regulations within the architecture department (APR, p. 31, and interview of Chair Antoine Fichfich).

The department has organized itself through various faculty coordinators who report to the department head. These coordinators attend to learning outcome assessment, faculty peer review, coordination between studio sections, course files and outcome collection. The faculty provide input through regular faculty meetings. Students provide feedback and suggestions through the department's advisory board,

where they have six members as well as through surveys and exit interviews. Student input was confirmed through a survey conducted at the student meeting (visiting team meeting with students).

There are no formal bylaws for the department.

The required administrative chart is provided in the APR on page 30.

- **Governance:** *The program must demonstrate that all faculty, staff, and students have equitable opportunities to participate in program and institutional governance as appropriate to the context and culture of the institution.*

[X] Governance opportunities are adequate for the program.

Visit Three Team Assessment: The Department of Architecture and its faculty are coordinated by the Academic Unit Council, which is composed of departmental heads, the head of the doctoral program, the associate dean, and the head of the studies program. This group is responsible for academic quality and review of curriculum changes. The faculty meets regularly with the head of the department. Together they have organized course coordinators who coordinate faculty within topical areas to provide consistency among sections and within the curriculum. Students participate in governance through the six-person advisory board (APR, p. 31, and visiting team lunch with student leaders).

The Department of Architecture is governed by the university's policies for promotion and review (see <http://www.usek.edu.lb/en/teaching-personnel/faculty-bylaws?parent=1>).

I.2.3 Physical Resources: *The program must demonstrate that it provides physical resources that promote student learning and achievement in a professional degree program in architecture. This includes but is not limited to the following:*

- *Space to support and encourage studio-based learning*
- *Space to support and encourage didactic and interactive learning.*
- *Space to support and encourage the full range of faculty roles and responsibilities including preparation for teaching, research, mentoring, and student advising.*

[X] Physical resources are adequate for the program.

Visit Three Team Assessment: The 2019 APR describes the architecture facilities in the Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts Building (C Building), which includes the dean's office and faculty offices. The team observed architecture learning spaces including small lecture rooms (20-45 students), auditoriums, and studio space. A new digital Service Center opened in 2019 to provide on-campus printing, laser cutting, and 3D printing facilities. Students have access to two computer laboratories and remote access licenses for Autodesk software. Students do not have dedicated studio desks and have a culture of mobility of their working environment, which appears to encourage collaboration and students working in diverse groups. There is no wood shop on campus, and students expressed an interest in more hands-on activity space and equipment.

I.2.4 Financial Resources: *A substantially equivalent degree program must demonstrate that it has access to appropriate institutional and financial resources to support student learning and achievement.*

[X] Financial resources are adequate for the program.

Visit Three Team Assessment: USEK is a private Catholic university that has autonomy in its budgeting activities. More than 90% of the university's funding comes from student tuition and the rest comes from

the Lebanese Maronite Order (APR, p. 36). The university receives no financial support from the Lebanese government or other outside sources. Occasionally, major activities and real estate projects are financed through fundraising. It should be noted that USEK has never experienced a budget deficiency nor has it ever experienced budget cuts restricting it in reaching its intended objectives (APR, p. 36).

A review of the recent Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts operations budget did not indicate any type of deficit and suggests that the architecture program has received sufficient institutional support in order to deliver its curriculum and programming. The budgeting process is a combination of historical and support for new initiatives as defined by the colleges.

The annual budget for the architecture program has been gradually reduced by approximately 11% over the last 4 years. This reduction reflects both the current economic situation in Lebanon and the program's decision to reduce enrollment to a maximum of 1,000 total students by the 2020-2021 academic year.

An average of 20% of the total revenue is used for financial aid and scholarships. As is typical for universities, approximately 80% of the operating expenses are dedicated to wages and teaching remuneration.

The university is currently working to diversify its sources of revenue and fundraising strategies by strengthening links with donors and empowering the role of the alumni.

1.2.5 Information Resources: *The substantially equivalent program must demonstrate that all students, faculty, and staff have convenient access to literature, information, and visual and digital resources that support professional education in the field of architecture.*

Further, the substantially equivalent program must demonstrate that all students, faculty, and staff have access to architecture librarians and visual resources professionals who provide information services that teach and develop research, evaluative, and critical thinking skills necessary for professional practice and lifelong learning.

[X] Information resources are adequate for the program.

Visit Three Team Assessment: USEK provides students with a 3,230 square meter library offering a variety of services to students, including physical materials to borrow, study rooms, research support and guidance, and printing/copying/scanning capabilities. The architecture collection houses 2,500 print books, 25 periodicals, and national and international newspapers. Students in the architecture department have access to the department-specific research assistant during library hours. There is large variety of online resources, books, and periodicals (APR, pp. 39-44). Through a meeting with Randa Al Chidiac and site visits, the team found students at the regional campuses have small collections accessible to them, along with the ability to obtain a book through intralibrary loan from the main campus. Books are provided in one day. In addition, all students have access to a regional interlibrary loan program if USEK does not have the material needed. The team found the library to have an impressive conservation studio. Students indicated their intense use of the library's resources.

Digital resources, aside from the library, are provided to architecture students through two computer laboratories with 25 stations each, providing the necessary software to students in the program (APR, pp. 33-34). At the student meeting with the visiting team on April 1, students said that they have their own laptops with access to the appropriate software, which they are able to obtain at a low or no cost.

PART I: SECTION 3—REPORTS

1.3.1 Statistical Reports. *Programs are required to provide statistical data in support of activities and policies that support social equity in the professional degree and program as well as other data points that demonstrate student success and faculty development.*

- *Program student characteristics.*
 - *Number of students enrolled in the substantially equivalent degree program(s).*
 - *Qualifications of students admitted in the fiscal year prior to the upcoming visit compared to those admitted in the fiscal year prior to the last visit.*
 - *Time to graduation.*
 - *Percentage of matriculating students who complete the substantially equivalent degree program within the normal time to completion for each academic year since the previous visit.*
 - *Percentage who complete the substantially equivalent degree program within 150% of the normal time to completion for each academic year since the previous visit.*
- *Program faculty characteristics*
 - *Number of faculty by rank (e.g., assistant professor, associate professor)*
 - *Number of full-time faculty and part-time faculty*
 - *Number of faculty promoted each year since the last visit*
 - *Number of faculty maintaining licenses in the country of the program each year since the last visit, and where they are licensed*

[X] Statistical reports were provided and provide the appropriate information.

Visit Three Team Assessment: The statistical data presented in the APR and provided during the visit indicate that the policies and activities of the program are advancing the program's mission and enhancing the student experience and faculty development.

The total student enrollment has declined 16% since 2016 (from 1,351 in 2016 to 1,131 in 2018) (APR, p. 47). As discussed in our meeting with Dean Zgheib and Associate Dean Karam, this is a result of a slowing of the Lebanese economy and the university's decision to reduce the enrollment of the program over time to a maximum of 1,000 students.

Because of the reduction in enrollment the program's faculty has also been reduced by 5 members to a total of 92, with 14 of those being full-time. 85% of the full-time faculty and 94% of the part-time faculty are licensed architects in Lebanon. A majority of the faculty received salary increases over the last year after personnel reviews were conducted (APR, p. 47).

Of the 185 students who graduated in 2018, 71% completed their course of studies in 6-7 years, while the remaining 29% finished in 8-9 years (National Ministry data provided by Dean Zgheib).

Additional data on the gender and religious preference of the students was provided. While this breakdown reflects the overall student population, as noted on our visit to the satellite campuses, the gender and religious preference vary on the satellite campuses to reflect the demographics of their surrounding communities.

I.3.2 Faculty Credentials: *The program must demonstrate that the instructional faculty are adequately prepared to provide an architecture education within the mission, history, and context of the institution.*

In addition, the program must provide evidence through a faculty exhibit³ that the faculty, taken as a whole, reflects the range of knowledge and experience necessary to promote student achievement as described in Part Two. This exhibit should include highlights of faculty professional development and achievement since the last substantial equivalency visit.

[X] Faculty credentials were provided and demonstrate the range of knowledge and experience necessary to promote student achievement.

Visit Three Team Assessment: The faculty credentials are provided in the APR (APR, p. 48 and Appendix 3). The faculty work presented in the team room showed a range of design approaches and experiences. The faculty's connection to practice is an asset that contributes to student achievement. Of the 14 full-time faculty members, 13 are licensed architects and 12 are engaged with practice. Of the 78 part-time faculty, 76 are licensed, most are engaged in practice, and 25 have been active in publications.

³ The faculty exhibit should be set up near or in the team room. To the extent the exhibit is incorporated into the team room, it should not be presented in a manner that interferes with the team's ability to view and evaluate student work.

PART ONE (I): SECTION 4—POLICY REVIEW

The information required in the three sections described above is to be addressed in the APR. In addition, the program shall provide a number of documents for review by the visiting team. Rather than being appended to the APR, they are to be provided in the team room during the visit. The list is available in Appendix 4 of the Conditions for Substantial Equivalency.

[X] The policy documents in the team room met the requirements of Appendix 4.

Visit Three Team Assessment: The required policy information was provided in the team room in the following documents:

Studio Culture Policy Statement; Diversity and Inclusion Statement; Faculty Guide; Faculty Bylaws; Job Descriptions; Architecture Program Statistical Reports; Academic Rules and Student Life; Policy on the Management of Computer Laboratories; Library Policies and Guidelines.

PART TWO (II): EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES AND CURRICULUM

PART TWO (II): SECTION 1—STUDENT PERFORMANCE—EDUCATIONAL REALMS & STUDENT PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

The substantially equivalent degree program must demonstrate that each graduate possesses the knowledge and skills defined by the Student Performance Criteria set out below. The knowledge and skills are the minimum for meeting the demands of an internship leading to registration for practice.

The school must provide evidence that its graduates have satisfied each criterion through required coursework. If credits are granted for courses taken at other institutions or online, evidence must be provided that the courses are comparable to those offered in the substantially equivalent degree program.

The criteria encompass two levels of accomplishment⁴:

Understanding—The capacity to classify, compare, summarize, explain and/or interpret information.

Ability—Proficiency in using specific information to accomplish a task, correctly selecting the appropriate information, and accurately applying it to the solution of a specific problem, while also distinguishing the effects of its implementation.

The NAAB establishes student performance criteria to help substantially equivalent degree programs prepare students for the profession while encouraging educational practices suited to the individual degree program. In addition to assessing whether student performance meets the professional criteria, the visiting team will assess performance in relation to the school's stated curricular goals and content. While the NAAB stipulates the student performance criteria that must be met, it specifies neither the educational format nor the form of student work that may serve as evidence of having met these criteria. Programs are encouraged to develop unique learning and teaching strategies, methods, and materials to satisfy these criteria. The NAAB encourages innovative methods for satisfying the criteria, provided the school has a formal evaluation process for assessing student achievement of these criteria and documenting the results.

For the purpose of substantial equivalency, graduating students must demonstrate understanding or ability as defined below in the Student Performance Criteria (SPC):

II.1.1 Student Performance Criteria: The SPC are organized into realms to more easily understand the relationships between individual criteria.

Realm A: Critical Thinking and Representation:

Architects must have the ability to build abstract relationships and understand the impact of ideas based on research and analysis of multiple theoretical, social, political, economic, cultural and environmental contexts. This ability includes facility with the wider range of media used to think about architecture including writing, investigative skills, speaking, drawing and model making. Students' learning aspirations include:

- Being broadly educated.
- Valuing lifelong inquisitiveness.
- Communicating graphically in a range of media.
- Recognizing the assessment of evidence.
- Comprehending people, place, and context.
- Recognizing the disparate needs of client, community, and society.

⁴ See also *Taxonomy for Learning, Teaching and Assessing: A Revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*. L. W. Anderson and D. R. Krathwold, eds. (New York: Longman, 2001).

A.1. Communication Skills: *Ability to read, write, speak and listen effectively.*

[X] Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: Evidence of student achievement at the prescribed level was found in student work prepared for ARCH 540: Graduation Project Thesis and ARCH 680: Senior Project.

A.2. Design Thinking Skills: *Ability to raise clear and precise questions, use abstract ideas to interpret information, consider diverse points of view, reach well-reasoned conclusions, and test alternative outcomes against relevant criteria and standards.*

[X] Well Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: Evidence of student achievement at the prescribed level was found in student work prepared for ARCH 670: Senior Project I.

A.3. Visual Communication Skills: *Ability to use appropriate representational media, such as traditional graphic and digital technology skills, to convey essential formal elements at each stage of the programming and design process.*

[X] Well Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: Evidence of student achievement at the prescribed level was found in student work prepared for ARCH 215: 2-3d Representation Skills, ARCH 210: Technical Drawing and ARCH 315: CAAD, ARCH 230: Architecture Analysis and Perception.

A.4. Technical Documentation: *Ability to make technically clear drawings, write outline specifications, and prepare models illustrating and identifying the assembly of materials, systems, and components appropriate for a building design.*

[X] Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: Evidence of student achievement at the prescribed level was found in student work prepared for ARCH 475: Construction Documentation.

A.5. Investigative Skills: *Ability to gather, assess, record, apply, and comparatively evaluate relevant information within architectural coursework and design processes.*

[X] Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: Evidence of student achievement at the prescribed level was found in student work prepared for ARCH 540: Graduation Project Thesis.

A.6. Fundamental Design Skills: *Ability to effectively use basic architectural and environmental principles in design.*

[X] Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: Evidence of student achievement at the prescribed level was found in student work prepared for ARCH 225: Basic Design II, ARCH 350: Design Studio II, ARCH 680A: Senior Project II-A and ARCH 680B: Senior Project II-B. There was a consistent development over the curriculum from beginning courses to the most advanced studio.

A.7. Use of Precedents: *Ability to examine and comprehend the fundamental principles present in relevant precedents and to make choices regarding the incorporation of such principles into architecture and urban design projects.*

[X] Well Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: Evidence of student achievement at the prescribed level was found in student work prepared for ARCH 570: Master Architecture Design Studio I and ARCH 580: Master Architecture Design Studio II.

A.8. Ordering Systems Skills: *Understanding of the fundamentals of both natural and formal ordering systems and the capacity of each to inform Three- and three-dimensional design.*

[X] Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: Evidence of student achievement at the prescribed level was found in student work prepared for ARCH 225: Basic Design II and ARCH 350: Design Studio II.

A.9. Historical Traditions and Global Culture: *Understanding of parallel and divergent canons and traditions of architecture, landscape and urban design including examples of indigenous, vernacular, local, regional, national settings from the Eastern, Western, Northern, and Southern hemispheres in terms of their climatic, ecological, technological, socioeconomic, public health, and cultural factors.*

[X] Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: Evidence of understanding of historical traditions and global culture was found in ARCH220: Vernacular Architecture, ARCH310: History and Culture of Architecture I, and ARCH410: History and Theory of Architecture II.

- A.10. Cultural Diversity: *Understanding* of the diverse needs, values, behavioral norms, physical abilities, and social and spatial patterns that characterize different cultures and individuals and the implication of this diversity on the societal roles and responsibilities of architects.**

[X] Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: Evidence of an understanding of cultural diversity is found in ARCH220: Vernacular Architecture and in ARCH465: Urbanism II.

- A.11. Applied Research: *Understanding* the role of applied research in determining function, form, and systems and their impact on human conditions and behavior.**

[X] Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: Evidence of student achievement at the prescribed level in A.11 Applied Research was found in the student work prepared for ARCH 505: Architecture Research Methodology. Evidence of student achievement at the prescribed level was also found in the projects completed by students in the following workshops: ARCH 620: Sustainable Architecture Workshop, ARCH630: Built Heritage Workshop, ARCH635: Archeology and Restoration Workshop, ARCH 640: Aesthetic Theorizing and Poetics of Architecture.

Realm A. General Team Commentary: The students at USEK demonstrate a strong aptitude for graphic representation and an ability to apply research to design. The descriptive geometry, hand drawing, and computer-aided graphical representation course work aid students in graphically communicating clear analysis and creative problem-solving resolutions. Precedents are used in multiple courses and applied at not only a local scale but also at urban and regional scales. It is apparent from course work that students develop an ability research and write about a diverse range of topics. It is evident the students have developed strong design thinking skills as demonstrated by their ability to synthesize and provide design solutions to challenging problems as seen in the workshop courses and in ARCH 680 A and B Senior Project.

Realm B: Integrated Building Practices, Technical Skills and Knowledge: Architects are called upon to comprehend the technical aspects of design, systems and materials, and be able to apply that comprehension to their services. Additionally they must appreciate their role in the implementation of design decisions, and their impact of such decisions on the environment. Students learning aspirations include:

- Creating building designs with well-integrated systems.
- Comprehending constructability.
- Incorporating life safety systems.
- Integrating accessibility.
- Applying principles of sustainable design.

- B.1. 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.

[X] Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: Evidence of student achievement at the prescribed level is shown in student work prepared for undergraduate and graduate course work in ARCH 230: Architecture Analysis and Perception, ARCH 345: Design Studio I, and ARCH 670: Senior Project I.

- B.2. Accessibility: *Ability* to design sites, facilities, and systems to provide independent and integrated use by individuals with physical (including mobility), sensory, and cognitive disabilities.**

[X] Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: Evidence of student achievement at the prescribed level was found in student work prepared for ARCH 490: Final Design Studio.

- B.3. Sustainability: *Ability* to design projects that optimize, conserve, or reuse natural and built resources, provide healthful environments for occupants/users, and reduce the environmental impacts of building construction and operations on future generations through means such as carbon-neutral design, bioclimatic design, and energy efficiency.**

[X] Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: Evidence of student achievement at the prescribed level was found in student work prepared for ARCH 620: Sustainability Workshop, a course taken by all students in the graduating class. A curricular change is in place to integrate sustainability into required student course work in ARCH 420: Sanitary and Mechanical Equipment and ARCH 425: Electrical and Lighting.

- B.4. Site Design: *Ability* to respond to site characteristics such as soil, topography, vegetation, and watershed in the development of a project design.**

[X] Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: Evidence of student achievement at the prescribed level was found in student work prepared for ARCH475: Construction Documents and ARCH 485: Design Studio V,

- B.5. Life Safety: *Ability* to apply the basic principles of life-safety systems with an emphasis on egress.**

[X] Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: Evidence of the ability to apply aspects of life safety was found in tests and assignments from ARCH470: Standards, Codes, and Building Laws. Student work from ARCH570: Master Architecture Design Studio and other design studios shows consistent ability to incorporate egress stair enclosures and other egress components.

- B.6. Comprehensive Design: *Ability* to produce a comprehensive architectural project that demonstrates each student's capacity to make design decisions across scales while integrating the following SPC:**

A.2. Design Thinking Skills	B.2. Accessibility
A.4. Technical Documentation	B.3. Sustainability
A.5. Investigative Skills	B.4. Site Design
A.8. Ordering Systems	B.7. Environmental Systems
A.9. Historical Traditions and	
Global Culture	B.9. Structural Systems
B.5. Life Safety	

[X] Not Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: Evidence of student achievement at the prescribed level was not found in the student work available for the visiting team to review. The team could not find consistent evidence of an ability to integrate mechanical systems equipment and distribution systems in both plan and section. While all projects demonstrated an understanding of structural systems in plan it was not consistently translated into building sections. Issues of sustainability were not analyzed, diagramed or demonstrated through a design solution.

- B.7 Financial Considerations: *Understanding* of the fundamentals of building costs, such as acquisition costs, project financing and funding, financial feasibility, operational costs, and construction estimating with an emphasis on life-cycle cost accounting.**

[X] Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: Student work that meets this criterion is found in three courses from which students may choose. Consequently, the visiting team reviewed all three courses to determine whether all three courses provided a learning experience that satisfied this criterion. The team found evidence of achievement at the prescribed level in each of the three courses reviewed: ARCH 550: Construction Management and Scheduling; ARCH 535: Working Documents for Project Management; and FIN 501: Essential of Finance. The visiting team found student understanding in all three courses to be particularly strong in the area of building cost estimating and the preparation of BOQ documents. This skill was enhanced through the creation of the BOQ to accompany the documents created in ARCH 475: Construction Documents.

- B.8. Environmental Systems: *Understanding* the principles of environmental systems' design such as embodied energy, active and passive heating and cooling, indoor air quality, solar orientation, daylighting and artificial illumination, and acoustics; including the use of appropriate performance assessment tools.**

[X] Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: Evidence of student achievement at the prescribed level was found in student work prepared for ARCH 420: Sanitary and Mechanical Equipment and ARCH 425: Electrical and Lighting.

- B.9. Structural Systems: *Understanding* of the basic principles of structural behavior in withstanding gravity and lateral forces and the evolution, range, and appropriate application of contemporary structural systems.**

[X] Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: Evidence of student achievement at the prescribed level was found in student work prepared for various courses. Students exhibit an understanding of the strength of materials and individual structural components from their course work in ARCH 235: Strength of Materials I. These understandings are translated into structural systems in student work for ARCH 490: Final Design Studio.

- B.10. Building Envelope Systems: *Understanding* of the basic principles involved in the appropriate application of building envelope systems and associated assemblies relative to fundamental performance, aesthetics, moisture transfer, durability, and energy and material resources.**

[X] Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: Evidence of student achievement at the prescribed level was found in student work prepared for ARCH475 - Construction Document.

- B.11. Building Service Systems Integration: *Understanding* of the basic principles and appropriate application and performance of building service systems such as plumbing, electrical, vertical transportation, security, and fire protection systems**

[X] Not Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: Evidence of understanding of plumbing and electrical systems was found in ARCH420: Sanitary and Mechanical Equipments and ARCH425: Electrical and Lighting. Evidence of understanding of vertical transportation is found in ARCH485: Design Studio V. Evidence of understanding of security and fire protection systems was not found in required courses. Studio work shows chases between elevators and fire stairs but does not include mechanical rooms or integration of HVAC, plumbing, and electrical systems.

- B.12. Building Materials and Assemblies Integration:** *Understanding of the basic principles utilized in the appropriate selection of construction materials, products, components, and assemblies, based on their inherent characteristics and performance, including their environmental impact and reuse.*

[X] Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: Evidence of student achievement at the prescribed level was found in student work prepared for ARCH 330: Building Technologies.

Realm B. General Team Commentary: One of the strengths of the USEK architecture program is the depth and variety of technical courses offered. Students not only learn structures (ARCH 320), concrete design (ARCH 340&440), building codes (ARCH 470), and construction documents (ARCH 475), but also take classes devoted to plumbing (ARCH 420) and electrical (ARCH 425). Students are introduced to sustainability early in the curriculum through ARCH 220: Vernacular Architecture, which surveys local responses to site conditions and culture. Students then apply these principles in ARCH620: Sustainability Workshop.

The technical knowledge supports students' work during internships and is important for professional development. However, student work does not show evidence of the ability to integrate the different technical aspects such as plumbing systems, electrical systems, mechanical systems, life safety, and environmental systems into a cohesive design solution.

Realm C: Leadership and Practice:

Architects need to manage, advocate, and act legally, ethically and critically for the good of the client, society and the public. This includes collaboration, business, and leadership skills. Student learning aspirations include:

- Knowing societal and professional responsibilities
- Comprehending the business of building.
- Collaborating and negotiating with clients and consultants in the design process.
- Discerning the diverse roles of architects and those in related disciplines.
- Integrating community service into the practice of architecture.

- C.1. Collaboration:** *Ability to work in collaboration with others and in multi-disciplinary teams to successfully complete design projects.*

[X] Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: Evidence of student achievement at the prescribed level was found in student work prepared for ARCH 465: Urbanism II.

- C.2. Human Behavior:** *Understanding of the relationship between human behavior, the natural environment and the design of the built environment.*

[X] Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: Evidence of student achievement at the prescribed level was found in student workbooks prepared for ARCH 570: Master of Architecture Design Studio I.

- C.3 Client Role in Architecture: *Understanding* of the responsibility of the architect to elicit, understand, and reconcile the needs of the client, owner, user groups, and the public and community domains.**

[X] Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: Evidence of student achievement at the prescribed level was found in student work completed for ARCH 545: Professional Internship.

- C.4. Project Management: *Understanding* of the methods for competing for commissions, selecting consultants and assembling teams, and recommending project delivery methods**

[X] Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: Student understanding of the various aspects of project management was evident through work prepared for ARCH470 Standards, Codes and Building Laws and ARCH545 Professional Internship.

- C.5. Practice Management: *Understanding* of the basic principles of architectural practice management such as financial management and business planning, time management, risk management, mediation and arbitration, and recognizing trends that affect practice.**

[X] Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: Evidence of student understanding of firm organization and business practices was developed through lectures, videos and materials delivered in a practice management seminar included in ARCH545: Professional Internship. Additional evidence of student achievement at the prescribed level was found in work diaries the students prepare during their internship.

- C.6. Leadership: *Understanding* of the techniques and skills architects use to work collaboratively in the building design and construction process and on environmental, social, and aesthetic issues in their communities.**

[X] Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: Evidence of student achievement at the prescribed level was found in group student work prepared for ARCH 540: Graduation Project Thesis.

- C.7. Legal Responsibilities: *Understanding* of the architect's responsibility to the public and the client as determined by registration law, building codes and regulations, professional service contracts, zoning and subdivision ordinances, environmental regulation, and historic preservation and accessibility laws.**

[X] Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: Evidence of student achievement at the prescribed level was found in ARCH 470: Standards, Codes and Building Laws. The code is now available in both Arabic and English.

- C.8. Ethics and Professional Judgment: *Understanding* of the ethical issues involved in the formation of professional judgment regarding social, political and cultural issues, and responsibility in architectural design and practice.**

[X] Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: Evidence of student achievement at the prescribed level was found in the Internship Assessments documents for ARCH 545: Professional Internship.

- C.9. Community and Social Responsibility: *Understanding* of the architect's responsibility to work in the public interest, to respect historic resources, and to improve the quality of life for local and global neighbors.**

[X] Well Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: Evidence of student achievement at the prescribed level was found in student work completed for ARCH65: Urbanism II.

Realm C. General Team Commentary: The team found the students at USEK to be highly collaborative in their design process, both formally and informally. They demonstrate an ability to integrate both social and aesthetic issues in their Graduation Project Thesis prepared for ARCH 540. Student outcomes in courses ARCH 475: Construction Documents, FIN 501: Essential of Finance, ARCH 535: Working Documents for Project Management, and ARCH550: Construction Management and Scheduling demonstrated exceptional understanding of construction cost estimating. The hands-on, practical experience of the internship program, ARCH 545: Professional Internship, is reflected in the student work that follows.

PART THREE (II): SECTION 2—CURRICULAR FRAMEWORK

II.2.1 National Authorization: *The institution offering the substantially equivalent degree program must be or be part of an institution that has been duly authorized to offer higher education in the country in which it is located. Such authorization may come from a federal ministry or other type of agency.*

[X] Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: The visiting team found reference to the accreditation of the University by the Lebanese Ministry of Education and Higher Education in the APR (APR, p. 54) and is confirmed by documentation (see https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rgW_QTZEOPCCFvRXZxQyueIGBqAeUCEk/view). The university has also been accredited by the European Institutional Accreditation by evalag, Germany (see <https://drive.google.com/file/d/175EZzvusx6GaDVP2Sp59LDEtKYzDvVyP/view>)

II.2.2 Professional Degrees and Curriculum: *For substantial equivalency, the NAAB requires degree programs in architecture to demonstrate that the program is comparable in all significant aspects to a program offered by a U.S. institution. This includes a curricular requirement that substantially equivalent degree programs must include general studies, professional studies, and electives.*

Curricular requirements are defined as follows:

- **General Studies.** *A professional degree program must include general studies in the arts, humanities, and sciences, either as an admission requirement or as part of the curriculum. It must ensure that students have the prerequisite general studies to undertake professional studies. The curriculum leading to the architecture degree must include a course of study comparable to 1.5 years of study or 30% of the total number of credits for an undergraduate degree. These courses must be outside architectural studies either as general studies or as electives with content other than architecture.*

This requirement must be met at the university or tertiary school level. Post-secondary education cannot be used to meet this requirement.

- **Professional Studies.** *The core of a professional degree program consists of the required courses that satisfy the NAAB Student Performance Criteria (SPC). The professional degree program has the discretion to require additional courses including electives to address its mission or institutional context.*
- **Electives.** *A professional degree program must allow students to pursue their special interests. The curriculum must be flexible enough to allow students to complete minors or develop areas of concentration, inside or outside the program.*

[X] Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: The curricular requirements of general studies are met with the equivalent of 1.5 years of study where undergraduate students complete 36 credits of course work outside of the architecture program in the areas of the arts, humanities, and sciences, and graduate students complete 9 credits for a total of 45. The professional studies are satisfied through the 129 credits of required program courses, which consist of the SPC content. Undergraduate students are required to obtain 7 credits of elective studies and 3 credits for graduate students (APR pp. 55-58).

II.2.3 Curriculum Review and Development

The program must describe the process by which the curriculum for the substantially equivalent degree program is evaluated and how modifications (e.g., changes or additions) are identified, developed, approved, and implemented. Further, the NAAB expects that programs are evaluating curricula with a view toward the advancement of the discipline and toward ensuring that students are exposed to current issues in practice. Therefore, the program must demonstrate that architects authorized to practice in the country where the program is located are included in the curriculum review and development process.

[X] Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: The team found evidence of the requirement in the APR (pp. 19-21 and 59-60) and in discussions with the faculty and administrators (interview with Chair Antoine Fichfich and Professor Victor Takchi, visiting team meeting with faculty). The APR describes the role of the newly charged advisory board consisting of full-time and part-time faculty, students, the dean, associate dean, and local practitioners. This group reviews course work products, the products of the self-assessment process and strategic progress to offer recommendations on curriculum refinement and course descriptions.

PART THREE (II): SECTION 3—EVALUATION OF PREPARATORY/PREPROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

Because of the expectation that all graduates meet the SPC (see Part Two, Section 1, above), the program must demonstrate that it is thorough in the evaluation of the preparatory education of individuals admitted to the NAAB substantially equivalent degree program.

In the event a program relies on the preparatory educational experience to ensure that students have met certain SPC, the program must demonstrate it has established standards for ensuring these SPC are met and for determining whether any gaps exist. Likewise, the program must demonstrate it has determined how any gaps will be addressed during each student's progress through the substantially equivalent degree program. This assessment should be documented in a student's admission and advising files.

[X] Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: The visiting team reviewed the policy on admissions, discussed the process with Antoine Fichfich, Chair of the Architecture Program (and responsible for making transfer student assessments) and reviewed specific student files. The architecture program at USEK has very few transfer students. The visiting team found that the program has a system to review applicants to the program. They use a form that serves as a checklist for transferred courses and their USEK equivalent. Each candidate is reviewed by comparing a student portfolio, courses catalogue descriptions, course syllabus, and/or course work products from the student's undergraduate institution before assigning completion of a required courses. In the limited sample the team reviewed files contained the assessment and the evidence used to make the determination of equivalency.

PART TWO (II): SECTION 4—PUBLIC INFORMATION

II.4.1 Statement on Substantially Equivalent Degrees

In order to promote an understanding of the substantially equivalent professional degree by prospective students, parents, and the public, all schools offering a substantially equivalent degree program or any candidacy program must include in catalogs and promotional media the exact language found in the NAAB Conditions for Substantial Equivalency, Appendix 6.

[X] Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: This requirement is satisfied on the program website
<http://www.usek.edu.lb/en/about-usek/accreditation>

II.4.2 Access to NAAB Conditions and Procedures

In order to assist parents, students, and others as they seek to develop an understanding of the body of knowledge and skills that constitute a professional education in architecture, the school must make the following documents available to all students, parents, and faculty:

The 2012 NAAB Conditions for Substantial Equivalency

The NAAB Procedures for Substantial Equivalency (edition currently in effect)

[X] Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: This requirement is satisfied on the program website through direct links to the required documents.

<http://www.usek.edu.lb/en/about-usek/accreditation>

<http://www.usek.edu.lb/Content/Assets/20181105ConditionsSubstantialEqu2012.pdf>

<http://www.usek.edu.lb/Content/Assets/20181105ProceduresSubstantialEqu2013.pdf>

II.4.3 Access to Career Development Information

In order to assist students, parents, and others as they seek to develop an understanding of the larger context for architecture education and the career pathways available to graduates of substantially equivalent degree programs, the program must make appropriate resources related to a career in architecture available to all students, parents, staff, and faculty.

[X] Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: The team found evidence of the requirement in the APR (APR, pp. 61-62) and in discussions with the students. The APR describes the role of the Career Services Office (CSO) in providing resources to students in planning and developing their professional careers. The CSO also provides guidance and comprehensive counseling in career development to support student success. In student meetings, students described using the CSO to help them obtain internships and jobs upon graduation.

II.4.4 Public Access to APRs and VTRs

In order to promote transparency in the process of substantial equivalency in architecture education, the program is required to make the following documents available to the public:

The final decision letter from the NAAB

The most recent APR

The final edition of the most recent Visiting Team Report, including attachments and addenda

These documents must be housed together and accessible to all. Programs are encouraged to make these documents available electronically from their web sites.

[X] Met

Visit Three Team Assessment: The previous APR and VTR for Visit Two are available on the Accreditation page of the University website under section "Ongoing Substantial Equivalency - Architecture Program" see <http://www.usek.edu.lb/Content/Assets/20181105NAABVisitTwo.pdf>
<http://www.usek.edu.lb/Content/Assets/20181105VTRVisitTwo.pdf>

III. Appendices

Appendix 1. Program Information

- A. History and Mission of the Institution and the Program
APR, page 4
- B. Long-Range Planning
APR, page 16
- C. Self-Assessment
APR, page 18

Appendix 2. Conditions Met with Distinction

- A.2. Design Thinking Skills:** *Ability to* raise clear and precise questions, use abstract ideas to interpret information, consider diverse points of view, reach well-reasoned conclusions, and test alternative outcomes against relevant criteria and standards.
- A.3. Visual Communication Skills:** *Ability to* use appropriate representational media, such as traditional graphic and digital technology skills, to convey essential formal elements at each stage of the programming and design process.
- A.7. Use of Precedents:** *Ability to* examine and comprehend the fundamental principles present in relevant precedents and to make choices regarding the incorporation of such principles into architecture and urban design projects.
- C.9. Community and Social Responsibility:** *Understanding of* the architect's responsibility to work in the public interest, to respect historic resources, and to improve the quality of life for local and global neighbors.

Appendix 3. Visiting Team

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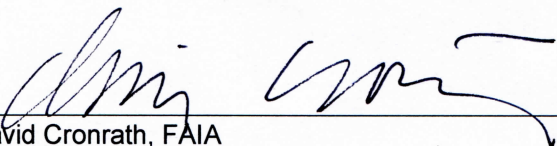
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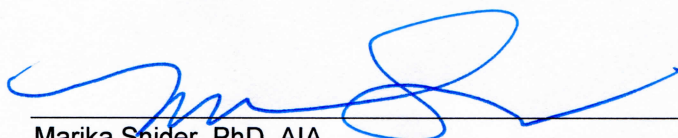
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IV. Report Signatures

Respectfully Submitted,




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May 17, 2019
OOP Ref. 20190517-01

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President

National Architectural Accrediting Board, Inc.

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United States

Subject: Response to the Visiting Team Report from Visit Three for Substantial Equivalency of the Master of Architecture Program at USEK

Dear Mr. Flynn,

First, allow me to share with you and the NAAB Board members our thoughts towards the NAAB Substantial Equivalency Process that our Architecture program has been going through during the last 5 years. This process supported the University administration and the Architecture Department, including administration, faculty, staff, students and partners, to see the program from a global perspective. It allowed us to restructure the curriculum and teaching methods to improve the quality of the program, holding a 45-years legacy, and therefore align with the international standards for architecture education while preserving the culture of the program emphasizing on heritage preservation as well as social and environmental responsibility.

The Holy Spirit University of Kaslik would like to thank the team from SE Visit Three for their kindness and friendliness during their presence on campus. We feel very fortunate to have had such experienced members for the Visit Three Team. They created a spirit of motivation and enthusiasm between the Architecture Program Substantial Equivalency Committee members, USEK Officials, administrators, faculty, students and practitioners.

The University and the Architecture Department are determined to complete the NAAB Substantial Equivalency process with success. For this purpose, the members of the Architecture Program Substantial Equivalency Committee at USEK met frequently during the last month and developed an action plan to mainly address the two Conditions Not Met and the two Causes of Concern found by the team from Visit Three:

Conditions Not Met

B.6. Comprehensive Design:

Visit Three Team Assessment: *Evidence of student achievement at the prescribed level was not found in the student work available for the visiting team to review. The team could not find consistent evidence of an ability to integrate mechanical systems equipment and distribution systems in both plan and section. While all projects demonstrated an understanding of structural*

systems in plan it was not consistently translated into building sections. Issues of sustainability were not analyzed, diagramed or demonstrated through a design solution.

Actions to be taken:

In alignment with the SPC Matrix provided to the team during their visit, evidence on comprehensive design is found in two courses ARCH490: Final Design Studio and ARCH680: Senior Project II.

Currently, the development of the project in ARCH680: Senior Project II includes the intervention of technical consultants for structure, sustainability, safety and accessibility. This strategy will be also applied to ARCH490: Final Design Studio starting Fall 2019.

In addition, the Architecture Department will reconsider the assignment of faculty members for the ARCH490: Final Design Studio in a way to select faculty who exclusively offer the design studio in a holistic manner rather than only focusing on the enhancement and accomplishment of the SPC B.6. Comprehensive Design subcategories.

B.11. Building Service Systems Integration:

Visit Three Team Assessment: *Evidence of understanding of plumbing and electrical systems was found in ARCH 420: Sanitary and Mechanical Equipment and ARCH 425: Electrical and Lighting. Evidence of understanding of vertical transportation is found in ARCH 485: Design Studio V. Evidence of understanding of security and fire protection systems was not found in required courses. Studio work shows chases between elevators and fire stairs but does not include mechanical rooms or integration of HVAC, plumbing, and electrical systems.*

Actions to be taken:

Starting Fall 2019, the Architecture Department will be emphasizing on the integration of the knowledge and application of different service systems offered to students throughout the curriculum within the course ARCH478: Construction Documents. The main purpose of this action will be to develop projects that include strong integration and cohesiveness between the building service systems, including plumbing, electrical, vertical transportation, security, and fire protection systems.

Causes of Concern

A. Workshop: The team reviewed the newly created plotting, laser cutter and 3-d printing facility in the Department of Architecture. The facility is now operational. However, the team heard from students the desire for a facility that permits the building of physical models and the exploration of full-scale assemblies. The exploration of a workshop that facilitates hands-on learning and digital making can serve as a complement to the digital representations being explored in their studio work. Such a facility could also assist with community outreach efforts and support the restoration practices being pursued by the Department of Architecture and bringing prestige to the USEK community.

Actions to be taken:

As mentioned in the VTR, the University has recently created a new digital Service Center that provides plotting, laser cutting and 3-d printing services as a response on the findings of the team from Visit Two. Additionally, the Architecture Department will be creating an on-campus facility for model making, that will be functioning starting Fall 2019, to allow students to have a hands-

on experience in full-scale assemblies. This facility, in which students will be primarily working on wood material, will include the following equipment: woodworking complete combined machine; band saw; table saw; miter saw; drill press; hand drill; router; CNC router table; bench top grinder disc; random-orbit sander; bench top belt sanding machine; etc.

B. Storage for Student Work: The department is in the process of obtaining storage lockers for students to use so they do not need to transport all their work products between home and school (the lockers existing and are being transferred from another college to the Department of Architecture). However, the team was not able to assess whether the proposed solution would meet the needs of students. The lockers shown to the visiting team are rather modest in dimension and would not readily accommodate process models and construction materials to be stored.

Actions to be taken:

The Architecture Department has now completed the transfer of lockers that would exclusively fit for its own lecture courses material. Furthermore, the department is currently working on adding lockers that are in a vertical shape to allow students to accommodate models developed during their studio classes.

Starting Fall 2019, a total of 440 lockers will be serving the diversified needs of the architecture students. The dimensions of these lockers are described in the below table, noting that it will be situated in the same building in which the architecture department is located, without any access restrictions:

Location	Height	Width	Depth	Number of lockers
Building C - 3 rd floor	42cm ~ 1.4 ft	42cm ~ 1.4 ft	45cm ~ 1.5 ft	90
Building C - 4 th floor	40cm ~ 1.3 ft	40cm ~ 1.3 ft	85cm ~ 2.8 ft	100
Building C - 4 th floor	100cm ~ 3.3 ft	41cm ~ 1.3 ft	45cm ~ 1.5 ft	150
Building C - 3 rd floor	150cm ~ 4.9 ft	100cm ~ 3.3 ft	90cm ~ 3 ft	100

In addition, the department is currently working on the procedure and rules for allocating student lockers, that will be in force starting Fall 2019.

We would like to reiterate our full commitment to NAAB Substantial Equivalency, while remaining available for any questions or further information. We look forward to hearing the results of our Visit Three after the Board's July meeting.

Best regards,

Prof. Georges Yahchouchi
Provost



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