

# School of Architecture Response to Budget Report

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## *History*

The School of Architecture's origins stretch back to 1946, with the creation of a Pre-Architecture program offered in the College of Applied Science. In 1965, this became a four-year degree. Two years later, the BA in Pre-Architecture was renamed a BFA in Environmental Design; and shortly afterward, the university's College of Arts and Sciences started a new Department of Architecture, creating a MArch degree in 1971. A BArch followed in 1976. The National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB) accredited the BArch in 1978, and in 1980 a newly established School of Architecture conferred its first BArch degree.

In 1996, the school earned full-term NAAB reaccreditation for both its professional BArch and professional MArch degrees. The school offers the only accredited U.S. architecture degree in the Asia-Pacific region. In 1999, the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa proposed the country's first professional doctorate in architecture, now called the DArch degree. In 2004, NAAB recognized the Doctor of Architecture degree as a professional architecture degree, and further approved the school's accreditation retroactive to January 1, 2001, to be concurrent with the terms of accreditation for the school's Bachelor and Master of Architecture programs.

In the fall 2007, the school changed its nomenclature from Architectural Doctorate (ArchD) to Doctor of Architecture (DArch), in conformance with established NAAB professional degree titles. With the addition of the DArch, the school phased out the MArch degree 2005 and the BArch degree in 2007. Effective fall 2012, the faculty divided the continuous, seven-year DArch program into a 4-year, 120-credit pre-professional Bachelor of Environmental Design (BEnvD) degree and the 90-credit professional DArch: four plus three. The faculty completed the first full year of this new curricular structure in spring 2015.

The school modified the BEnvD curriculum in AY 2015–16, eliminating concentrations and crafting a sequence of more focused courses, partly tailored to the planning of a landscape architecture graduate degree. The school's 2010–11 Strategic Plan considered the creation of a Master of Landscape Architecture (MLA) program as one of its top curricular priorities. In October 2017, the BOR unanimously approved the MLA, which began in 2018 and achieved Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board (LAAB) candidacy status in 2019.

## *Community Support*

Local architecture and landscape architecture professionals have been a tremendous resource for the school's degree programs. They serve as donors, supporters, advisor council members, guest critics in studios, guest lectures, mentors, and future employers.

The school's part-time lecturer pool draws heavily from members of Oahu's professional community. The MLA program has a very close relationship with the American Society of Landscape Architects. The program director serves on the national organization's Board of Trustees, and a SOA assistant professor serves as president of the Hawai'i chapter of ASLA.

The professional community has taken great pride in the independence of the school and sees the School of Architecture's status as a reflection of the regard of the state and university for the profession. Many local firms employ the School of Architecture's graduates; and many principals in local firms are UHM graduates themselves. Gift giving is a reflection of this loyalty; in 2014 the architectural community provided over \$200,000 to assist the then new dean, Daniel Friedman, in his efforts to expand and improve the school. This close-knit relationship between the architectural community and the School of Architecture remains a hallmark of the school's place in the state today.

### ***Importance to the State and Region***

The School of Architecture builds on the unique island context within the Hawai'i, Asia, and Pacific region to promote design excellence, intellectual inquiry, creative problem solving, and multidisciplinary collaboration, with both local and global impact. Environmental designers, architects, and landscape architects are essential for a better future for Hawai'i, our country, and planet. We now face unprecedented challenges: the impacts of a changing climate on our communities and deteriorating critical infrastructure.

Architects and landscape architects create the places where people live and learn, work, and play. They design hospitals that heal and houses of worship that sustain communities. They create next generation energy-saving buildings to make our communities healthier and safer. All the while, architects work with clients and allied design professionals and construction partners to improve the built environment in a \$1 trillion sector that accounts for almost 6 percent of the economy.

UH's shared value of *malama'aina*, caring for living in harmony with the land—expressed in land stewardship and sustainable environmental design—lies at the core of landscape architecture as an academic discipline and profession. The work of landscape architects addresses climate change adaptation and urban ecological and social justice through design. As part of the green industry, landscape architecture is an expanding field whose economic impact continues to grow in Hawai'i. Locally-trained landscape architects' design and problem-solving skills in resource, water and land use planning, sustainability, applied ecology, as well as cultural and social factors, are invaluable in increasing environmental leadership on the campus and in the state.

Well-designed buildings and well considered urban environments that result from the nexus of good urban planning and design and good architecture build capital in several ways:

Architecture helps to build environmental capital through the application of sustainable practices that respect and preserve our environment for future generations. The environment can be considered our most important asset; and our obligation to protect and preserve this asset is compelling. Buildings and the infrastructure that supports them are a huge potential contributor

to carbon emissions and environmental degradation. It is also clear that the appropriate design of new buildings and the retrofit of existing buildings can help in a very significant way to move us towards a better and more sustainable future. The pressing need to address climate change through building renovation and upgrading and through the construction of new higher performance buildings is in and of itself a significant economic driver due to the economic benefit if such capital expenditures.

Architecture helps to build financial capital by putting it to work constructing assets that are not only beautiful and inspiring but are also durable and adaptable enough to retain their value over a long time. It also does this by producing buildings that consume increasingly scarce energy resources efficiently. In fact, in the best cases good architecture can be net zero or even net positive in energy terms... In other words, sustainable buildings can produce more energy than they consume.

Finally, good architecture helps to attract and build human capital by providing environments that lift the human spirit and engage and empower communities to achieve their maximum potential.

### ***Present Degree Offerings and Observations by the Administration (edited)***

- The School of Architecture presently offers the Bachelor of Environmental Design (BEnvD), the recently approved Master of Landscape Architecture (MLA), and the accredited Doctor of Architecture (DArch). The MLA has achieved accreditation candidacy status in 2019. The BEnvD is in the last stages of seeking permanent degree status at UHM (Fall 2020).
- The Department has a Global Track DArch/MArch dual degree program with Tongji University in China. The Doctor of Architecture is the only program of its kind in the country.
- There are 203 enrolled in the BEnvD, 19 in the MLA, and 56 in the DArch.
- Faculty FTE is currently 12.92, down from 13.48 in Fall 2014. The faculty FTE includes two former deans, one who now serves as director of the “global track” and one on special appointment with the Provost’s Office.
- The interim dean holds tenure in American Studies, where he oversaw the Graduate Certificate in Historic Preservation. That program is currently struggling but could flourish in the School of Architecture. Of the twenty-five U.S. master’s programs in historic preservation only one is in a school other than architecture. Courses in historic preservation are currently offered by lecturers. No other American Studies graduate course supports the certificate program.
- The School of Architecture has a successful research arm in the form of the University of Hawai’i Community Design Center (UHCDC). The School of Architecture established the UHCDC as a new model for a university-based, built environments practice: a public-sector platform for multi-disciplinary collaboration. This public-interest orientation generated \$4 million in state funded “proof of concept” work involving 47 contracts

with 12 state agencies and 4 non-profit organizations. UHCDC's novel "top-down bottom-up" approach, which strengthens connections between government and communities, recently earned both the 2020 national AIA/ACSA Practice & Leadership Award and a 2020 ACSA Collaborative Practice award. UHCDC has engaged 12 of 15 full-time School of Architecture faculty members, and over 20 faculty members across six university departments. Participating faculty members integrated projects into 29 courses in architecture, landscape architecture, planning, engineering, and the social sciences, engaging hundreds of students on statewide efforts to address housing, transportation, infrastructure, sea level rise, coastal management, food, waste, energy, incarceration, and education, among other topics. UHCDC provides roughly \$100,000 in student employment each year and has cumulatively offered students and new graduates nearly 20,000 hours of AXP credit applicable to architectural licensure. In addition to its project portfolio, the center has hosted 12 outreach events that have gathered our students, faculty, local and global practitioners, civic leaders, and the broader community around the critical built environment issues facing Hawai'i.

It is important to note the extramural award amount for Architecture on the university's website does not include UHCDC funding.

- Unlike professional degrees in Law and Medicine, the graduate programs in Architecture are under the Graduate Division.

### ***Proposed New Degree Offerings***

The School of Architecture has prepared a draft ATP for the Master of Architecture (MArch) degree, which would reduce the time to a professional architecture degree from 3 years (DArch) to 1.5 to 2 years (MArch) beyond the four-year preprofessional BEnvD. The trend in architectural education is away from the traditional professional BArch degree to a 4+2 (or in our case possibly 4+ 1.5) combined preprofessional bachelor's degree and two-year graduate professional degree. Currently 126 national programs have MArch degrees. Only 67 retain the BArch.

The faculty members have further discussed the creation of a Doctor of Design program to meet the needs professionals in a number of design fields, including architects with BArchs or MArchs. The School is considering a design-based, partially residential program that would bring mid-career professionals to UHM for two summer sessions but allow them to continue to maintain their careers where they are.

With its April 2019 Strategic & Action Plan, the school committed to researching what it would take to plan and implement dual graduate degree options in architecture (DArch/MArch) and landscape architecture (MLA) and landscape architecture (MLA) and urban planning (MURP).

A strategic relationship with other units, notably Planning (the Department of Urban and Regional Planning) and Engineering could result in new degrees that would contribute significantly to the campus' and school's offerings. These include a graduate-level program

in Urban Design; a shared program with the College of Engineering in Construction Management; in addition to the potential MS in Historic Preservation. All of these would contribute to the school's growth and take advantage of existing courses and offerings.

### ***The College of Engineering Option***

The story of the School of Architecture (in the minds of alumni, faculty, and the community) is one of gradual growth and independence. A survey of the 136 NAAB accredited architecture programs indicates that only five have a connection with engineering programs. Even among these, the connection is tenuous: Tuskegee Institute has a College of Engineering, Architecture, and Physical Sciences, which would suggest this is a mere administrative grouping, not one with any degree of integration. Clearly this is not the direction that environmental design programs are taking around the country. In the 1980s, in fact, NAAB specifically cautioned against architecture programs associated with engineering colleges, putting them on notice for accreditation. In contrast, numerous US precedents exist of highly ranked and successful units that house departments and/or programs of architecture, urban and regional planning and landscape architecture, for example the College of Environmental Design at the University of California at Berkeley or the University of Texas at Austin School of Architecture. At Arizona State, often cited as a model for our future, Architecture is located in a School of the Arts. Our latest NAAB review (2018) emphasized the importance of an independent school of architecture at UHM.

The majority of the SOA faculty and dean are opposed to the higher administration's suggestion to "combine the School of Architecture with the College of Engineering." However, some faculty members see the advantage and others sense the inevitability of some sort of coalesce in a time of administrative streamlining.

If the School of Architecture can retain a high level of integrity and self-governance and can find ways of benefitting from the connection with the College of Engineering, such a move may be acceptable. The broader architectural community may require far more education and explanation to set their anxieties at rest.

### ***Alternative Alignments***

One proposal is that the Department of Urban Regional Planning return to the School of Architecture where it began. This is consistent with nearly every other architecture and planning program in the country. For many years the UHM Department of Urban and Regional Planning had a strong policy-focus. This has changed in recent years towards a greater focus on design and the environment. Presently, the Department of Urban and Regional Planning has no undergraduate degree, a healthy master's degree program, and a small Ph.D. program. A combined Planning and Architecture college (name TBD) would build upon existing alliances and offer numerous continued and new opportunities for collaboration and interdisciplinary teaching and research. Many current DURP faculty routinely serve on Doctor of Architecture committees, architecture and landscape architecture faculty serve on MURP capstone and thesis committees, PLAN 620 environmental planning is a required MLA course that brings planning and landscape

architecture students together, DURP students register for various DArch/MLA electives and vice versa. A number of current DURP faculty hold professional architecture and landscape architecture degrees. Similar in structure to SOA's DArch and MLA degrees, the MURP is a professionally accredited degree (Planning Accreditation Board). Further, the American Planning Association (APA) is a professional sister organization of AIA and ASLA.

The SOA faculty views the prospect of joining forces with DURP as desirable and mutually beneficial and the dean concurs.

There is significant precedence also for an alignment with the Fine Arts programs, including art history, painting, sculpture and graphic arts. An excellent model is Cornell: The College of Architecture, Planning and Arts.

Such a combination would genuinely benefit all three areas (Architecture, Planning, Art). It would not eliminate a school but provide a more manageable, efficient unit with a significant critical mass and numerous opportunities for collaboration and cross-fertilization. A platform such as this would facilitate the development of other degrees: an urban design degree; an interior design program; historic preservation (beyond the certificate program). It would fill a number of state needs and those for expanding our reach beyond Hawai'i.

### ***Architecture aligned with Engineering: Possibilities***

Failing a more radical organizational realignment, another step, either now or in the future, might be an independent School of Architecture and Planning (name TBD) under the College of Engineering. Joining forces with Planning would put Architecture in a stronger position relative to Engineering and would represent at least something of a move forward.

The other step, as explained, is simply for the School of Architecture to become a well-defined and recognized school within the College of Engineering. Again, this would require significant articulation to the community, assuring the profession that the School of Architecture would be well respected and better funded than it is presently.

If the School of Architecture were to coalesce with the College of Engineering, it would be essential that the school retain its separate identity. A complete merger would undermine the specific strengths of SOA's environmental design, architecture, and landscape architecture programs, under the illusion that the practice of engineering and of architecture and landscape architecture have natural affinities because all deal with the built environment. There would, however, be some potential for synergies in the relationship as long as a concerted effort is made to bring faculty members together in a systematic and structured way. Additional programs, including Historic Preservation, Urban Design, Construction Management would further strengthen the school in this context.

The connection with Engineering would result in some consolidation of services and staff. It should provide for greater resources. Ways of exploring potentials for interdisciplinary research and funding would require significant facilitation.

An adjustment to School of Architecture salary scales may be an expectation as part of the potential new alignment. Presently, the College of Engineering brings in new assistant professors at around \$90,000. A newly tenured Associate Professor in Architecture makes just \$86,000. This, of course, would affect any potential savings due to the merger, actually increasing faculty salary costs.