

Washington State University

Interim Progress Report for 2016

Instructions and Template

[[Insert date submitted to the NAAB]]

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1. INSTRUCTIONS AND TEMPLATE GUIDELINES

Purpose

Continuing accreditation is subject to the submission of interim progress reports at defined intervals after an eight-year or four-year term of continuing accreditation is approved.

This narrative report, supported by documentation, covers three areas:

1. The program's progress in addressing not-met Conditions, Student Performance Criteria, or Causes of Concern from the most recent Visiting Team Report.
2. Significant changes to the program or the institution since the last visit.
3. Responses to changes in the NAAB Conditions since your last visit (Note: Only required if Conditions have changed since your last visit)

Supporting Documentation

1. The narrative should describe in detail all changes in the program made in response to not-met Conditions, Student Performance Criteria, and Causes of Concern.
2. Provide information regarding changes in leadership or faculty membership. Identify the anticipated contribution to the program for new hires and include either a narrative biography or one-page CV.
3. Provide detailed descriptions of changes to the curriculum that have been made in response to not-met Student Performance Criteria. Identify any specific outcomes expected to student performance. Attach new or revised syllabi of required courses that address unmet SPC.
4. Provide additional information that may be of interest to the NAAB team at the next accreditation visit.

Outcomes

IPRs are reviewed by a panel of three: one current NAAB director, one former NAAB director, and one experienced team chair.¹ The panel may make one of three recommendations to the Board regarding the interim report:

1. Accept the interim report as having demonstrated satisfactory progress toward addressing deficiencies identified in the most recent VTR.
2. Accept the interim report as having demonstrated progress toward addressing deficiencies but require the program to provide additional information (e.g., examples of actions taken to address deficiencies).
3. Reject the interim report as having not demonstrated sufficient progress toward addressing deficiencies and advance the next accreditation sequence by at least one calendar year but not more than three years, thereby shortening the term of accreditation. In such cases, the chief academic officer of the institution will be notified and a copy sent to the program administrator. A schedule will be determined so that the program has at least six months to prepare an Architecture Program Report. The annual statistical report (see Section 9 of the 2014 Conditions) is still required.

Deadline and Contacts

IPRs are due on November 30. They are submitted through the NAAB's Annual Report System (ARS). Contact Kesha Abdul Mateen (kabdul@naab.org) with questions.

Instructions

1. Type all responses in the designated text areas.
2. Reports must be submitted as a single PDF following the template format. Pages should be numbered.
3. Reports are limited to 25 pages/10 MBs.
4. Supporting documentation should be included in the body of the report.
5. Student work is not to be submitted as documentation for a two-year IPR.

¹ The team chair will not have participated in a team during the year in which the original decision on a term of accreditation was made.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF 2014 NAAB VISIT

CONDITIONS NOT MET

2014 VTR
I.1.4 Long Range Planning
I.2.1 Human Resources & Human Resources Development (Faculty)
II.1.1 Administrative Structure & Governance (Governance)

STUDENT PERFORMANCE CRITERIA NOT MET

2014 VTR
B. 2 Accessibility
B.5 Life Safety
B. 6 Comprehensive Design

CAUSES OF CONCERN

2014 VTR
Faculty
Program Director
Dual Dean Model

3. TEMPLATE

Interim Progress Report
Washington State University
School of Design & Construction
M. Arch. [Preprofessional degree + 57 credits]
Last APR submission: September 6, 2013
Year of the previous visit: 2014

Please update contact information as necessary since the last APR was submitted.

Chief administrator for the academic unit in which the program is located: Donald Bender, interim Dean

Provost: Dr. Daniel Bernardo

President of the institution: Dr. Kirk Schulz

Individual submitting the Interim Progress Report: Dr. David Wang

Name of individual(s) to whom questions should be directed: Dr. David Wang, Professor of Architecture, Architecture Program Head; Dr. J. Philip Gruen, Associate Professor and Director, School of Design and Construction

Current term of accreditation: full accreditation

Text from the most recent VTR or APR is in the gray text boxes. Type your response in the designated text boxes.

a. Progress in Addressing Not-Met Conditions and Student Performance Criteria

I.1.4 Long Range Planning

2014 Visiting Team Assessment: The economic crisis was a major driver for the creation of this new school. The team learned that a number of decisions had to be made rapidly during the early days of formation of the new school including shutting down the Spokane program and moving the LA and ID programs into the school. This did not allow for a full plan to be developed.

Under the leadership of a strong interim director, the school has developed a mission and vision and has started a process of evaluating strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The administration of the School of Design & Construction has done their best to bring the programs together under this new framework. Resources have been spent on ensuring this integration is successful. Staff, Faculty and students have all reported amazing progress to that end.

Nevertheless, the result is that a long range planning process is not currently in place and a plan does not currently exist for the new school. When the new director arrives, it will be a high priority to take the good work that has been done by the interim director and his leadership team and manifest that in a new process and plan.

WA State U, 2016 Response:

Long-range strategic plans (2015-20) for the School of Design and Construction (SDC) and each of its programs (Architecture, Construction Management, Interior Design, and Landscape Architecture) were completed from scratch since the NAAB team visited in 2014. They followed a new strategic plan offered by Washington State University (2014-19) as well as the two colleges that oversee its operations. The SDC plans were approved by faculty and upper administration, and are being reviewed on a bi-annual basis.

The SDC was formed five years ago under the auspices of two colleges: The Voiland College of Engineering and Architecture (VCEA) and the College of Agricultural, Human and Natural Resource Sciences (CAHNRS). Because we are in the fifth year (of five years) of the Memorandum of Agreement which established the SDC, the deans of both colleges are supporting an external review of the School in 2017. This would provide additional feedback to help us establish targeted goals in an updated long-range, strategic plan.

Also since the 2014 visit and subsequent VTR, the deans appointed Dr. J. Philip Gruen as interim director for 2014-15. In 2015, the deans, supported by faculty, awarded him a two-year contract as director from 2015-17. Working closely with the SDC Leadership Team (comprised of the heads of each program, along with the Academic Program Manager and the Administrative Manager), Dr. Gruen has led the SDC in establishing several new documents related to long-range planning beyond the strategic plans. These include new tenure and promotion guidelines; position descriptions for all administrative and staff positions; hiring plans; teaching assistant policies; budgeting processes; leadership transition documents; professional development and travel policies; study tour regulations; and a range of student policies that establish criteria for the many activities that keep the school active. In addition, the leadership team has brought the school's advisory board together under a new structure and has grown to forty-one (41) total members. Under Dr. Wang's leadership, the Architecture Advisory Board (13 members) has become actively involved in recruitment, retention, and fundraising, and several processes are in place to entice future students to the program.

I.2.1 Human Resources & Human Resources Development (Faculty)

2014 Visiting Team Assessment: Human resources have been negatively impacted by severe budget cuts imposed by the state legislature. The program is small enough that the faculty has been able to manage the increases in workload as faculty vacancies have gone unfilled. However, the team believes this is not sustainable. It is expected that the new director will be hiring up to six positions in the School starting in Fall 2014. However, only one of these positions will be a shared architecture/CM resource for environmental systems.

The two Weller Fellows who were brought in this year to provide new content and learning options for the students are not being renewed next year due to funding issues. A number of architecture faculty are overdue for sabbaticals and do not have the bandwidth for the faculty scholarship goals that the university has or will set. WSU was able to retain some key faculty who were hired for the Spokane program and have been relocated within the Pullman campus. However, on the whole, the faculty is stretched beyond capacity and there is no hiring plan in place to give the team assurances that a resolution will be found in the near future.

The interim director has done an excellent job this last year, and is highly revered by the faculty. Based on the faculty and staff report, it is his leadership that has propelled the school forward through this year of transition. However, everyone is waiting expectantly for the new director. The provost, dean, faculty, staff and students all have high expectations for him to continue to integrate the four programs and increase faculty scholarship. In the team's observation, the high levels of uncertainty are due to the rapidly changing environment, combining the programs into one school, and recovering from the economic downturn.

The team has concerns about the workload of the program coordinators. They are doing the same amount of work as chairs with two months less pay. They reported expanded responsibilities beyond their contract terms including budget oversight duties and fundraising.

The accredited program has policies in place and EEO/AA is documented on the website.

Awareness of the IDP program is low among the student body as a whole; those that do know about it were introduced to it in other settings (e.g., AIAS Quad Conference or by NCARB School Visits). The graduate coordinator is acting as the IDP coordinator. However, the student body is unaware of his role.

Faculty and staff are afforded opportunities to pursue professional development. The APR stated that \$1,000 was available per faculty member. However this was viewed by the team as a reflection of the current tight budget conditions, and the faculty reported feeling supported in their development needs. There are opportunities for all faculty and staff to pursue professional development that contributes to program improvement. Additionally, there are established criteria for determining rank, reappointment, tenure and promotion as well as eligibility requirements for professional development resources.

The staff expresses strong feeling of collegiality with the faculty. And the team observed cohesive faculty and staff working relationships

WA State U, 2016 Response:

Washington State University, like all public institutions of higher education, continues to see reduced levels of funding from the state government. Therefore the impact of tight funds continues to challenge operations of the SDC. Here is what we can report: 1) Our permanent director, Dr. J. Philip Gruen, has done an outstanding job in integrating the School. Last year (2015) a solid faculty vote of confidence for Dr. Gruen was sent to the deans of both Colleges. 2) Since 2014, the SDC Leadership Team has provided steady leadership of the School, meeting weekly, and, as of fall 2016, all meeting minutes are accessible to all faculty on the SDC website. 3) Responsibilities of the program heads (they were called “coordinators” in 2014) remain the same as when the NAAB team visited in 2014. The team is energetic, collegial, and committed to leading the SDC. 4) Travel funding has been raised to \$1500 per faculty per year, and policies and a responsible budgeting system is in place so that program heads are able to award more travel funding to those faculty not already awarded such funding in a start-up package—if necessary and justified. 5) We are happy to report that the level of collegiality and solidarity among SDC staff and faculty, a feature underlined by the visiting team in the VTR, continues to be strong. Despite the closure of the Interdisciplinary Design Institute in Spokane (1 ½ hours from Pullman by car) which contributed to the formation of the SDC, six faculty and one staff member continue to make this commute. Dedication to the students and the craft of teaching runs deep. The SDC is a happy place to come to work each day.

II.1.1 Administrative Structure & Governance (Governance)

2014 Visiting Team Assessment: The team did not find evidence that the students were equitably involved in the governance of the program.

WA State U, 2016 Response:

SDC Ambassadors: Each year, students interview to be a part of the school's student leadership structure. The ambassadors (there are three per program in the school) are responsible principally for student recruiting events, including Saturday WSU “Experience” presentations for visiting high school students. Architecture ambassadors provide presentations and lead tours of studios on those days; they are also “on call” for leading impromptu tours and info sessions to students who show up at random times.

Meet and Greets: New “meet and greets” with the students. The Architecture program is holding three such events in Fall 2016 alone. These are intended principally to increase retention in the school from first year into the second (certified) year, both because the first year of integrated courses may fail to provide enough disciplinary focus and because enrollment numbers are increasingly tied to revenue.

AIAS: The student AIAS chapter hosted the Western Quadrant Conference in spring 2015 in *Seattle*, drawing more than 125 students from around the West Quad region and invited faculty and staff to participate—rather than the other way around. Architecture Program Head (David Wang) currently meets regularly with the leadership of the AIAS chapter.

MoD: Student initiative, beginning in 2014, led to the formation of the Masters of Design (MoD) group. This group remains active, organizing lectures, workshops, and social events—and otherwise existing as a

Committees: Students from the school have been invited to participate on various committees and with various groups over the past few years—including search committees, the lecture series committee, and the gallery crew.

Solar Decathlon: This high-profile Department of Energy sponsored project, of which WSU is one of fourteen (14) college teams for 2017, includes two architecture students as project leads, and the conceptual design emerged from an architecture studio in spring 2016.

B.2 Accessibility

2014 Visiting Team Assessment: The evidence of the coursework indicative of teaching and student understanding was found in ARCH 472, however, in application, the students' project did not reveal that they were able to apply the needed standards of accessibility in a proper manner in their own design projects. Even the high passing projects had major flaws with accessibility standards' application.

This criterion calls for **ability**, and the students' evidence in the files only could prove as far as understanding. The search in students' projects did not convince the team that this criterion was met.

WA State U, 2016 Response (This response pertains also to the following two items): The Architecture Program now has an Assessment Committee in place to address the deficiencies in B.2, B.5, B.6, as part of a larger agenda of developing a self-reporting annual assessment rubric. This rubric, which will be a self-report of each faculty member who teaches a course in the Architecture curriculum, is used to report program assessment to the University; it will also be compiled as an annual checklist log for future NAAB reports and visits.

B.5 Life Safety

2014 Visiting Team Assessment: The evidence of the coursework indicative of its teaching and student understanding was found in ARCH 472, however, in application, the students project did not reveal that they were able to apply the needed Life Safety requirements in a proper manner in their own design projects. Even the high passing projects had major flaws with exiting requirements.

This criterion demands **ability**, and the students' evidences in the files only could prove as far as understanding of the criterion. The review of students' projects did not convince the team that this criterion was met.

WA State U, 2016 Response: [Ditto previous answer](#)

B.6 Comprehensive Design

2014 Visiting Team Assessment: Evidences of the students' works in comprehensive studio ARCH 401, or ARCH 403, as well as the graduate thesis work in ARCH 511, and ARCH 513 did not demonstrate the ability to make sound decisions in integrating certain technical requirements mainly with respect to the exiting requirements and accessible path of travel in the design projects. This was encountered in high pass and low pass as well as additional student projects that were requested by the team for further review.

WA State U, 2016 Response: [Ditto previous answer](#)

b. Plans for/Progress in Addressing Causes of Concern

- **Faculty**

2014 Visiting Team Comments: The faculty has been stretched thin due to the five-year hiring freeze leaving several tenured positions vacant. A number of architecture faculty are overdue for sabbaticals and do not have the bandwidth for the faculty scholarship goals that the university expects. Lack of new hiring has negatively impacted the diversity of the faculty.

The team has concerns about the workload of the program coordinators. Coordinators are doing the same amount of work as chairs with two months less pay. They reported expanded responsibilities beyond their contract terms including budget oversight duties and fundraising.

The use of the Weller Architecture Excellence Fund to provide two Weller Fellowships proved a valuable addition to the learning atmosphere of the architecture program.. However, the team was informed that the funding will no longer be available after this academic year. Additionally, the team received students' explicit concerns about the lack of such fund as to them this was part of the opportunities for fresh insights and diverse points of view skill sets in the make-up of what can constitute a progressive architecture education.

On the whole, the faculty is stretched beyond capacity and there is no hiring plan in place to give the team assurances that a resolution will be found in the near future.

WA State U, 2016 Response: As already noted, funding at the College and University levels have been very tight, so available faculty lines are very difficult to come by. Since 2014, the Architecture Program did hire one tenure track assistant professor (Mona Ghandi) to teach computational design, and two temporary faculty members (Nadia Frye and Omar Al-Hassawi) on renewable, one-year contracts, to teach sustainable design and structures, respectively. We are hoping to get permission to convert both of their positions into longer-term, tenure-track or tenured positions, but the college is in major financial straits and has put a hold on all new hiring beyond those positions already in the works or endowed chair positions where donors have long expected a return on investment. Neither of these positions are in Architecture, although the college's new Construction Engineering degree will require new faculty in Construction Management (which is part of the SDC).

In addition, since 2014, the Construction Management program has hired two tenure-track faculty (Anne Anderson and George Okere); the Interior Design program has hired one new tenure-track faculty member (Saleh Kalantari) and a temporary faculty member (Genell Ebbini) whose contract has been twice renewed; and the Landscape Architecture program has added two new tenure-track professors (Michael Sánchez and Hope Rising).

The VTR's concerns about the amount of work for the program heads (formerly titled coordinators) remains legitimate. These responsibilities have not lessened. But we can honestly report high morale and, again, high collegiality and commitment to making the SDC a unique place committed to design thinking and the training of future design professionals.

- **Program Director**

2014 Visiting Team Comments: Everyone is waiting expectantly for the new director. The provost, dean, faculty, staff and students all have high expectations for him/her to

continue to integrate the four programs and increase faculty scholarship. However, without the new director in place it is impossible for the team to know if these aspirations will come to fruition. Uncertainty among all stakeholder groups is high. Administrative delays caused by the dual college model in the hiring stage of the new director exacerbated the problems that led the team to assess some of the conditions a not-met.

WA State U, 2016 Response: The previous answers have made clear that Dr. J. Philip Gruen, who served has served in the director's role since fall 2014 (both as interim and permanent), has received tremendous support from the SDC faculty.

- **Dual Dean Model**

2014 Visiting Team Comments: This team was not provided with the opportunity to meet the interim dean of the CAHNRS. Discussions with dean of the CEA revealed strong support for the dual college model. Several faculty and staff mentioned the challenge of managing program budgets within the School of Design & Construction, which is funded through its two parent colleges (CAHNRS and CEA). This will likely continue to be a challenge. On the positive side, it also provides twice the advocacy at the Dean level for all programs of the SDC, including architecture. The challenge will be maintaining the independence of the development fund for the program while establishing a development fund for the SDC.

WA State U, 2016 Response: A development fund for the school has been established, and this has helped with private donations to fund school-wide initiatives. But state funding is a challenge, and the dual dean model adds to the administrative demands of the SDC and, less directly, the workload of the program heads. In addition, since 2014, there have been four different deans (either permanent, interim, or acting) who have overseen the SDC's operations. Searches are underway for two new permanent deans in both colleges, which will give the SDC five different deans (one has returned following a one-year transition) in three years' time. Through these transitions, the SDC has been fortunate to be largely in "control" of its own operations, and has moved ahead with new plans, policies, and operations, as discussed in I.1.4. (above). Material being compiled for the deans'-recommended external review (in part to provide new deans with information about the school) may lend further insight into the benefits and challenges of the two-dean model.

c. Changes or Planned Changes in the Program

Please report such changes as the following: faculty retirement/succession planning; administration changes (dean, department chair, provost); changes in enrollment (increases, decreases, new external pressures); new opportunities for collaboration; changes in financial resources (increases, decreases, external pressures); significant changes in educational approach or philosophy; changes in physical resources (e.g., deferred maintenance, new building planned, cancellation of plans for new building).

WA State U, 2016 Response: Dr. Gruen will be applying for professional leave for 2016-17, and the deans are planning to identify an interim director for the SDC. For continuity, this individual is expected to come from the existing faculty, and is expected to be in place by March of 2017 so that the incoming leadership can learn the proverbial ropes. New deans for both colleges are also expected to be in place by fall 2017, in which case the school will re-consider the desire to push ahead for a national search for a permanent director. That this director would require a new position line and thus new permanent funding from the college(s), the school must remain cautious that any new deans will wish to immediately move ahead with a search. To that end, the school will continue to move forward, following its strategic initiatives and putting together its foundational documents so that the structure is smooth enough to allow faculty and students to be the best they can be.

d. Summary of Activities in Response to Changes in the NAAB Conditions
[2014 NAAB Conditions](#)

WA State U, 2016 update: N/A

e. Appendix (include revised curricula, syllabi, and one-page CVs or bios of new administrators and faculty members; syllabi should reference which NAAB SPC a course addresses)

WA State U, 2016 update: Not sure what else to add than what's been said above