

2023 Visiting Team Report

Harding University
Department of Art and Design

M.Arch.

Initial Candidacy Visit
September 25-26, 2023

NAAB

National
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Accrediting
Board, Inc.

Contents

<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
I. Summary of Visit	3
II. Progress Since the Previous Site Visit	4
III. Program Changes	4
IV. Compliance with the 2020 Conditions for Accreditation	4
1. Context and Mission	
2. Shared Values of the Discipline and Profession	
3. Program and Student Criteria	
4. Curricular Framework	
5. Resources	
6. Public Information	
V. Appendices	29
1. Conditions Met with Distinction	
2. Team SPC Matrix	
3. The Visiting Team	
VI. Report Signatures	32

I. Summary of Visit

a. Acknowledgments and Observations

The NAAB visiting team would like to thank Harding University's architecture program for its assistance and hospitality during our virtual initial candidacy visit. In particular, the team wants to recognize the efforts of the director of the architecture program, Mike Steelman, for being extremely helpful in leading the program's preparation and organization for the team visit. The team especially appreciates his timely responses to our requests for information and the organization of the visiting team room. In every meeting, the team heard how much the Harding community (faculty, staff, students, practitioners) respect and admire Professor Steelman for the way that he leads the program. He is clearly a leader who acts with integrity, humility, and empathy; and he seems to embody all that the architecture program aspires to be.

The team would also like to recognize and thank the Harding community for the many thoughtful discussions it had with students, faculty, staff, administration, and professional architects throughout the visit. Your openness and candor speak to your commitment to the program and the excitement that everyone has for its future.

The NAAB team would like to highlight some of the program's unique characteristics that have great potential for shaping what will surely be a distinctive architecture program in the years ahead.

It is quite common for architecture programs to speak about the low student to faculty ratio in their design studios or the open-door policy of the faculty. Harding's program is no exception. What stood out, however, is the intensity of this community spirit, especially in how you care for your citizens. The way in which the faculty and staff care for the students, and the way in which students care for one another. Care was a verb expressed throughout our visit and we find that it embodies the Harding spirit. As the program continues to grow and evolve, the team encourages you to maintain the values that you hold as a community and reaffirm them in ways that make the architecture program special and unique.

The team appreciates the program's connections to the profession. It seems to be a true partnership between the academy and practice and has the potential to develop and support students as they make their way into the professional world. We are confident that you will continue to strengthen these ties and create distinctive opportunities for your students, not only in Arkansas, but nationally and internationally.

As a developing program, the team would like to acknowledge your efforts to engage early with your university partners in developing a clear plan for assessing the quality of your program. Continuous improvement is a collaborative process, and you are encouraged to engage your students and the practicing community throughout the process.

As your program develops, you should continue to reflect on and support the mission of the University. As a small liberal arts university with a faith-based approach, the architecture program is in a unique position to frame how you will educate future practitioners and community leaders. Your context can make your program unique, and the team hopes you will continue to build on this foundation and what it can offer in the education of architects.

b. Conditions with a Team Recommendation to the Board as Not Achieved *(list number and title)*

4.2	Professional Degrees and Curriculum	Not Met
4.3	Evaluation of Preparatory Education	Not Met
5.2	Planning and Assessment	Not Demonstrated
5.5	Social Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion	Not Demonstrated
2.	Shared Values of the Discipline and Profession	In Progress
PC.1	Career Paths	Not Yet Met
PC.2	Design	Not Yet Met
PC.3	Ecological Literacy and Responsibility	Not Yet Met
PC.4	History and Theory	Not Yet Met
PC.5	Research and Innovation	Not Yet Met
PC.6	Leadership and Collaboration	Not Yet Met
PC.7	Learning and Teaching Culture	Not Yet Met
PC.8	Social Equity and Inclusion	Not Yet Met
SC.1	Health, Safety, and Welfare in the Built Environment	Not Yet Met
SC.2	Professional Practice	Not Yet Met
SC.3	Regulatory Context	Not Yet Met
SC.4	Technical Knowledge	Not Yet Met
SC.5	Design Synthesis	Not Yet Met
SC.6	Building Integration	Not Yet Met
5.1	Structure and Governance	In Progress
5.4	Human Resources and Human Resource Development	In Progress
5.6	Physical Resources	In Progress
5.7	Financial Resources	In Progress
6.1	Statement on NAAB Accredited Degrees	Not Yet Met
6.2	Access to NAAB Conditions and Procedures	Not Yet Met
6.4	Public Access to Accreditation Reports and Related Documents	Not Yet Met
6.5	Admissions and Advising	Not Yet Met

II. Progress Since the Previous Site Visit

Not applicable for initial candidacy visits.

III. Program Changes

If the Accreditation Conditions have changed since the previous visit, a brief description of changes made to the program because of changes in the Conditions is required.

2023 Team Analysis:

The program is pursuing initial candidacy and has always operated under the 2020 Conditions for Accreditation. Therefore, the program has not needed to make changes as a result of the issuance of the 2020 Conditions.

IV. Compliance with the 2020 Conditions for Accreditation

1—Context and Mission *(Guidelines, p. 5)*

To help the NAAB and the visiting team understand the specific circumstances of the school, the program must describe the following:

- The institutional context and geographic setting (public or private, urban or rural, size, etc.), and how the program’s mission and culture influence its architecture pedagogy and impact its development. Programs that exist within a larger educational institution must also describe the mission of the college or university and how that shapes or influences the program.
- The program’s role in and relationship to its academic context and university community, including how the program benefits—and benefits from—its institutional setting and how the program as a unit and/or its individual faculty members participate in university-wide initiatives and the university’s academic plan. Also describe how the program, as a unit, develops multidisciplinary relationships and leverages unique opportunities in the institution and the community.
- The ways in which the program encourages students and faculty to learn both inside and outside the classroom through individual and collective opportunities (e.g., field trips, participation in professional societies and organizations, honor societies, and other program-specific or campus-wide and community-wide activities).

Described

Program Summary Statement of 1 – Context and Mission

“In addition to respected academic programs and well-prepared graduates, Harding University is known for the atmosphere of community and common purpose that pervades all aspects of campus life. Dr. Mike Williams, the new president, announced “Inspired Purpose” as the new university motto at his inauguration on September 16, 2022. The Harding Architecture Program, which was coincidentally “inaugurated” at about the same time, is dedicated to instilling that sense of common purpose through all aspects of the program with the goal of inspiring all National Architectural Accrediting Board Architecture Program Report-Candidacy 15 students to realizing their full potential as professionals who are prepared to lead fulfilling and rewarding careers, balancing life, work, service, citizenship, and growth.

Harding Architecture aspires to expose a broader diversity of young people to the opportunities for meaningful impact available through the practice of architecture and to empower them to envision their future through a lens of optimism rather than skepticism. We are committed to assuring that all students know they belong in the program and they are valued. The program is committed to developing a balanced, comprehensive curriculum designed to build future professionals who will elevate both the perception and the practice of architecture through character, empathy, creativity, stewardship, and technical capability. Preparation for licensure and practice will be critical components of the entire curriculum, but especially at the graduate level. The Harding Architecture Program enjoys tangible support from the professional community evidenced by scholarships, facilities, resources, and involvement. We are committed to increasing support to benefit the students.”

2023 Team Analysis:

As described in the APR-C, Harding University is a private, residential, coeducational, liberal arts, and faith-based university located in Searcy, Arkansas. Harding is affiliated with the churches of Christ. The institution offers undergraduate, graduate, and pre-professional degree programs. With a student enrollment of over 4,800, Harding is the largest private university in the state. Harding’s mission is “to provide a quality education that will lead to an understanding and philosophy of life consistent with Christian ideals.” In support of the university, college and department missions, the mission of the architecture program is “to develop architects with character, integrity, and hearts for service who are grounded in technical capability and empowered to explore unlimited passion and creativity through the process of design.”

Harding began as a private senior college in 1924 when two junior colleges, Arkansas Christian College and Harper College, merged their facilities and assets, adopted the new name of Harding College, and located on the campus of Arkansas Christian in Morrilton, AR. The college was named in memory of James A. Harding, co-founder and first president of Nashville Bible School (now Lipscomb University) in

Nashville, TN. A preacher, teacher, and Christian educator, James A. Harding inspired his co-workers and associates with an enthusiasm for Christian education that remains a significant tradition at Harding University. In 1934 Harding purchased the campus of a former women's institution, Galloway College in Searcy, AR (approximately 50 miles northeast of Little Rock, AR, and 100 miles west of Memphis, TN), and the institution was relocated to its present site. In 1979, Harding was elevated from a college to a university. The university also has satellite campuses in north Little Rock and Rogers, AR, as well as in Memphis, TN. The university has permanent international campuses in Florence, Italy, and Athens, Greece, and conducts study abroad programs in Zambia, Australasia, Latin America, and England.

Harding University is committed to establishing and supporting professional degrees across many disciplines which fit the university mission of integrating faith, learning, and living. Allied Health, Nursing, Pharmacy, Physical Therapy, Engineering, and other professional degrees have successfully pursued and been granted accreditation, all within the past dozen years.

Harding is in the process of becoming only the second NAAB accredited program within the state of Arkansas. The program is built off the standing foundation of the already established CIDA-accredited Interior Architecture and Design (IAD) program, which was established in the late 1980s and accredited in 2009. Discussions about beginning an architecture program started as early as 2010 but started in earnest in 2018 when the provost initiated the Architecture Planning Committee. Campus-wide support for the addition of an architecture program at Harding has been unwavering. Following recommendations from the Architecture Planning Committee, the president proposed this new program to the board of directors in 2021 and it was quickly approved.

The program prides itself on preparing its graduates for the profession of architecture.

2—Shared Values of the Discipline and Profession *(Guidelines, p. 6)*

The program must report on how it responds to the following values, all of which affect the education and development of architects. The response to each value must also identify how the program will continue to address these values as part of its long-range planning. These values are foundational, not exhaustive.

Design: Architects design better, safer, more equitable, resilient, and sustainable built environments. Design thinking and integrated design solutions are hallmarks of architecture education, the discipline, and the profession. *(p.7)*

Environmental Stewardship and Professional Responsibility: Architects are responsible for the impact of their work on the natural world and on public health, safety, and welfare. As professionals and designers of the built environment, we embrace these responsibilities and act ethically to accomplish them. *(p.7)*

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: Architects commit to equity and inclusion in the environments we design, the policies we adopt, the words we speak, the actions we take, and the respectful learning, teaching, and working environments we create. Architects seek fairness, diversity, and social justice in the profession and in society and support a range of pathways for students seeking access to an architecture education. *(p.7)*

Knowledge and Innovation: Architects create and disseminate knowledge focused on design and the built environment in response to ever-changing conditions. New knowledge advances architecture as a cultural force, drives innovation, and prompts the continuous improvement of the discipline. *(p.8)*

Leadership, Collaboration, and Community Engagement: Architects practice design as a collaborative, inclusive, creative, and empathetic enterprise with other disciplines, the communities we serve, and the clients for whom we work. *(p.8)*

Lifelong Learning: Architects value educational breadth and depth, including a thorough understanding of the discipline's body of knowledge, histories and theories, and architecture's role in cultural, social, environmental, economic, and built contexts. The practice of architecture demands lifelong learning, which is a shared responsibility between academic and practice settings. (p.8)

Described

2023 Team Analysis:

In the APR-C, and evidenced during meetings during the Virtual Site Visit, the program has described how it responds to the six shared values. The program has described points of assessment within the curriculum as well as in non-curricular experiences. It has not identified how the program will assess these values as part of their long-range planning.

Design – The program views human-centered design and embraces the role of public opinion as the core of the curriculum. Abstract exercises are introduced early to encourage innovation and non-traditional design processes, while real-world problems and reality-based studio projects ensure students develop empathy for a range of societal and cultural contexts. Service-learning community projects, like the Habitat for Humanity project in the program's first year, support the program's faith-based approach to caring for their community. The program also describes the value of diversity of design theory and expression, and that successful design is functional, equitable, and sustainable. The incorporation of design thinking strategies in the design process allows students the opportunity for new knowledge creation.

Environmental Stewardship and Professional Responsibility – The program shares an obligation for the care and protection of the created world and for always putting others' interests before their own. Furthermore, the program acknowledges that because the construction and operation of buildings account for a significant portion of energy consumption, architects have a great responsibility for environmental stewardship, which translates into professional accountability. Both environmental stewardship and professional responsibilities are integrated and reinforced throughout the curriculum. The program content within the curriculum will be reviewed and evaluated annually to assure that all direct and indirect activities provide exposure to best practices and develop awareness of the content.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion – The program seeks to educate students on the ways in which architects can influence justice and equity in their communities. To do this, the program seeks to expand the world view of their students, provide a better understanding of different cultures, and develop a respect for all. As a part of this process, the architecture program and the university have sought to understand the ways in which Harding's past has been influenced by systemic inequities based on both racial and gender stereotypes. To ensure that the practice of architecture is just, equitable, and empathetic, the program recognizes that these same values must exist in the program itself. The program seeks continuous improvement with regard to diversity, equity, and inclusion by creating a culture of inclusion and respect and by building a diverse group of faculty and student body. The program also seeks to imbed issues of diversity and intentional inclusion into the curriculum.

Knowledge and Innovation – The development of knowledge, wisdom, and innovation are described as being central to the mission of the program. The close association with allied fields in the Department of Art, Architecture, and Design provides opportunities to explore interdisciplinary projects and exposes the students to other disciplines ways of thinking. A cross-disciplinary studio in the program's first year allows students to understand how projects are approached through collaboration and diverse approaches. The program also acknowledges that professional experience is a key component of students' abilities to innovate within the discipline. The required internship before the fifth year of the program will allow students to bring their experiences from practice into their capstone experiences in the final year of the program.

Leadership, Collaboration, and Community Engagement – The program places a great deal of emphasis and importance on leadership, collaboration, and community involvement. Collaboration begins in the first year of the program when architecture students share studio and other classes with Interior Architecture and Design (IAD) students. In future years of the curriculum, the program is structured to involve students in interdisciplinary collaboration opportunities with Engineering, Construction Science, Graphic Design, and Integrated Marketing. At the time of this visit, these courses have yet to take place, but through conversations with multiple stakeholders, the opportunity to transform these ideas into realities seem apparent. As a faith-based institution, Harding University stays engaged in community involvement through many strategic initiatives. Though not yet documented, long-range planning for the development of service projects will include opportunities to involve faculty and students in efforts to benefit both the university community and the local municipality, especially when those opportunities involve traditionally underserved communities.

Lifelong Learning – As described in the APR-C, the program fosters a sense of lifelong learning by requiring students to attend and report on at least three Art & Design Symposium events each semester. Additionally, guest speakers, professional conferences, and study abroad between the third and fourth year are further examples of the provided and encouraged continuing education opportunities. Furthermore, students are exposed to current events on campus via “required” daily chapel and are challenged to read, watch, and discuss current topics. As confirmed during the site visit, the university and the program support lifelong learning among the faculty by supporting membership in professional organizations and participation in conferences.

3—Program and Student Criteria *(Guidelines, p. 9)*

These criteria seek to evaluate the outcomes of architecture programs and student work within their unique institutional, regional, national, international, and professional contexts, while encouraging innovative approaches to architecture education and professional preparation.

3.1 Program Criteria (PC) *(Guidelines, p. 9)*

A program must demonstrate how its curriculum, structure, and other experiences address the following criteria.

The program has developed its assessment plan for the Program Criteria in coordination with the University Assessment Committee (UAC). The assessment plan includes a three-level strategy where content is first introduced to students, reinforced in a series of subsequent courses and non-curricular activities, and finally assessed in a capstone-level course. The PC/SC matrix provided by the program identifies these courses and non-curricular activities as Introduced (I), Reinforced (R), and Assessed (A). For most PCs there are two points of assessment, one at the undergraduate level and another in the final year of the program. The program uses non-curricular activities to reinforce content, but not as a point of assessment. Once the assessment courses have been taught, the program will gather and analyze the data annually to evaluate the compliance with the current standards as it works toward accreditation.

The program provided evidence of their approach to assessment in the APR-C as well as through additional materials provided in the Virtual Team Room, including an outline of the Program Criteria Assessment Plan & Report.

PC.1 Career Paths—How the program ensures that students understand the paths to becoming licensed as an architect in the United States and the range of available career opportunities that utilize the discipline’s skills and knowledge. *(p.9)*

Not Yet Met

2023 Team Analysis:

As described in the APR-C and additional materials provided in the Virtual Team Room, one of the founding principles of the program is to prepare students for the profession. The program addresses

criterion **PC.1 Career Paths** throughout the curriculum ensuring students will understand the paths to becoming a licensed architect within the United States and the range of available career paths made possible with a professional degree.

The program introduces students to **PC.1 Career Paths** during their first semester, in ARCH1010: Introduction to the Built Environment through an early exercise called “Getting to Know your Profession Scavenger Hunt.” This course was first taught in fall 2022. The required summer internship (ARCH5870) will reinforce the content following the completion of the fourth year of the program, first scheduled during Summer 2026. The criterion will be assessed at two points in the curriculum:

- ARCH4320: Professional Practice I (fall, year 4) – first scheduled for Fall 2025
- ARCH6800: Adv. Professional Practice (spring, year 5) – first scheduled for Spring 2027

The content will be reinforced in several non-curricular activities including the student/professional organizations and guest lectures, but these will not be formal assessment points.

The program is not scheduled to begin collecting data on this criterion until Fall of 2025, after which it will be assessed annually. Assessment methods include exams and research papers, both direct measures of student learning. Benchmarks have been identified for each assessment method.

PC.2 Design—How the program instills in students the role of the design process in shaping the built environment and conveys the methods by which design processes integrate multiple factors, in different settings and scales of development, from buildings to cities. (p.9)

Not Yet Met

2023 Team Analysis:

As described in the APR-C and additional materials provided in the Virtual Team Room, the program will ensure student understanding of **PC.2 Design** through multiple courses, design studios, and non-curricular activities. In courses throughout the sequence, studio projects will emphasize research and evidence-based design solutions.

The program will introduce students to **PC.2 Design** in ARCH1020: Architectural Graphics I. This course was first taught in fall 2022. An understanding of the criterion will be reinforced in design studios throughout the curriculum. The criterion will be assessed at two points in the curriculum:

- ARCH5610: Advanced Architectural Studio I (fall, year 4) – first scheduled for Fall 2025
- ARCH6780: Advanced Architectural Studio IV (spring, year 5) – first scheduled for Spring 2027

The content will be reinforced in the several non-curricular activities including the Art and Design Symposium and guest lectures, but these will not be formal assessment points.

The program is not scheduled to begin collecting data on this criterion until Fall 2025, after which it will be assessed annually. Assessment methods include project rubrics, a direct measure of student learning, and juror evaluations. Benchmarks have been identified for each assessment method.

PC.3 Ecological Knowledge and Responsibility—How the program instills in students a holistic understanding of the dynamic between built and natural environments, enabling future architects to mitigate climate change responsibly by leveraging ecological, advanced building performance, adaptation, and resilience principles in their work and advocacy activities. (p.9)

Not Yet Met

2023 Team Analysis:

As described in the APR-C and additional materials provided in the Virtual Team Room, the program's overall approach to environmental responsibility stems from the perspective that stewardship of the created world is a biblical mandate. As such, it is woven throughout the curriculum.

The program will introduce students to **PC.3 Ecological Knowledge and Responsibility** in ARCH2780: Architecture Studio. This course is scheduled to be taught first in spring 2024. An understanding of the criterion will be reinforced in courses throughout the curriculum. The criterion will be assessed at three points in the curriculum:

- ARCH4800: Building Systems Integration (spring, year 4) – first scheduled for Spring 2026
- ARCH6780: Advanced Architectural Studio IV (spring, year 5) – first scheduled for Spring 2027
- ARCH6800: Advanced Professional Practice (spring, year 5) – first scheduled for Spring 2027

The content will be reinforced in the several non-curricular activities such as field trips and travel, but these will not be formal assessment points.

The program is not scheduled to begin collecting data on this criterion until Spring 2026, after which it will be assessed annually. Assessment methods include project rubrics and research papers, both direct measures of student learning, as well as juror evaluations and pre-/post-course surveys. Benchmarks have been identified for each assessment method.

PC.4 History and Theory—How the program ensures that students understand the histories and theories of architecture and urbanism, framed by diverse social, cultural, economic, and political forces, nationally and globally. (p.9)

Not Yet Met

2023 Team Analysis:

As described in the APR-C and additional materials provided in the Virtual Team Room, the program intends to ensure student understanding of the history and theory of architecture within the context of social, political, and physical influences. Although formally assessed within professional coursework, the program will build off required general studies courses, such as ART3750: Visual Aesthetics and the Biblical Perspective.

The program introduces students to **PC.4 History and Theory** in ARCH1080: Human Behavior and the Built Environment. This course was first taught in spring 2023. An understanding of the criterion will be reinforced in courses throughout the curriculum. The criterion will be assessed at two points in the curriculum:

- ARCH3820: History & Theory of Architecture III (spring, year 3) – first scheduled for Spring 2025
- ARCH6610: Advanced Architectural Studio III (fall, year 5) – first scheduled for Fall 2026

The content will be reinforced in the several non-curricular activities such as field trips and travel, but these will not be formal assessment points.

The program is not scheduled to begin collecting data on this criterion until Spring 2025, after which it will be assessed annually. Assessment methods include project rubrics, research papers, and case studies, all direct measures of student learning. Benchmarks have been identified for each assessment method.

PC.5 Research and Innovation—How the program prepares students to engage and participate in architectural research to test and evaluate innovations in the field. (p.9)

Not Yet Met

2023 Team Analysis:

As described in the APR-C and additional materials provided in the Virtual Team Room, the program will ensure student understanding of **PC.5 Research and Innovation** through multiple courses and design studios. In courses throughout the sequence, students will employ qualitative and quantitative research techniques to investigate innovations in materials and methods related to the built environment. Additionally, many studio projects will be rooted in research with a focus on serving clients' best interests as well as the needs of the community. Graduate thesis projects will utilize research to focus on social justice issues.

The program introduces students to **PC.5 Research and Innovation** in ARCH1010: Introduction to the Built Environment. This course was first taught in fall 2022. An understanding of the criterion will be reinforced in courses throughout the curriculum. The criterion will be assessed at two points in the curriculum:

- ARCH3780: Architecture Studio IV (spring, year 3) – first scheduled for Spring 2025
- ARCH6500: Design Thesis Research (fall, year 5) – first scheduled for Fall 2026

The program is not scheduled to begin collecting data on this criterion until Spring 2025, after which it will be assessed annually. Assessment methods include project rubrics and case studies, both direct measures of student learning, as well as client evaluations and pre-/post-course surveys. Benchmarks have been identified for each assessment method.

PC.6 Leadership and Collaboration—How the program ensures that students understand approaches to leadership in multidisciplinary teams, diverse stakeholder constituents, and dynamic physical and social contexts, and learn how to apply effective collaboration skills to solve complex problems. (p.9)

Not Yet Met

2023 Team Analysis:

As described in the APR-C and additional materials provided in the Virtual Team Room, the program addresses criterion **PC.6 Leadership and Collaboration** throughout the curriculum ensuring that students will apply effective collaboration skills to solve complex problems while also understanding how to lead multidisciplinary teams, facilitate diverse stakeholder constituents, and adapt to dynamic social contexts.

The program is utilizing the strong connection between the new program and the established interior design program to provide initial collaborative design opportunities. The program introduces students to this criterion in ARCH1010: Introduction to the Built Environment. This course was first taught in fall 2022. An understanding of the criterion will be reinforced in courses throughout the curriculum. The criterion will be assessed at two points in the curriculum:

- ARCH3780: Architecture Studio IV (spring, year 3) – first scheduled for Spring 2025
- ARCH6800: Advanced Professional Practice (spring, year 5) – first scheduled for Spring 2027

The content will be reinforced in the several non-curricular activities including the student/professional organizations and community involvement, but these will not be formal assessment points.

The program is not scheduled to begin collecting data on this criterion until Spring 2025, after which it will be assessed annually. Assessment methods include project rubrics and exams, both direct measures of student learning, as well as student evaluations. Benchmarks have been identified for each assessment method.

PC.7 Learning and Teaching Culture—How the program fosters and ensures a positive and respectful environment that encourages optimism, respect, sharing, engagement, and innovation among its faculty, students, administration, and staff. (p.9)

Not Yet Met

2023 Team Analysis:

As described in the APR-C and additional materials provided in the Virtual Team Room, the atmosphere of genuine community and common purpose that has long been a hallmark of the interior architecture program has given the architecture program a great foundation on which to build. As a faith-based institution, Harding requires a high standard of conduct and character from administrators, faculty, staff, and students and the results are evident across the spectrum of the Harding family. The Architecture Student Handbook and Studio Culture document outline policies and expected behavior with the goal of ensuring a respectful, caring, and professional environment, supported by the mission and goals of the university student handbook. The program addresses criterion **PC.7 Learning and Teaching Culture** throughout the curriculum ensuring the students will adapt the learning environment of the architecture program, which fosters the development of a strong sense of community, respect, sharing, and builds lasting relationships between classmates and with faculty.

The program introduces students to **PC.7 Learning and Teaching Culture** in the first year of the program in ARCH1060: Architectural Graphics II. The content is then reinforced throughout the studio sequence. The criterion will be assessed at two points in the curriculum:

- ARCH3780: Architecture Studio IV (spring, year 3) – first scheduled for Spring 2025
- ARCH6780: Advanced Arch Studio IV (spring, year 5) – first scheduled for Spring 2027

The content will be reinforced in the several non-curricular activities including the Art and Design Symposium, but this will not be a formal assessment point.

The program is not scheduled to begin collecting data on this criterion until Spring of 2025, after which it will be assessed annually. Assessment methods include pre-/post-course surveys. Benchmarks have been identified for each assessment method.

PC.8 Social Equity and Inclusion—How the program furthers and deepens students' understanding of diverse cultural and social contexts and helps them translate that understanding into built environments that equitably support and include people of different backgrounds, resources, and abilities. (p.9)

Not Yet Met

2023 Team Analysis:

As described in the APR-C and additional materials provided in the Virtual Team Room, a component of the liberal arts curriculum, three hours of global literacy, is required for graduation. A founding principal of the architecture program is a commitment to mentor students as they develop character, integrity, and hearts for service. The program addresses criterion **PC.8 Social Equity and Inclusion** throughout the curriculum ensuring the students will understand the importance of equity, diversity, and inclusion through projects and assignments focused on ethics, community engagement, and a service-focused world view.

The program introduces students to **PC.8 Social Equity and Inclusion** in the first year of the program in ARCH1080: Human Behavior & Built Environment. The content is then reinforced in the second year in ARCH2780: Architecture Studio II, and in the third year during the summer study abroad HUM2730: Global Perspectives. The criterion will be assessed at one point in the curriculum:

- ARCH6610: Advanced Arch Studio III (fall, year 5) – first scheduled for Fall 2026

The content will be reinforced in the several non-curricular activities including the student/professional organizations and community involvement, but these will not be formal assessment points.

The program is not scheduled to begin collecting data on this criterion until Fall of 2026, after which it will be assessed annually. Assessment methods include project rubrics, a direct measure of student learning. Benchmarks have been identified for each assessment method.

3.2 Student Criteria (SC): Student Learning Objectives and Outcomes (*Guidelines, p. 10*)

A program must demonstrate how it addresses the following criteria through program curricula and other experiences, with an emphasis on the articulation of learning objectives and assessment.

The program has developed its assessment plan for the Student Criteria in coordination with the University Assessment Committee (UAC). This includes a three-level strategy where content is first introduced to students, reinforced in a series of subsequent courses, and finally assessed in a capstone-level course. The PC/SC matrix provided by the program identifies these courses and non-curricular activities as Introduced (I), Reinforced (R), and Assessed (A). For most SCs there are two points of assessment, one at the undergraduate level and another in the final year of the program. In contrast to the program's approach to PCs, content for Student Criteria is only reinforced within the curriculum, rather than in non-curricular activities. Once the assessment courses have been taught, the program will gather and analyze the data annually to evaluate the compliance with the current standards as it works toward accreditation.

The program provided evidence of their approach to assessment in the APR-C as well as through additional materials provided in the Virtual Team Room, including an outline of the Student Criteria Assessment Plan & Report. Student work has not yet been collected relative to SC.5 and SC.6.

SC.1 Health, Safety, and Welfare in the Built Environment—How the program ensures that students understand the impact of the built environment on human health, safety, and welfare at multiple scales, from buildings to cities. (*p.10*)

Not Yet Met

2023 Team Analysis:

As described in the APR-C and additional materials provided in the Virtual Team Room, the program will ensure student understanding of **SC.1 Health, Safety, and Welfare in the Built Environment** through multiple courses. In courses throughout the sequence, students will master the concepts and principles of structural resilience, acoustical control, thermal comfort, indoor air quality, lighting, and security. Individual studio projects will utilize guidelines for wellness and sustainability, such as WELL and LEED building standards. Projects and assignments emphasizing health, safety, and welfare will empower students to advocate for achievable and relevant improvements in the quality of life for all members of the community.

The program will introduce students to **SC.1 Health, Safety, and Welfare in the Built Environment** in ARCH2800: Structural Systems I. This course is scheduled to be taught first in spring 2024. An understanding of the criterion will be reinforced in courses throughout the curriculum. The criterion will be assessed at two points in the curriculum:

- ARCH5610: Advanced Architectural Studio I (fall, year 4) – first scheduled for Fall 2025
- ARCH5820: Building Technology (fall, year 5) – first scheduled for Fall 2026

The program is not scheduled to begin collecting data on this criterion until Fall 2025, after which it will be assessed annually. Assessment methods include exams and project rubrics, both direct measures of student learning, as well as juror evaluations. Benchmarks have been identified for each assessment method.

SC.2 Professional Practice—How the program ensures that students understand professional ethics, the regulatory requirements, the fundamental business processes relevant to architecture practice in the United States, and the forces influencing change in these subjects. (*p.10*)

Not Yet Met

2023 Team Analysis:

As described in the APR-C and additional materials provided in the Virtual Team Room, one of the founding principles of the program is to prepare students for the profession. The program addresses criterion **SC.2 Professional Practice** throughout the curriculum ensuring that students will understand professional ethics, the regulatory requirements, and fundamental business processes relevant to practicing architecture within the United States.

The program introduces students to **SC.2 Professional Practice** during the first semester of the first year, in ARCH1010: Introduction to the Built Environment. The content is reinforced in the third year of the curriculum in ARCH2610: Architecture Studio I, first be taught in the fall of 2023. Furthermore, the required summer internship (ARCH5870) will again reinforce the content following the completion of the fourth year of the program. The first summer internship requirement is scheduled for of 2026. The criterion will be assessed at three points in the curriculum:

- ARCH3500: Regulatory Codes (fall, year 3) – first scheduled for Fall 2024
- ARCH4320: Professional Practice I (fall, year 4) – first scheduled for Fall 2025
- ARCH6800: Adv. Professional Practice (spring, year 5) – first scheduled for Spring 2027

The program is not scheduled to begin collecting data on this criterion until Fall 2024, after which it will be assessed annually. Assessment methods include exams and research papers, both direct measures of student learning. Benchmarks have been identified for each assessment method.

SC.3 Regulatory Context—How the program ensures that students understand the fundamental principles of life safety, land use, and current laws and regulations that apply to buildings and sites in the United States, and the evaluative process architects use to comply with those laws and regulations as part of a project. (p.10)

Not Yet Met

2023 Team Analysis:

As described in the APR-C and additional materials provided in the Virtual Team Room, the program addresses criterion **SC.3 Regulatory Context** throughout the curriculum ensuring that students will understand the principles of life safety and the role architects play in protecting occupants and the public through responsible design.

The program will introduce students to **SC.3 Regulatory Context** in ARCH2610: Architectural Studio I and reinforce the content in ARCH2800: Structural Systems I. These courses are scheduled to be taught during the 2023-2024 academic year. The criterion will be assessed at two points in the curriculum:

- ARCH3500: Regulatory Codes (fall, year 3) – first scheduled for Fall 2024
- ARCH6780: Advanced Arch Studio IV (spring, year 5) – first scheduled for Spring 2027

The program is not scheduled to begin collecting data on this criterion until Fall 2024, after which it will be assessed annually. Assessment methods include project rubrics and exams, both direct measures of student learning, as well as juror evaluations. Benchmarks have been identified for each assessment method.

SC.4 Technical Knowledge—How the program ensures that students understand the established and emerging systems, technologies, and assemblies of building construction, and the methods and criteria architects use to assess those technologies against the design, economics, and performance objectives of projects. (p.10)

Not Yet Met

2023 Team Analysis:

As described in the APR-C and additional materials provided in the Virtual Team Room, the program will ensure student understanding of **SC.4 Technical Knowledge** through multiple courses. Technical capability is a core value of the program. Due to the rapid evolution of building technology in the practice of architecture, technical knowledge is introduced early in the curriculum. The program's focus on practical experience will provide reinforcement of the material, although not as a formal component of the assessment plan.

The program will introduce students to **SC.4 Technical Knowledge** in ARCH2800: Structural Systems I. This course is scheduled to be taught first in spring 2024. An understanding of the criterion will be reinforced in courses throughout the curriculum. The criterion will be assessed at two points in the curriculum:

- ARCH5610: Advanced Architectural Studio I (fall, year 4) – first scheduled for Fall 2025
- ARCH5820: Building Technology (fall, year 5) – first scheduled for Fall 2026

The program is not scheduled to begin collecting data on this criterion until Fall 2025, after which it will be assessed annually. Assessment methods include project rubrics and case studies, both direct measures of student learning, as well as juror evaluations. Benchmarks have been identified for each assessment method.

SC.5 Design Synthesis—How the program ensures that students develop the ability to make design decisions within architectural projects while demonstrating synthesis of user requirements, regulatory requirements, site conditions, and accessible design, and consideration of the measurable environmental impacts of their design decisions. ([p. 12](#))

Not Yet Met

2023 Team Analysis:

As described in the APR-C and additional materials provided in the Virtual Team Room, the program describes design excellence and human-centered design philosophy as founding principles and has developed a curriculum and learning objectives centered on synthesis of design elements.

The program introduces students to **SC.5 Design Synthesis** in ARCH1010: Architectural Graphics I. This course was first taught in fall 2022. An understanding of the criterion will be reinforced in design studios throughout the curriculum. The criterion will be assessed at the level of ability at two points in the curriculum:

- ARCH3610: Architecture Studio III (fall, year 3) – first scheduled for Fall 2024
- ARCH6610: Advanced Architectural Studio III (fall, year 5) – first scheduled for Fall 2026

The program is not scheduled to begin collecting data on this criterion until Fall 2024, after which it will be assessed annually. Assessment methods include project rubrics, a direct measure of student learning, as well as juror evaluations. Benchmarks have been identified for each assessment method.

SC.6 Building Integration—How the program ensures that students develop the ability to make design decisions within architectural projects while demonstrating integration of building envelope systems and assemblies, structural systems, environmental control systems, life safety systems, and the measurable outcomes of building performance. ([p. 12](#))

Not Yet Met

2023 Team Analysis:

As described in the APR-C and additional materials provided in the Virtual Team Room, the program assures that students will understand how building systems and assemblies influence architectural design decisions by integrating system choices into the studio design process.

The program will introduce students to **SC.6 Building Integration** in ARCH2780: Architecture Studio II. This course is scheduled to be first taught in spring 2024. An understanding of the criterion will be reinforced in systems (structural, environmental, and building) courses and design studios throughout the curriculum. The criterion will be assessed at the level of ability at two points in the curriculum:

- ARCH4800: Building Systems Integration (spring, year 4) – first scheduled for Spring 2026
- ARCH6610: Advanced Architectural Studio III (fall, year 5) – first scheduled for Fall 2026

The program is not scheduled to begin collecting data on this criterion until Spring 2026, after which it will be assessed annually. Assessment methods include project rubrics, a direct measure of student learning, as well as juror evaluations. Benchmarks have been identified for each assessment method.

4—Curricular Framework *(Guidelines, p. 13)*

This condition addresses the institution's regional accreditation and the program's degree nomenclature, credit-hour and curricular requirements, and the process used to evaluate student preparatory work.

4.1 Institutional Accreditation *(Guidelines, p. 13)*

For the NAAB to accredit a professional degree program in architecture, the program must be, or be part of, an institution accredited by one of the following U.S. regional institutional accrediting agencies for higher education:

- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)
- Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE)
- New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE)
- Higher Learning Commission (HLC)
- Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)
- WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC)

Met

2023 Team Analysis:

Harding University maintains its regional accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). The program provided a letter from the HLC (dated December 15, 2021) indicating the university's continuous accreditation since 1954 (Exhibit 3, APR-C). The HLC website lists the most recent reaffirmation of accreditation as 2014-2015, with the next reaffirmation scheduled for 2024-2025. Additionally, the program provided documentation from HLC (dated May 27, 2022) approving their request to offer the Master of Architecture and Bachelor of Arts in Architectural Studies (Exhibit 4, APR-C).

4.2 Professional Degrees and Curriculum *(Guidelines, p. 13)*

The NAAB accredits professional degree programs with the following titles: the Bachelor of Architecture (B. Arch.), the Master of Architecture (M. Arch.), and the Doctor of Architecture (D. Arch.). The curricular requirements for awarding these degrees must include professional studies, general studies, and optional studies.

Professional Studies. Courses with architectural content required of all students in the NAAB-accredited program are the core of a professional degree program that leads to licensure. Knowledge from these courses is used to satisfy Condition 3—Program and Student Criteria. The degree program has the flexibility to add additional professional studies courses to address its mission or institutional context. In its documentation, the program must clearly indicate which professional courses are required for all students. (p.13)

- 4.2.1 **General Studies.** An important component of architecture education, general studies provide basic knowledge and methodologies of the humanities, fine arts, mathematics, natural sciences, and social sciences. Programs must document how students earning an accredited degree achieve a broad, interdisciplinary understanding of human knowledge. In most cases, the general studies requirement can be satisfied by the general education program of an institution's baccalaureate degree. Graduate programs must describe and document the criteria and process used to evaluate applicants' prior academic experience relative to this requirement. Programs accepting transfers from other institutions must document the criteria and process used to ensure that the general education requirement was covered at another institution. (p.14)
- 4.2.2 **Optional Studies.** All professional degree programs must provide sufficient flexibility in the curriculum to allow students to develop additional expertise, either by taking additional courses offered in other academic units or departments, or by taking courses offered within the department offering the accredited program but outside the required professional studies curriculum. These courses may be configured in a variety of curricular structures, including elective offerings, concentrations, certificate programs, and minors. (p.14)

NAAB-accredited professional degree programs have the exclusive right to use the B. Arch., M. Arch., and/or D. Arch. titles, which are recognized by the public as accredited degrees and therefore may not be used by non-accredited programs.

The number of credit hours for each degree is outlined below. All accredited programs must conform to minimum credit-hour requirements established by the institution's regional accreditor.

- 4.2.3 **Bachelor of Architecture.** The B. Arch. degree consists of a minimum of 150 semester credit hours, or the quarter-hour equivalent, in academic coursework in general studies, professional studies, and optional studies, all of which are delivered or accounted for (either by transfer or articulation) by the institution that will grant the degree. Programs must document the required professional studies courses (course numbers, titles, and credits), the elective professional studies courses (course numbers, titles, and credits), the required number of credits for general studies and for optional studies, and the total number of credits for the degree.
- 4.2.4 **Master of Architecture.** The M. Arch. degree consists of a minimum of 168 semester credit hours, or the quarter-hour equivalent, of combined undergraduate coursework and a minimum of 30 semester credits of graduate coursework. Programs must document the required professional studies classes (course numbers, titles, and credits), the elective professional studies classes (course numbers, titles, and credits), the required number of credits for general studies and for optional studies, and the total number of credits for both the undergraduate and graduate degrees.
- 4.2.5 **Doctor of Architecture.** The D. Arch. degree consists of a minimum of 210 credits, or the quarter-hour equivalent, of combined undergraduate and graduate coursework. The D. Arch. requires a minimum of 90 graduate-level semester credit hours, or the graduate-level 135 quarter-hour equivalent, in academic coursework in professional studies and optional studies. Programs must document, for both undergraduate and graduate degrees, the required professional studies classes (course numbers, titles, and credits), the elective professional studies classes (course numbers, titles, and credits), the required number of credits for general studies and for optional studies, and the total number of credits for the degree.

Not Met

2023 Team Analysis:

As a professional degree program within a liberal arts university, 4.2.1 Professional Studies and 4.2.2 General Studies is being addressed. However, due to the university's requirements for a purposefully broad liberal arts requirements and necessary bible study each semester, and in part due to the accelerated approach to the professional degree, sub criterion 4.2.3 Optional Studies is not addressed. As described within the APR-C and further clarified through meetings with program administrators, options for electives are limited within the required 168 credit hours. The curriculum as currently described does not provide sufficient flexibility for all students to develop additional expertise outside the required professional studies curriculum.

Through conversations with program administrators, it was noted that other professional degree programs at Harding, such as engineering, have had relief from some of the university-wide required course requirements.

The program provides a sample five-year plan for students pursuing a degree in architecture. The color-coded rubric outlines the required courses for each of the semesters, throughout the duration of the learning experience. Conversations with a sample of students confirmed the rigid curriculum allows little flexibility, however that they do have the opportunity and are encouraged to take elective courses and pursue minors. Minors are being developed in Interior Architecture and Design and Construction Science specifically for architecture students though this will, in most cases, require students to complete more than the 168 total credit hours required for the professional degree.

4.3 Evaluation of Preparatory Education *(Guidelines, p. 16)*

The NAAB recognizes that students transferring to an undergraduate accredited program or entering a graduate accredited program come from different types of programs and have different needs, aptitudes, and knowledge bases. In this condition, a program must demonstrate that it utilizes a thorough and equitable process to evaluate incoming students and that it documents the accreditation criteria it expects students to have met in their education experiences in non-accredited programs.

- 4.3.1 A program must document its process for evaluating a student's prior academic coursework related to satisfying NAAB accreditation criteria when it admits a student to the professional degree program.
- 4.3.2 In the event a program relies on the preparatory education experience to ensure that admitted students have met certain accreditation criteria, the program must demonstrate it has established standards for ensuring these accreditation criteria are met and for determining whether any gaps exist.
- 4.3.3 A program must demonstrate that it has clearly articulated the evaluation of baccalaureate-degree or associate-degree content in the admissions process, and that a candidate understands the evaluation process and its implications for the length of a professional degree program before accepting an offer of admission.

Not Met

2023 Team Analysis:

The APR-C describes the university's general policies for the review of prior coursework. The Harding Architecture program, however, does not have a documented process for how transfer students' prior academic course credits are accepted and whether any gaps exist in satisfying NAAB accreditation criteria. Currently, students are not made fully aware of the previous coursework evaluation and impact on placement within the program during the admission process. As a result, students may not understand the implication for the length of the program prior to accepting an offer of admission.

As the program continues to enroll more students at the undergraduate level, it should develop clear and transparent policies toward the review of undergraduate professional coursework, including any articulation agreements with Associate degree programs. Additionally, as the program nears its launch of graduate-level coursework in fall 2025, they should develop similar policies with regard to the evaluation of applicants with pre-professional degrees in architecture and related coursework.

5—Resources

Structure and Governance *(Guidelines, p. 18)*

The program must describe the administrative and governance processes that provide for organizational continuity, clarity, and fairness and allow for improvement and change.

- 5.1.1 **Administrative Structure:** Describe the administrative structure and identify key personnel in the program and school, college, and institution.
- 5.1.2 **Governance:** Describe the role of faculty, staff, and students in both program and institutional governance structures and how these structures relate to the governance structures of the academic unit and the institution.

In Progress

2023 Team Analysis:

The program described its administrative structure and governance to comply with this condition. The team confirmed the content in the APR-C with administrators during the Virtual Site Visit. After the writing of the APR-C, the university reorganized its structure and is described below based on additional materials provided to the team and as confirmed in meetings during the Virtual Site Visit.

5.1.1 Harding University is led by a Board of Trustees and President Mike Williams and Provost Marty Spears. The College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) is organized into seventeen departments. Dean Dana Steil oversees the College. Professor Amy Cox from the Department of Art, Architecture, and Design serves as Associate Dean for CAS. The Architecture program is housed within the Department of Art, Architecture, and Design, which has four units: Fine Arts, Graphic Design, Interior Architecture & Design, and Architecture. The Department of Art, Architecture, and Design is led by Stacy Gibson. The architecture program is directed by Mike Steelman.

5.1.2 The Department of Art, Architecture, and Design is primarily governed through faculty meetings. Many of the large decisions of the department are determined through consensus or majority votes in faculty and program leaders' meetings. Department staff, as well as adjunct and part-time faculty are invited to attend and participate in all faculty meetings. Standing departmental committees are an active part of the governance process, including the curriculum and assessment committees. At the program level, the director meets with the full-time and part-time faculty to distribute advising, teaching assignments, and other duties within the program.

Art, Architecture, and Design faculty stand for election to university-level committees and have recently served on the Rank and Promotion Committee, Undergraduate Academic Affairs Committee, and the Faculty Leadership Council, among others.

The role of students in the governance of both the program and institutional structures has not been described in the APR-C or confirmed during the Virtual Site Visit.

5.2 Planning and Assessment *(Guidelines, p. 18)*

The program must demonstrate that it has a planning process for continuous improvement that identifies:

- 5.2.1 The program's multiyear strategic objectives, including the requirement to meet the NAAB Conditions, as part of the larger institutional strategic planning and assessment efforts.
- 5.2.2 Key performance indicators used by the unit and the institution.
- 5.2.3 How well the program is progressing toward its mission and stated multiyear objectives.
- 5.2.4 Strengths, challenges, and opportunities faced by the program as it strives to continuously improve learning outcomes and opportunities.
- 5.2.5 Ongoing outside input from others, including practitioners.

The program must also demonstrate that it regularly uses the results of self-assessments to advise and encourage changes and adjustments that promote student and faculty success.

Not Demonstrated

2023 Team Analysis:

The program has not demonstrated that it has in place a planning process for continuous improvement. The Harding University Strategic Plan (2018-2023) was shared as part of the Virtual Team Room documentation. The Harding Architecture program does not have a long-term planning document and is waiting for the new university-wide strategic plan to be completed to align goals and objectives between the program and the university (estimated date of completion: May 2024). The program administrators and faculty speak about ideas and possibilities for the future, but no guiding document has been provided to help inform the next steps of the program or hold the program accountable when goals are not achieved.

The professional program is currently in the second year of its development and has two dedicated faculty and 28 students. In three more years, by the 2026-2027 academic year, the program is expected to have five dedicated faculty, and 75+ students, with an opportunity to grow up to 100 students. The program administrators have been honest with themselves about student and faculty recruitment and retention. The pro forma budget indicates some of the information expected to be observed in a long-range plan but omits the layered impacts of strategic goals that further support the program's mission. These include, but are not limited to administrative support, community outreach, study abroad, DEI goals, professional experience and positioning, and capital improvements.

5.2.1 Harding University has recently initiated a new strategic visioning process. The APR-C describes how the program's multi-year strategic plan will coordinate with and support the university plan. As described, the focus of the program over the next five years is on complying with the NAAB Conditions and Procedures. The program, at the time of the visit, had not yet established a long-term plan that addresses strategic multi-year objectives beyond the requirements for seeking NAAB Accreditation, while supporting the institutional and architecture program mission.

5.2.2 The program has identified the NAAB conditions as current key performance indicators as it seeks candidacy status, in addition to factors of diversity, retention, and persistence. As the program continues to develop, they will continue to add KPIs, notably graduation rates, and a number of indicators regarding graduating student success. Student performance will be evaluated each year and then collectively over a three- to five-year period. A review of the program's compliance with the NAAB Conditions will take place annually.

5.2.3 The program described its progress toward NAAB candidacy and initial accreditation, which is its strategic focus for the next five years. This includes the hiring of new faculty and staff, an evaluation of the coursework of the initial cohort of students, and a limited renovation of Kendall Hall to support the program in its early years. The program remains on track to seek initial accreditation in 2027-28.

5.2.4 The program provided a self-assessment of its strengths and challenges. Strengths include an emphasis on human-centered design, communication skills, professionalism, collaboration, ethics, a supportive faculty, and a positive learning environment. The program recognizes diversity as well as the need for rapid growth as challenges. Opportunities for the program include further collaboration with different disciplines/degrees, and further exploring community involvement and outreach that embraces the university's mission, both locally and abroad.

5.2.5 The program continues to engage with the Architecture Working Group of the Harding Architecture and Interior Architecture Design Advisory Board. All members of the working group assist with curriculum assessment and improvement.

5.3 Curricular Development *(Guidelines, p. 19)*

The program must demonstrate a well-reasoned process for assessing its curriculum and making adjustments based on the outcome of the assessment. The program must identify:

- 5.3.1 The relationship between course assessment and curricular development, including NAAB program and student criteria.
- 5.3.2 The roles and responsibilities of the personnel and committees involved in setting curricular agendas and initiatives, including the curriculum committee, program coordinators, and department chairs or directors.

Demonstrated

2023 Team Analysis:

In the APR-C, and confirmed in meetings during the Virtual Site Visit, the program demonstrated that it has in place a well-reasoned process for assessing its curriculum. Although it has not yet begun the process of making improvements based on the outcome of assessment, the program has worked closely with the university's assessment office to establish its process.

5.3.1 In the development of its assessment plan, the program has aligned the NAAB program and student criteria with the University Learning Outcomes (ULO) and the Program Learning Outcomes (PLO). The program also described forms of qualitative assessment that will be used to annually assess the program. The university is moving to a biannual assessment plan and report, with data collection taking place in year one and analysis and implementation in year two. The program, however, currently plans to assess the program and student criteria annually. The program has also described how non-curricular experiences are assessed in the PLOs, as they are considered an integral part of student learning. As described in Section 3 of this report, the program has developed a three-tiered approach to assessment that culminates in a set of capstone experiences for all students.

5.3.2 The program has described the roles and responsibilities of personnel and committees in setting curricular agendas and initiatives. Currently, all faculty are involved in the process of aligning the NAAB criteria with courses and non-curricular experiences. It is not clear what role students will play, if any, in setting curricular agendas.

5.4 Human Resources and Human Resource Development *(Guidelines, p. 19)*

The program must demonstrate that it has appropriate and adequately funded human resources to support student learning and achievement. Human resources include full- and part-time instructional faculty, administrative leadership, and technical, administrative, and other support staff. The program must:

- 5.4.1 Demonstrate that it balances the workloads of all faculty in a way that promotes student and faculty achievement.
- 5.4.2 Demonstrate that it has an Architect Licensing Advisor who is actively performing the duties defined in the NCARB position description. These duties include attending the biannual NCARB Licensing Advisor Summit and/or other training opportunities to stay up-to-date on the requirements for licensure and ensure that students have resources to make informed decisions on their path to licensure.
- 5.4.3 Demonstrate that faculty and staff have opportunities to pursue professional development that contributes to program improvement.
- 5.4.4 Describe the support services available to students in the program, including but not limited to academic and personal advising, mental well-being, career guidance, internship, and job placement.

In Progress

2023 Team Analysis:

As a program seeking initial candidacy, the program is in progress with demonstrating that it has adequately funded human resources to support student learning and achievement. The program admits that faculty recruitment and retention for a small, faith-based program in a partially remote location of Arkansas is one of the largest concerns. The program must demonstrate that human resources and human resource development be provided for the full size of faculty and staff when the program size is fully established.

5.4.1 Full-time faculty currently balance teaching workloads to promote student and faculty achievement. While the faculty load may currently be within the University's expected range of 24-26 credits hours per year, achieving the requirements of this criterion will only be obtainable in the future if additional faculty and adjuncts are continually hired to meet the increase of the course offerings each year.

5.4.2 The program director is currently in the process of becoming the Architect Licensing Advisor for the Harding Architecture program. NCARB has set the director up as an advisor in the profession. Once the program is granted NAAB candidacy, the director will be appointed as the educator advisor for the program.

5.4.3 The architecture program budget includes a travel budget adequate to permit faculty to attend both professional and educational conferences. Faculty are required and financially supported to maintain professional memberships and licensure in their respective discipline, including annual completion of continuing education requirements.

5.4.4 Student support services include:

- 1) Student advising is a responsibility of faculty. Each student is assigned a faculty advisor prior to entering the architecture program. Advisors use the Uachieve degree evaluation and progress tracking platform to ensure each student remains on track regarding professional, liberal arts, and optional course requirements. Faculty advisors and students are required to meet near the end of each semester, prior to registration, to coordinate the student's plan for the following semester.
- 2) Prior to their first semester, incoming freshmen at the university are given the Noel-Levitz College Student Inventory (CSI) to identify perceived needs and student receptivity to institutional assistance. Counselors connect at-risk students to support and resources, including information about learning strategies, time management, career services, academic and mental health counseling, and financial services.
- 3) Members of the Architecture Working Group Charter have agreed to mentor students and assist with placement for internships and job placement.

5.5 Social Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion *(Guidelines, p. 20)*

The program must demonstrate its commitment to diversity and inclusion among current and prospective faculty, staff, and students. The program must:

- 5.5.1 Describe how this commitment is reflected in the distribution of its human, physical, and financial resources.
- 5.5.2 Describe its plan for maintaining or increasing the diversity of its faculty and staff since the last accreditation cycle, how it has implemented the plan, and what it intends to do during the next accreditation cycle. Also, compare the program's faculty and staff demographics with that of the program's students and other benchmarks the program deems relevant.
- 5.5.3 Describe its plan for maintaining or increasing the diversity of its students since the last accreditation cycle, how it has implemented the plan, and what it intends to do during the next accreditation cycle. Also, compare the program's student demographics with that of the institution and other benchmarks the program deems relevant.
- 5.5.4 Document what institutional, college, or program policies are in place to further Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action (EEO/AA), as well as any other social equity, diversity, and inclusion initiatives at the program, college, or institutional level.

- 5.5.5 Describe the resources and procedures in place to provide adaptive environments and effective strategies to support faculty, staff, and students with different physical and/or mental abilities.

Not Demonstrated

2023 Team Analysis:

The program described its commitment to social equity, diversity, and inclusion in the APR-C, but as confirmed in meetings during the Virtual Site Visit, the team was unable to find evidence of a plan that clearly outlines the program's goals regarding this condition through self-established benchmarks.

5.5.1 As a small program still in the process of building out its human and physical resources, the team did not find inequities in resource allocations. It is unclear, however, whether the program considers diversity and inclusion when making resource allocations.

5.5.2 Without a multi-year strategic planning document, the program was not able to demonstrate its plan to maintain or increase the diversity of its faculty and staff. In numerous meetings throughout the Virtual Site Visit, the team heard of the program's desire and recent success in hiring new faculty that will complement the existing faculty. Currently, there are two faculty within the architecture program. While they represent approximately the gender diversity of the students in the program, they are not reflective of the small under-represented minority student population in the program.

5.5.3 Without a multi-year strategic planning document, the program was not able to demonstrate its plan to maintain or increase the diversity of its student body. Currently, the demographics of the program do not reflect the demographics of the Harding University student population, with fewer women and students of color currently enrolled in the architecture program. The Harding University student population mirrors closely the U.S. Census Bureau population estimates (2022) for the state of Arkansas. It is noteworthy that approximately 70% of the architecture student population is from out-of-state, adding to a diversity of backgrounds and outlooks and opportunities for increased diversity beyond the state's population.

5.5.4 In the APR-C, the program described the appropriate institutional, college, and program policies as well as inclusive initiatives that exist at the university. In meetings, the team heard of the university's initiatives to address historical attitudes toward diversity and inclusion. The team also heard of the program's interest in developing outreach to underserved communities.

5.5.5 In the APR-C, the program described resources and procedures to provide adaptive environments for faculty, staff, and students with limited physical abilities. It did not describe how the program makes accommodations for varying mental abilities.

5.6 Physical Resources *(Guidelines, p. 21)*

The program must describe its physical resources and demonstrate how they safely and equitably support the program's pedagogical approach and student and faculty achievement. Physical resources include but are not limited to the following:

- 5.6.1 Space to support and encourage studio-based learning.
- 5.6.2 Space to support and encourage didactic and interactive learning, including lecture halls, seminar spaces, small group study rooms, labs, shops, and equipment.
- 5.6.3 Space to support and encourage the full range of faculty roles and responsibilities, including preparation for teaching, research, mentoring, and student advising.
- 5.6.4 Resources to support all learning formats and pedagogies in use by the program.

If the program's pedagogy does not require some or all of the above physical resources, the program must describe the effect (if any) that online, off-site, or hybrid formats have on digital and physical resources.

☒ In Progress

2023 Team Analysis:

The program has adequate physical space to support the current student body; however, the current physical facilities cannot meet the demands of the anticipated student body at full capacity. The program does have a fully approved and funded plan in place to have adequate physical space once the program reaches its full capacity by the 2026-2027 academic year. To meet the desired physical space needs, the university will utilize existing spaces, as well as subsequently renovate university spaces as the student enrollment for the architecture program increases each year. Once fully established, the architecture program anticipates having a total of 75-100 students and five faculty members.

The first cohort of students was welcomed during the 2022-2023 academic year, during which time the students utilized the third floor of the Olen Hendrix Building in space shared with the Interior Architecture and Design (IAD) program. This sharing of space will continue for first-year students, with a common first-year curriculum for architecture and IAD students. In the short term, the university has identified Kendall Hall, a short walk directly across the main lawn, as a space for the architecture program to call its home. Kendall Hall is a former dormitory building and has incrementally been going through renovation work to convert its building footprint into academic use (11,260 s.f.). Prior to 2023, the first floor of Kendall Hall had already been renovated for general university “swing” space. The architecture program is currently using a classroom on the first floor of Kendall Hall (room 121) as their second-year studio space.

The larger renovation work currently taking place and expected at Kendall Hall is on the third floor, in two phases of construction. The university has financially supported the renovation with over \$1M in funding, including the furniture package. Phase 1 work will include two additional studios, a computer lab, small classroom, four offices, a reception area, a materials library, and ancillary spaces such as restrooms, staff break room, and storage. Phase 1 work is anticipated to be completed by January 2024, allowing for the current second year students to begin occupying the space as early as the spring 2024 semester. Concurrent with the Phase 1 work will be providing a new elevator to the building, as well as the renovation of the basement into a woodshop/makerspace (approximately 5,500 s.f.). This work is anticipated to be completed by August 2024. Phase 2 work will take place during the 2024-2025 academic year, and will add two additional studios, a student lounge, and a dedicated critique space.

The architecture program has determined that dedicated studio space is critical to the students successfully achieving learning outcomes. As such, they have carefully orchestrated an approach, with full support from the university, to identify dedicated studio space for each cohort, as the program is established within its first four years:

- 2022-2023 – First-year students occupy the third floor of the Olen Hendrix Building due to a combined curriculum with IAD. The first-year architecture students will continue to share space with the IAD students for each of the subsequent years noted below.
- 2023-2024 – The first cohort (now second-year students) is located in a classroom/lab space on the first floor of Kendall Hall as their dedicated studio space. Phase 1 of Kendall Hall third floor renovations are completed, including elevator access, and converting the basement of Kendall Hall into a woodshop.
- 2024-2025 – The first two cohorts (now second- and third-year students) will be based in the newly renovated third floor of Kendall Hall. Phase 2 of Kendall Hall third floor renovations are completed during summer 2025.
- 2025-2026 – Phase 2 work at Kendall Hall is fully operational supporting second- through fifth-year students in dedicated studio space.

Further conversations with program administrators confirmed that Kendall Hall is seen as a short-term solution to housing the architecture program and that no definitive planning for the program's permanent home has been provided to date. However, a university-wide master planning process is underway, and

an addition to the Olen Hendrix Building has been discussed as an opportunity to further align the architecture and IAD programs.

5.7 Financial Resources *(Guidelines, p. 21)*

The program must demonstrate that it has the appropriate institutional support and financial resources to support student learning and achievement during the next term of accreditation.

In Progress

2023 Team Analysis:

A pro forma budget has been provided by the program illustrating anticipated expenses and revenue through the year 2026-2027 (the year of the first graduating class). The pro forma appropriately indicates an increase in faculty salaries, as well as a decrease in the student cohort as they progress through the program. Once fully established, the architecture program anticipates having a total of 75-100 students and five faculty members. The pro forma does not capture all program expenses, including any level of contingency. For a program that is committed to growing, expenses associated with travel, scholarships, student support, physical facilities, and equipment are notably absent.

Most notably, the associated costs for long-term physical facilities have been neglected. For a program that prides itself on in-person/on-campus learning, a temporary start-up approach is being utilized with the renovation of the third floor of Kendall Hall. This space is noted as serving as a “swing” space for the development of the architecture program. Long-range planning discussions suggest a possible addition to the Olen Hendrix Building as a permanent home for the architecture program. Separate from the pro forma, the university is covering the associated costs and anticipated timing for the Kendall Hall renovation.

5.8 Information Resources *(Guidelines, p. 22)*

The program must demonstrate that all students, faculty, and staff have convenient and equitable access to architecture literature and information, as well as appropriate visual and digital resources that support professional education in architecture.

Further, the program must demonstrate that all students, faculty, and staff have access to architecture librarians and visual resource professionals who provide discipline-relevant information services that support teaching and research.

Demonstrated

2023 Team Analysis:

The program has access to the university's Brackett Library, which is located directly south of the Olen Hendrix Building; both buildings form the east edge of the main campus lawn. Kendall Hall is situated on the opposite side of the lawn on the west. Brackett Library contains a dedicated architecture section and has recently increased the architecture collection from 473 to 512 printed books. The program director and other faculty have assisted in expanding the printed book collection. Additionally, faculty and students have access to several databases, including e-periodicals on architecture and design as well as the ARKLink program and JSTOR. Each department has an assigned librarian liaison that is shared with other departments. There is also a dedicated research assistant who assists both students and faculty. Students are introduced to the library and its staff in their first semester, informing them on how to properly utilize the provided resources.

Brackett Library is a heavily utilized space on the campus and one of the few facilities open seven days a week, totaling 88 hours of operation. The library has a media center with computer space and access to standard business software as well as printing capabilities. In recent years, the students have requested small study rooms, which the university has provided. The intimate study spaces have become popular, with a desire to provide additional huddle space. There are also current industry periodicals that are

available in print in the student lounge in the Olen Hendrix Building. Each student is required to have a laptop computer with specific industry-standard software including Revit, Rhino, and the Adobe Creative suite for use in design studio projects.

6—Public Information

The NAAB expects accredited degree programs to provide information to the public about accreditation activities and the relationship between the program and the NAAB, admissions and advising, and career information, as well as accurate public information about accredited and non-accredited architecture programs. The NAAB expects programs to be transparent and accountable in the information provided to students, faculty, and the public. As a result, all NAAB-accredited programs are required to ensure that the following information is posted online and is easily available to the public.

6.1 Statement on NAAB-Accredited Degrees (Guidelines, p. 23)

All institutions offering a NAAB-accredited degree program or any candidacy program must include the *exact language* found in the NAAB *Conditions for Accreditation, 2020 Edition*, Appendix 2, in catalogs and promotional media, including the program's website.

Not Yet Met

2023 Team Analysis:

As a program seeking initial candidacy, the program is not required to make available the Statement on NAAB-Accredited Degrees. The program does provide the statement to students in the Harding Architecture Handbook and Student Culture document. Upon achieving candidacy, the program must make these documents publicly available on their website, including any addenda that are issued.

6.2 Access to NAAB Conditions and Procedures (Guidelines, p. 23)

The program must make the following documents available to all students, faculty, and the public, via the program's website:

- a) *Conditions for Accreditation, 2020 Edition*
- b) *Conditions for Accreditation* in effect at the time of the last visit (2009 or 2014, depending on the date of the last visit)
- c) *Procedures for Accreditation, 2020 Edition*
- d) *Procedures for Accreditation* in effect at the time of the last visit (2012 or 2015, depending on the date of the last visit)

Not Yet Met

2023 Team Analysis:

As a program seeking initial candidacy, the program is not required to make available the current NAAB Conditions and Procedures. Upon achieving candidacy, the program must make these documents publicly available on their website, including any addenda that are issued.

6.3 Access to Career Development Information (Guidelines, p. 23)

The program must demonstrate that students and graduates have access to career development and placement services that help them develop, evaluate, and implement career, education, and employment plans.

Met

2023 Team Analysis:

The primary resource for students seeking information and career development advice is found through the University Career Center resources for the Center for Professional Excellence (CPE), which hosts events through Handshake that include career planning and advising events and presentations. The

Center also offers resume writing services, interview skills, and job search tools like LinkedIn and Glassdoor.

Though not in place at the time of the visit, the NCARB required Architect Licensing Advisor and Internship Coordinator will be filled by the program director, who will assist with job placement, internships, and licensing direction. The program has a robust relationship with local architectural firms and has scheduled firm visits throughout the school year. The program will also rely on the Architecture Advisory Board, who have agreed to mentor students and hire them for internships as well as full employment.

6.4 Public Access to Accreditation Reports and Related Documents *(Guidelines, p. 23)*

To promote transparency in the process of accreditation in architecture education, the program must make the following documents available to all students, faculty, and the public, via the program's website:

- a) All Interim Progress Reports and narratives of Program Annual Reports submitted since the last team visit
- b) All NAAB responses to any Plan to Correct and any NAAB responses to the Program Annual Reports since the last team visit
- c) The most recent decision letter from the NAAB
- d) The Architecture Program Report submitted for the last visit
- e) The final edition of the most recent Visiting Team Report, including attachments and addenda
- f) The program's optional response to the Visiting Team Report
- g) Plan to Correct (if applicable)
- h) NCARB ARE pass rates
- i) Statements and/or policies on learning and teaching culture
- j) Statements and/or policies on diversity, equity, and inclusion

Not Yet Met

2023 Team Analysis:

As a program seeking initial candidacy, the program is not required to make available any prior reports and related documents. Upon achieving candidacy, the program must make the following documents publicly available on their website: the APR-C, the Visiting Team Report (VTR), all related attachments, and the program's optional response to the VTR.

6.5 Admissions and Advising *(Guidelines, p. 24)*

The program must publicly document all policies and procedures that govern the evaluation of applicants for admission to the accredited program. These procedures must include first-time, first-year students as well as transfers from within and outside the institution. This documentation must include the following:

- a) Application forms and instructions
- b) Admissions requirements; admissions-decisions procedures, including policies and processes for evaluation of transcripts and portfolios (when required); and decisions regarding remediation and advanced standing
- c) Forms and a description of the process for evaluating the content of a non-accredited degrees
- d) Requirements and forms for applying for financial aid and scholarships
- e) Explanation of how student diversity goals affect admission procedures

Not Yet Met

2023 Team Analysis:

As a program seeking initial candidacy, the program is in the process of documenting all admission policies and procedures and sharing this information publicly.

- a) University-wide application forms and instructions are provided.

- b) The link provided for public information on evaluation of transcripts and course equivalency requires login information. The program acknowledges that not all students will graduate with an M.Arch. degree and may need an early exit strategy. They have not yet developed policies on how students will successfully transfer out of the program prior to the culmination of the fourth year.
- c) The architecture program will not accept applications to the graduate program until the fall of 2025. The application process for the M.Arch. program, including evaluation of non-accredited degrees, has not been developed.
- d) Requirements and forms for financial aid through the university are provided. However, the provided link for architecture-specific scholarships is not active.
- e) No explanation of how student diversity goals affect admission procedures has been provided. A written nondiscrimination statement is provided by Harding University. As a recipient of federal financial assistance, Harding is required by Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, as amended, not to discriminate on the basis of gender in its admission policies, treatment of students, employment practices, or educational programs except as exempted based on the religious tenets of the churches of Christ.

6.6 Student Financial Information (*Guidelines, p. 24*)

- 6.6.1 The program must demonstrate that students have access to current resources and advice for making decisions about financial aid.
- 6.6.2 The program must demonstrate that students have access to an initial estimate for all tuition, fees, books, general supplies, and specialized materials that may be required during the full course of study for completing the NAAB-accredited degree program.

Met

2023 Team Analysis:

The program has demonstrated that students have access to current resources and advice for making decisions about financial aid. As a private university, over 90% of Harding students received some form of financial assistance. These funds come from federal, state, and private sources. A variety of assistance programs are available to all students to help bridge the gap between the cost of education and the student/family's financial resources.

The program openly shares tuition, fees, books, housing, and program costs for prospective students to make informed decisions about their associated costs with education.

V. Appendices

Appendix 1. Conditions Met with Distinction

Not applicable.

Appendix 2. Team SPC Matrix

As of the date of this visit, no course content has been formally assessed as part of the program's assessment plan. As a result, the team did not find evidence that demonstrates the program's compliance with Part II, Section 1.

Appendix 3. The Visiting Team

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VI. Report Signatures

Respectfully Submitted,



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Team Chair



Michael Hamilton, AIA
Team Member



Ryan McEnroe, FAIA, ASLA, LEED AP, LFA
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