School of Architecture

Omar Khan
Location: CFA 201
www.soa.cmu.edu (http://www.soa.cmu.edu)

The SoA provides deep immersion in the discipline of architecture, intensified by the broader CMU culture of interdisciplinarity and creative inquiry.

The SoA educates students in the discipline of architecture emphasizing the role of creativity in architectural design; understanding its historical, social and environmental context; critically engaging technology in its innovation; and ethically working for social progress and justice in the built environment. Our undergraduate and graduate degree programs prepare students for the challenges facing architecture and urbanism in the twenty-first century, namely global warming, artificial intelligence and social justice. We aim to produce discipline-defining designers and thinkers in diverse global contexts.

This world-class architecture education is enhanced by our position within one of the world’s leading research and entrepreneurship institutions, and by the fundamental premise that architectural excellence demands both rigorous training in fundamentals and the development of unique specializations. Students may extend their core knowledge either through concentration in architecture subdisciplines like urban design, sustainable design or computational design, or through interdisciplinary interaction with CMU’s other renowned programs in the sciences, humanities, business and engineering. Though every SoA student graduates with intensive architecture knowledge, no two graduates leave with the same education.

In the twenty-first century, few architecture problems are straightforward. Graduates of SoA excel in the roles architects have performed for centuries - and in new roles catalyzed by the depth and breadth of their education - to create and execute innovative solutions to a huge range of emerging global challenges.

Undergraduate Degree Programs

The SoA offers two baccalaureate degree programs: the 5-year, professional Bachelor of Architecture (B.Arch), and the 4-year Bachelor of Arts in Architecture (B.A.). Both programs begin with the same studio-based curriculum in the first year, but then begin to diverge in terms of opportunities and outcomes. The B.Arch requires 10 studios and an extensive set of required professional courses, while the B.A. requires a minimum of 4 studios and fewer technical courses, all of which can be spread out over the four years of the program, and thus allow students to explore different opportunities in their studies.

Undergraduate students are admitted to the SoA without a declared degree program. By the end of the second year, students must select either the B.A. or the B.Arch degree program. The student’s academic advisors, faculty, and Head provide mentoring and information to guide the student in selecting their degree option.

Bachelor of Architecture Program (B.Arch)

The Bachelor of Architecture (B.Arch) is a 5-year, first professional degree program accredited by the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB, www.naab.org/accreditation/information/) with a carefully defined set of “Program Criteria” (PC) and “Student Performance Criteria” (SPC). The B.Arch is for students proposing to pursue a career as a licensed architect or related profession, and centers around a carefully structured set of professional and technical courses, including building design and construction, along with courses designed to broaden the social, cultural and professional contexts in which architects operate. Our students graduate with a professional degree that prepares them to excel in practice—but that also launches them into key specialties within and around the profession.

Due to the technical nature of the B.Arch program at CMU, it is STEM-eligible, meaning that in addition to one year of Optional Practical Training (OPT), an international student on an F-1 visa may apply for a 24-month STEM OPT extension following graduation.

The NAAB requires all accredited B.Arch programs to include the following types of courses:

- Professional studies - Courses required for all students with architectural content that is at the core of a professional degree program that leads to licensure
- General studies - Required or elective courses that provide basic knowledge and methodologies of the humanities, fine arts, mathematics, natural sciences, and social sciences, and allow students to achieve a broad, interdisciplinary understanding of human knowledge.
- Optional studies - Elective courses that allow students to develop additional individual expertise, either by taking 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.

According to NAAB, each degree program has the flexibility to organize these courses to address its unique mission, institutional context, or educational philosophy.

To understand the unique requirements of a professional, accredited architecture education, NAAB requires all programs to publish the following summary of accreditation from the 2020 "Conditions for Accreditation for Professional Degree Programs in Architecture": “In the United States, most registration boards require a degree from an accredited professional degree program as a prerequisite for licensure. The National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB), which is the sole agency authorized to accredit professional degree programs in architecture offered by institutions with U.S. regional accreditation, recognizes three types of degrees: the Bachelor of Architecture, the Master of Architecture, and the Doctor of Architecture. A program may be granted an eight-year term, an eight-year term with conditions, or a two-year term of continuing accreditation, or a three-year term of initial accreditation, depending on the extent of its conformance with established education standards. Doctor of Architecture and Master of Architecture degree programs may require a non-accredited undergraduate degree in architecture for admission. However, the non-accredited degree is not, by itself, recognized as an accredited degree.”

The Carnegie Mellon University School of Architecture offers a NAAB-accredited Bachelor of Architecture degree program. A minimum of 450 units is required to graduate, including 264 units of “Professional Studies,” 75 units of required “General Studies,” and 111 units of Optional Studies. The term of accreditation is effective January 1, 2018, and the program is scheduled for its next visit for continuing accreditation in 2026.

The Carnegie Mellon University School of Architecture also offers a NAAB-accredited Master of Architecture (M.Arch) degree program (pre-professional degree or equivalent + 180 units). The term of accreditation is effective January 1, 2019, and the first visit for continuation of accreditation is scheduled for 2022 (NAAB has delayed this to 2023 because of the pandemic).

The full 2020 NAAB Conditions for Accreditation can also be found on NAAB’s website at: www.naab.org/accreditation/conditions-and-procedures/ (https://www.naab.org/accreditation/conditions-and-procedures/).

Bachelor of Arts in Architecture Program (B.A.)

The Bachelor of Arts in Architecture (B.A.) is a 4-year liberal studies degree program that allows and encourages interdisciplinary exploration. The program is built around a core foundation of architectural studios and technical coursework, but more than half of the units required for graduation are general studies courses and flexible electives. B.A. students have the opportunity to double major, test the boundaries of the discipline, and explore a variety of interests. If you are a student that embraces creativity, is curious about the world around you, and enjoys engaging both the left and right sides of your brain, the B.A. program could be a perfect fit for you.

As a 4-year, pre-professional architecture program, the B.A. allows those who are interested to continue in architecture with a 2-year professional M.Arch degree program (often called a 4+2 degree), or to go on to specialize in other fields in graduate school, including urban design, landscape architecture or other fields related to design, the built environment, virtual worlds, community engagement, sustainability, and more. The B.A. also makes it possible for students to transfer into architecture from other studies.

In the first year, the B.A. program begins with the same studio-based curriculum as the B.Arch program, but then begins to diverge in terms of opportunities and outcomes. The B.A. requires only the first four studios and the core courses from the first two years of the B.Arch sequence, and these can be spread out over the four years of the program. Students may take more studios, specialize in particular aspects of architecture, or explore broadly.

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For students seeking to integrate architecture with another field of study, CMU also offers the BXA Intercollege Degree Programs. BXA students graduate with a Bachelor of Humanities and Arts, a Bachelor of Science and Arts, or a Bachelor of Computer Science and Arts degree.

B.Arch Curriculum

Minimum units required for Bachelor of Architecture 450

**First Year: Poeisis**

48-100  Architecture Design Studio: Poeisis Studio 1 15
48-025  First Year Seminar: Architecture Edition I 3
62-104  Design Ethics Introduction 3
48-104  Shop Skills 3
62-122  Digital Media I 6
62-125  Drawing I 6
76-101  Interpretation and Argument 9
99-101  Computing @ Carnegie Mellon 3
48-105  Architecture Design Studio: Foundation II (Formerly Foundation 2, now Poeisis 2) 15
48-026  First Year Seminar: Architecture Edition II 3
62-123  Digital Media II 6
62-126  Drawing II 6
48-240  Historical Survey of World Architecture and Urbanism I 9
xx-xxx  Elective 9

**Second Year: Poeisis**

48-200  Architecture Design Studio: Poeisis Studio 3 (Formerly Elaboration 1) 18
48-215  Materials & Assembly 9
48-116  Building Physics 9
62-225  Generative Modeling 9
48-205  Architecture Design Studio: Elaboration II (Formerly Elaboration 2, now Options) 18
48-324  Structures/Statics 9
48-241  Modern Architecture 9
62-275  Fundamentals of Computational Design 9

**Third Year: Praxis**

48-300  Architecture Design Studio: Praxis Studio I (Formerly Foundation 1) 18
48-315  Environment I: Climate & Energy in Architecture 9
48-250  Urbanism and the Social Production of Space 9
xx-xxx  Elective 9
48-305  Architecture Design Studio: Integration II (Formerly Integration 2, now Praxis 2) 18
48-380  Real Estate Design and Development 6
48-xxx  Architectural History III (Selective) 9
xx-xxx  Elective 9

**Fourth Year**

48-400  Advanced Synthesis Options Studio I 18
48-432  Environment II: Design Integration of Active Building Systems 9
xx-xxx  Elective 9
xx-xxx  Elective 9
48-405  Advanced Synthesis Options Studio II 18
48-381  Issues of Practice 6
48-383  Ethics and Decision Making in Architecture 6
xx-xxx  Elective 9-15
48-497  Pre-Thesis 3

**Fifth Year**

48-500  Advanced Synthesis Options Studio III 18
xx-xxx  Elective 9
xx-xxx  Elective 9

B.A. Curriculum

Minimum units required for Bachelor of Arts in Architecture 369

**Design Studios**

48-100  Architecture Design Studio: Poeisis Studio 1 (Formerly Foundation 1) 15
48-105  Architecture Design Studio: Foundation II (Formerly Foundation 2, now Poeisis 2) 15
48-200  Architecture Design Studio: Poeisis Studio 3 (Formerly Elaboration 1) 18
48-205  Architecture Design Studio: Elaboration II (Formerly Elaboration 2, now Options) 18

**Architecture Coursework**

48-104  Shop Skills 3
48-240  Historical Survey of World Architecture and Urbanism I 9
48-241  Modern Architecture 9
48-116  Building Physics 9
48-250  Urbanism and the Social Production of Space 9
48-215  Materials & Assembly 9

**General Studies**

99-101  Computing @ Carnegie Mellon 3
48-025  First Year Seminar: Architecture Edition I 3
48-026  First Year Seminar: Architecture Edition II 3
76-101  Interpretation and Argument 9
62-104  Design Ethics Introduction 3
62-122  Digital Media I 6
62-123  Digital Media II 6
62-125  Drawing I 6
62-126  Drawing II 6
62-225  Generative Modeling 9
62-275  Fundamentals of Computational Design 9

**Electives**

48-xxx  Architecture Electives 45
xx-xxx  University Electives (Outside SoA) 45
xx-xxx  Flex Electives (In or out of SoA) 103

Minors in Architecture

The SoA offers several minors in various specialty subjects related to architecture, some are only available to non-architecture students, others are only available to architecture majors, and still others can be taken by all CMU students. For the most up-to-date list of minors, see: https://soa.cmu.edu/minors/.


The Minor in Architecture sequence is for students who intend to develop intellectual links to the architectural profession. The scope of courses offered includes a full spectrum of professional issues in architecture. (Available to non-architecture majors only.)

The Minor in Architectural Design Fabrication is intended for students who wish to develop focused, disciplinary expertise in both analog and digital material methods for shaping the built environment and become involved in a community of practice dedicated to a rigorous pursuit of making as a mode of architectural research and cultural expression.
It is also for students interested in gaining advanced placement in the SoA's Master of Advanced Architectural Design (MAAD) (https://soa.cmu.edu/maad/) program. (Available to architecture majors only.)

The Minor in Architectural History is intended for candidates interested in the history of architecture in its many manifestations, including high style and vernacular buildings, western and non-western traditions, built and theoretical works, and rural to urban contexts. Students wishing to pursue the minor should meet with the Architecture advisor to determine if a course is eligible. (Available to both architecture majors and non-architecture majors.)

The Minor in Architectural Representation and Visualization is intended for students who wish to develop particular skills in architectural representation, and for those who are interested in gaining advanced placement in the SoA's Master degree program in Computational Design (MScD) (https://soa.cmu.edu/mscd/). (Available to both architecture majors and non-architecture majors.)

The Minor in Architectural Technology is intended for students who seek to develop intellectual links to the technical aspects of the profession. (Available to non-architecture majors only.)

The Minor in Building Science is intended for students that want to deepen their knowledge in the building sciences, and for those who are interested in gaining advanced placement in the SoA's Master degree programs in Building Performance & Diagnostics (MSBPD) (https://soa.cmu.edu/bpd/) or Sustainable Design (MSSD) (https://soa.cmu.edu/mssd/). (Available to architecture majors only.)

The Minor in Computational Architecture is intended for students who wish to engage with computation as a vehicle of generative, material, and spatial design exploration, and for those who are interested in gaining advanced placement in the SoA's Master of Science in Computational Design (MSCD) (https://soa.cmu.edu/mscd/). (Available to both architecture majors and non-architecture majors.)

Advanced Standing in Master Degree Programs

The SoA offers a unique opportunity to undergraduate students who wish to pursue a post-professional Master's degree in an architecture-related field. The Accelerated Master's Program (AMP) (https://soa.cmu.edu/accelerated/) offers baccalaureate students the opportunity to expedite their completion of a Master's degree, saving both time and money—and allowing them to hit the job market with specialized knowledge and two CMU degrees. Baccalaureate students can pursue a graduate degree in the following subjects: Master of Architecture (M.Arch) (B.A. students only), Advanced Architectural Design, Architecture–Engineering–Construction Management, Building Performance and Diagnostics, Computational Design, Sustainable Design, and Urban Design. An AMP student must complete all of the units required by BOTH programs, less a maximum of 48 units that can be double-counted. For instance, B.Arch + M.SSBD-Applied would be 450 units, 135 units less 48 double-counted units, or 537 total units total for two degrees. B.Arch students may begin pursuit of a post-professional Master's degree through AMP as early as their third year.

Graduate Degree Programs

Carnegie Mellon University is recognized for outstanding contributions to science, technology, management, policy, and the fine arts. The School of Architecture builds on a tradition of interdisciplinary study. The School of Architecture offers seven (7) Master’s degrees, and three (3) Doctoral degrees in the following areas of study:

Master of Advanced Architectural Design

The Master of Advanced Architectural Design (MAAD) (https://soa.cmu.edu/maad/) is a post-graduate, studio-based program that engages emerging methods of design and fabrication through architectural design to speculate upon future modes of architectural practice, enhanced construction methods, and material culture within the built environment.

Master of Architecture

The Master of Architecture (M. Arch) (https://soa.cmu.edu/march/) is two-year, studio-based, NAAB-credited (https://soa.cmu.edu/about/#naab), first professional degree program to educate tomorrow's leaders in architecture-related careers. It requires a 4-year, pre-professional architecture program such as the B.A. or its equivalent to enroll, and is thus often called a 4+2 degree. The M.Arch program provides both the broad, comprehensive training in fundamentals required for U.S. professional registration and licensure, and the opportunity to focus on, speculate in, and obtain dual degrees with other research-based master's programs in the SoA. Our M.Arch program's strategically small size allows our self-motivated students to shape their individual educational agendas and career paths as they interact directly with a broad array of vertically integrated studios and advanced research projects in the school, the university, the local community, and around the world.

Master of Science/Doctor of Philosophy in Architecture–Engineering–Construction Management

A joint effort between the School of Architecture and the Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering, the Architecture–Engineering–Construction Management (AECM) (https://soa.cmu.edu/aecm/) programs prepare building delivery professionals for careers in capital project delivery dealing with the entire lifecycle of capital projects, from pre-design to design, construction, commissioning, operation, and maintenance stages. Graduates are educated to become effective decision makers who can positively impact economic, environmental, and ethical aspects of the built environment through professional management strategies. Our graduates have successful careers in government, industry, business, and NGO (non-governmental organization) sectors, prospering in positions where design professionals continuously make large-scale capital project design, construction, and maintenance decisions.

Master of Science/Doctor of Philosophy in Building Performance and Diagnostics

Our graduate programs in Building Performance & Diagnostics (BPD) (https://soa.cmu.edu/bpd/) have long led the world in advanced building technologies that sustainably reshape the built environment. BPD deals with the comprehensive integration of building design and advanced technology, as a means of producing high performance architecture. Led by the Center for Building Performance & Diagnostics (CBPD) (https://soa.cmu.edu/cbpd/) and housed within the Robert L. Preger Intelligent Workplace (http://www.cmu.edu/igp/practices/greening-the-campus/green-buildings/intelligent-workplace.html), students have the opportunity to gain both diversity and depth of knowledge from world-renowned and experienced faculty.

Master of Science/Doctor of Philosophy in Computational Design

Our graduate programs in Computational Design (https://soa.cmu.edu/computational-design/) are among the first and best known in the country, and our legacy continues today. The Computational Design program takes a computer science view of design, applying both the science and art of computing to design problems, in relation to creation, presentation, analysis, evaluation, interaction or aesthetic expression; in real and imagined applications, both perceived and conceived. From the beginning, the program has benefitted from close cooperation with other units of the university, particularly the School of Computer Science and the Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering. Our research-based degree programs are intended for practitioners, educators and researchers in architecture, computer science, engineering and those interested in design. Our graduates go on to successful careers in government, industry, academia, and software development.

Master of Urban Design

The Master of Urban Design (MUD) (https://soa.cmu.edu/mud/) is a studio-based program distinguished by its emphasis on integrating socially engaged practice with new tools and techniques for representing, understanding, and designing cities; by the opportunity to work in trans-disciplinary teams at the intersection of the arts, humanities and technology across Carnegie Mellon's departments and colleges; and by its location in Pittsburgh—a thriving post-industrial laboratory.

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

The Master of Science in Sustainable Design (MSSD) (https://soa.cmu.edu/mssd/) is a post-professional research-based graduate program focused on enabling deep expertise, critical thinking, and investigation of innovative sustainable strategies for the design of built environments. The MSSD program explores technical and cultural aspects of ecological thinking, while enabling actionable expertise in sustainable design methodologies. Based in the legacy of sustainability teaching at Carnegie Mellon University, the MSSD program prepares students to excel in research methods, and to become experts in integrative design thinking for the future of the built environment.

Student Advising

Architecture students can receive advice from many sources, including the faculty, staff, and administration of the School. All SoA undergraduates are urged to meet with the Senior Academic Advisor to review their academic
Study Abroad

The SoA strongly encourages students to study abroad. The perspective gained through immersion in another culture and language is invaluable. A student is exposed to architectural subjects not readily available at CMU and will study architecture directly in a foreign context. The Office of International Education (OIE) is an excellent resource for getting started for study abroad planning.

Study abroad can fall into four categories: University Direct Exchanges, University Sponsored Programs, External Programs, and Departmental Summer Programs.

Students are allowed one semester abroad for which they receive studio credit except for those students at approved direct, year-long exchange programs. Students may study abroad in the Fall, Spring, or Summer semesters. Careful planning and scheduling of your courses are necessary when incorporating a study away experience into your curriculum. Students should investigate and start making decisions to study abroad by the fall of their second year, so they can plan their courses accordingly. Please see the academic advisor prior to making any decisions on what term to schedule your study away experience.

To qualify for a study abroad program other than the departmental summer programs, a student must have completed their third year of the program, have a minimum overall GPA of 3.00, and be in good academic standing (no current academic actions).

Students in SoA departmental summer programs must have completed their first year, and must be free of any academic actions for the semester prior to studying away, or permission may be denied. Students can petition the UPEC for exceptions.

Students who participate in a study abroad program for one semester will transfer non-studio course credit by submitting course descriptions of each course taken as well as an official transcript from the host institution. Careful planning and scheduling of your courses are necessary when incorporating a study away experience into your curriculum. Students should investigate and start making decisions to study abroad by the fall of their second year, so they can plan their courses accordingly. Please see the academic advisor prior to making any decisions on what term to schedule your study away experience.

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