

**NAAB ANNUAL REPORT**  
**Part II (Narrative Report)**

**Massachusetts College of Art and Design**  
**Master of Architecture Program**  
**Professor Patricia Seitz, Head, Graduate Program in Architecture**  
**Last candidacy visit: October 29-November 2, 2011**

**OVERVIEW**

The M.Arch program of Massachusetts College of Art and Design (MassArt) hosted a NAAB Visiting Team in October 2011. The Visiting Team concluded that the program had made significant progress during the first four years of candidacy---enough to warrant a reinstatement of the balance of the program's candidacy to address the remaining unmet Conditions for Accreditation. The next visit for initial accreditation is scheduled for fall 2013, in preparation for which the faculty and administration have begun implementing an academically enriched graduate program that advances the mission of the College and is unique in the Boston area.

Since the 2011 visit we have reflected upon the cross-disciplinary opportunities offered by a professional architecture program within an art school, seeking ways to leverage our success in the MFA in Dynamic Media and the MFA in Fine Art. An M.Des. program in Design Innovation is in development with an eye towards blending cohorts and creating an environment in which intellectual and disciplinary cross-pollination maximize the creative potential of MassArt's planned Center for Design and New Media.

MassArt has used the time since the last visit to strengthen its commitment to accessibility this year, providing more than \$47,000 in scholarships and \$32,000 in Teaching Assistantships to M.Arch students, many of whom come from non-traditional academic backgrounds and from countries as culturally diverse as Iran and Vietnam.

The self-assessment process has been collaborative, thoughtful and energizing, considering the program holistically while addressing areas in the curriculum that were Not Met and Causes for Concern. Specifically, the following curricular changes have been made:

**Track I (pre-professional) coursework**

1) *Sustainable Architecture* was reconceptualized with a focus on passive design strategies across buildings, climates, cultures, and a public interest project was added in which students apply this knowledge.

2) *Professional Practice I* was moved to the pre-professional curriculum.

3) *Making Cities Work* was designated as a required course with an emphasis on the role of neighborhoods, landscapes and urban systems.

4) Primary text readings and additional discussion groups were added to the architectural history courses.

5) A new requirement for a studio elective with a focus on “making” (glass, metals, ceramics, and furniture fabrication) was added to the curriculum

### **Track II (professional) coursework**

1) *Professional Practice II* was added to the curriculum to address the need for more content and assessment in financial considerations, project management and ethics.

2) The thesis sequence is now comprised of twelve credits: *Thesis Prep*, *Thesis I* and *Thesis II*.- Previously *Thesis I* and *II* functioned as independent studies with adjunct advisors, contributing to the inconsistent quality of the projects. To address this, a faculty member was hired in fall 2012 to develop course syllabi, lead weekly class meetings, and facilitate regular reviews. Thesis advisors are now selected from MassArt faculty.

3) The credits were reduced in EDAD700 and EDAD750 (*Architectural Design VII* and *VIII*) from 9 to 6 credits each to align with college standards for contact hours.

### **Section 1.4 CONDITIONS NOT MET**

*All italicized quotes below are excerpted from the 2011 Visiting Team Report.*

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

- ***How the program is progressing towards its mission.***
- ***Progress against its defined multi-year objectives...***
- ***Strengths, challenges and opportunities faced by the program...***
- ***Self assessment procedures shall include but not be limited to: Solicitation of faculty, student, and graduate views on the teaching, learning and achievement opportunities...; individual course evaluations; review and assessment of the focus and pedagogy of the program; institutional self-assessment...***

*“Although the APR contains an articulate 5-year strategic plan...it in itself does not promote timely, rigorous, and consistent self-assessment practices that integrate the evaluative perspective of all constituencies...Although the APR lists a variety of self-assessment practices--including topic-driven faculty days; curriculum meetings; combined meetings of the students and faculty; standard course evaluations; and a three-person professional advisory committee--program administrators were unable to produce substantive documentation of these self-assessment exercises...in the absence of which it would be difficult to assess...academic outcomes, measurable or otherwise.”*

In response to the 2011 NAAB team assessment the program took a series of actions to incorporate the evaluative perspectives of all constituencies and better document program self-assessment. Meeting throughout the summer and fall of 2011 and the spring of 2012, faculty, adjuncts and graduate students reviewed the NAAB Conditions and their placement in curriculum and collectively debated areas for improvement. These meetings also included discussion on how each of the conditions were met or not met. The collaborative summary, presented in the 11-30-11 Annual Report were instituted. Since that time the faculty have continued to refine syllabi, course descriptions, develop assessments and codify outcomes and evidence for each course. Students continue to be central to this process.

#### A) Program Self-Assessment

Students have been involved and critical to the evolution of the changes in curriculum made to date and noted below. Student assessments of the NAAB Perspectives and Conditions and of the curriculum and its relation to teaching the Conditions from their perspective will be included in the upcoming APR. This work is ongoing and evolving:

- Partnering with the faculty, MassArt engaged the services of Daniel Friedman, Dean of Washington University's College of the Built Environment and former NAAB Visiting Team leader to conduct a rigorous and continuing evaluation and assessment of the program's focus, curriculum and pedagogy.
- In October 2012 MassArt invited Daniel Friedman and guest critic Patricia Kucker, associate professor of architecture and associate dean of the College of Design, Architecture, Art, and Planning at the University of Cincinnati (also notably chair of the 2009 chair of MassArt's 2009 NAAB candidacy team visit) to review four projects from EDAD 310 and one each from EDAD803 and EDAD804. Both Friedman and Kucker acknowledged exemplary preparation on the part of both faculty and students, stating that presentations were clear, cogent, and well organized, exhibiting depth commensurate with thesis-level work.
- The M.Arch program is finalizing a new Advisory Board with an anticipated initial meeting in early 2013.
- Faculty meeting minutes will be included in the team room materials.
- The M. Arch project room documents the ongoing discussions of identity, mission and curriculum graphically and visually on a wall of text that is enriched as the conversations continue.
- Structural and leadership changes in Graduate Programs administration have resulted in better communication and collaboration. Using this opportunity as a means for reflective programmatic self-assessment has been helpful. For example, the team comprised of the program Head, the full-time faculty, the Dean (Associate) and the Vice President for Academic Affairs now meet weekly to review progress.

#### B) Learning Outcomes and Curriculum Assessment

- The program tasked Paul Paturzo, a new full-time Assistant Professor to address learning outcomes assessment across the curriculum. A broad range of assessment tools are now used in the studios facilitating students self-assessments as well as that of peers, and faculty and faculty assessments of students.
- New adjunct faculty are assigned a full-time faculty member for support in curriculum assessment, outcomes and course materials.
- Lois Hetland, chair of MassArt's Art Education Department, is working in conjunction with the Program Head to implement a program of continuous course assessments and evidence.
- Faculty met throughout the summer and fall to clarify curriculum relative to the NAAB Conditions and developed a range of assessment methods including forms, peer-to-peer note taking and self assessments within the studios.
- Attention to professional development and support for faculty are a priority of the College. Faculty are encouraged to apply for MassArt Foundation Faculty Fellowships which are competitive with an award of \$4,000 annually for each recipient.

### ***1.2.1 Human Resources & Human Resource Development: Faculty & Staff***

- ***An accredited degree program must have appropriate human resources to support student learning and achievement. This includes full-and part-time faculty, administrative leadership...***

*“Three full-time faculty members reside in the undergraduate and graduate architecture programs; and additional full-time faculty member teaches in both architecture and other areas within the institution. Part-time adjunct faculty members therefore teach the bulk of the curriculum. This places a large burden on a few full-time faculty...One of the full-time faculty serves as the IDP coordinator. One administrative assistant serves several programs and therefore architecture's share of this support is .25 FTE. This multiplies the administrative load already shouldered by the few full-time faculty members. At the time of this visit, no definite professional development program for faculty and staff exists.”*

Since the last Team visit, one full-time faculty member has been added, bringing the total number to five. In program administration, one FTE has been added to Admissions and .75 of the Assistant to the Dean of Graduate Programs has been assigned to support the M.Arch program Head. In combination with the addition of .25 staff support in the undergraduate department this brings the administrative support for the M.Arch program to two additional FTE supporting the M.Arch program .

The College provides significant professional development opportunities for both full- and part-time faculty. In addition, departmental and graduate program funds support conference attendance. Some of the professional development activities in which faculty participate include:

- Head of the graduate program in Architecture, Patricia Seitz, and new full-time Assistant Professor, Paul Paturzo attended the Administrator's Conference in Austin, Texas in

October 2012. Patricia regularly attends this conference. Patricia Seitz also attended the 100th ACSA Annual Conference.

- Patricia Seitz regularly attends the New England Sustainable Energy Association Conference in support of program and curriculum development.
- Meg Hickey attends the New England Sustainable Energy Association professional education conference annually and the Building Technology Educators Society biannually, at which she has presented her digital tools for teaching sustainability.
- The IDP Coordinator, Paul Hajian, attends the annual IDP conferences.
- Paul Paturzo attended and presented a paper on Assessment in the Arts at the conference on Assessment in the Arts in Colorado.
- Paul Hajian participated in an SCUP panel regarding the collaborative process for the design of the new residence hall at Build Boston; AICAD International Symposium for Learning and Teaching in Studio Art; BFA Grant with the Artward Bound program to develop "Designovate" curriculum.
- Lawrence Cheng, a longtime adjunct attended the ACSA 99th Annual meeting and presented a paper: "*Giancarlo De Carlo and the Question of WHY*", at the panel titled "*Critical Pedagogies: Architectural Education after 1968*".
- The College holds two faculty days each year bringing in presenters in assessment, and topics in education to assist faculty in their work on campus.
- Academic Affairs has a program of workshops centered on teaching excellence offered throughout the year.

#### ***I.4 Policy Review***

*"Despite repeated attempts, the team was unable to obtain and review policy documents within the allotted time of the visit."*

Graduate Academic Policy will be provided in hard-copy in the team room and are available at [http://inside.massart.edu/Campus\\_Life/Student\\_Handbook/Graduate\\_Academic\\_Policies.html](http://inside.massart.edu/Campus_Life/Student_Handbook/Graduate_Academic_Policies.html)

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

*"Although ordering systems are suggested in projects through largely gridded structural frames...evidence of exercises within the vast array of compositional strategies and ordering systems is clearly lacking. The curriculum map directs the team to four studios...AD305, AD310, AD320, and AD750. The majority do not integrate into other design thinking skills an understanding of fundamental figure/ground relationships, contrapuntal compositional strategies...Too many projects defaulted to structure or extruded area diagrams as the basis for order..."*

This content is introduced in the first pre-professional studio EDAD223/EDAD510 *Architectural Design I*, and reinforced in EDAD310/EDAD520 *Architectural Design II*. Topics include ordering

within classic buildings, urban systems, samples of ordering systems across cultures, and natural ordering systems keyed to project designs. It is the goal of faculty to incorporate student assignments in subsequent studios that focus on student ability to communicate their effective use of these systems in their designs.

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

*“The concentrated focus on New England and Boston-based projects and the lack of broader and more diverse geographic and cultural contexts for projects hinders compliance with the performance criteria.”*

In response to the Visiting Team’s assessment Cultural Diversity is now addressed throughout the program in the following ways:

- Eastern and Middle-Eastern traditions are addressed alongside Western traditions in the two required architectural history courses.
- Students in *Architectural Design II* EDAD310/EDAD520 analyze and apply a range of building systems and climate awareness found in precedents globally.
- EDAD302/EDAD532 *Sustainable Architecture* was reworked to bring an understanding of the design implications of cultural diversity by comparing multiple cultures and diverse climates to vernacular traditions in non-western countries.
- EDAD700 *Architectural Design VII* addresses cultural diversity with a focus on work within a neighborhood by developing and documenting designs that respond to local diverse cultural, zoning and economic issues.

The greater Boston metropolitan area presents many opportunities to learn with different cultures. Historically populated with immigrants from Britain and continental Europe, Boston now has large and growing groups from South America, Asia, and Africa, who are generating their own neighborhoods and cultural institutions. The city of Boston is 53% non-Hispanic/white identified ethnicity, with 25% black/African residents, a large Brazilian community and a thriving Chinatown now attracting Vietnamese, Cambodian and Korean immigrants. 50,000 Islamic immigrants attend mosques and participate in local cross-cultural activities in Boston. Previous studios set in a nearby Portuguese fishing community and Chinatown have enabled our students to experience some of our cosmopolitan cultural mix.

In light of this local environment, in EDAD700 this fall MassArt students worked with students from the Rhode Island School of Design’s Landscape Architecture program on a collaborative project in Bridgeport, CT. The design project, situated on a current brownfield that housed a former weapons facility, was informed by conversations with the mayor and focused on issues facing a diverse immigrant population, drawing upon urban landscape concepts developed by

the RISD studio as a springboard for architectural intervention within a complex urban public program.

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

*“...The team especially notes that the three deficiencies---1) the absence of evidence indicating students understand fundamental ordering systems and compositional methodologies, 2) the absence of evidence that students understand the responsibility of architecture to engage culturally diverse constituencies and contexts, and 3) the absence of evidence indicating that students understand the interdependence between applied research and the integrity of building design and performance---manifest a larger problem: that MassArt’s largely part-time faculty...has yet to demonstrate its capacity to ensure the integration of these essential requirements...risking default into the realm of the vocational (as opposed to professional) education.”*

Applied research is now integrated into many of the studios; students research and map characteristics of sites, neighborhoods, districts, history of place and human centered design issues, and apply this information to the development of design proposals. Specifically, issue 1) above is discussed above under **A.8 Ordering Systems** and applied to each studio and 2) above is addressed in **A.10 Cultural Diversity** above.

In response to 3), the interdependence of applied research and building design, the thesis sequence has been considerably strengthened in terms of rigor and consistency. The sequence is comprised of three courses (EDAD760 *Thesis Prep*, EDAD806 *Thesis I* and EDAD802 *Thesis II*), led by a new faculty member who developed hybrid critical studies/ studio course syllabi. Weekly course meetings bring together the full thesis cohort, who are reviewed individually by the full-time faculty and thesis advisors seven times over the semester. The program is testing a series of assessment tools in the benchmark reviews which provide an opportunity for students and reviewers to collaboratively articulate the next steps for the research and design project.

In addition to research topics that have an importance to the profession key assessment knowledge areas for the sequence include application of the design through writing, developing and organizing cogent arguments in the designs, and demonstration of graphic and written clarity.

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

*“The papers provided in AD401/720 binder are not graded and are reflections on readings. Students do various studies (not graded)---and make recommendations...Although student material exhibits some understanding of sustainability topics, the evidence does not demonstrate **ability**...”*

### **Course Evolution**

The sustainable design sequence has been strengthened to demonstrate ability. All studios have requirements for evidence of sustainable strategies in their projects from the most elementary in early studios---solar orientation and solar gain---to mechanical and energy systems design proposals in the later projects, including:

- EDAD302/EDAD520 *Sustainable Architecture* is a rigorous design-tools course focusing on passive strategies in form, HVAC, and energy as well as daylight openings, enclosures and thermal detailing. Systems are modeled to aid understanding of building envelope elements and principles of thermal transfer that pertain to diverse building types. The course explores graphic investigations into climate types, vernacular traditions worldwide, and the relationships between climate, building form, material and enclosure. Students select project sites that include their country of origin, comparing it to two other climate and cultural sites. The curriculum now includes a public interest project, that in spring 2012 worked with a local housing authority to develop boards for an RFP for building envelope renovations. Additional evidence of ability is provided in a graded final exam.
- Large building design and building systems are covered in EDAD720 *Integrated Systems*, an applied workshop focusing on sustainable renovation of existing structures, to build a knowledge base that is incorporated into *Comprehensive Studio* EDAD750. This year, using working drawings of a campus dormitory with outdated systems, students developed Revit models of building structure and HVAC systems, analyzed the building envelope, and developed renovation proposals for new HVAC systems that localize designs in various perimeter solar orientations. Students compared percentage-openings in the envelope, daylight strategies, and low-energy lighting systems, and dissected a window assembly to understand issues of thermal transfer critical to comprehension of building envelope systems at all scales.

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

*“...Although student design projects exhibited different attitudes in dealing with topography and slope, they did not address other issues in site design. The APR listed AD700 Arch. Design VI in satisfaction of the criterion, but the work shown was on a flat site. While this work might satisfy an understanding of site design, it did not demonstrate ability.”*

Student work in EDAD310 /EDAD520 *Architectural Design II*, EDAD320/EDAD530 *Architectural Design III*, in Track I, and in subsequent studios in Track II, has been reworked to incorporate



larger sites and more concentrated programs. The goal of each is to demonstrate an ability not only in grading (topography), but also in development of strategies for dealing with hydrology in flat and sloped sites, planting strategies that show an understanding of rooftop use, soils characteristics such as percolation and drainage, and site storage of water.

The two Track I courses present this work at different scales:

- In EDAD310, (the second studio in the pre-professional sequence) students work on a public project within a neighborhood. This year we increased the size of the site and required more focus on exterior space development.
- In EDAD320 students research at the urban scale within a district and apply that understanding of site principles to design work on a specific site.

In the Track II sequence, students tackle a complex urban site and building program:

- In EDAD700 *Architectural Design VII*, in the Track II sequence, the course evolution this semester proposes a district understanding of site in concert with a graduate RISD Landscape Architecture studio. The M. Arch students exchanged information, reviews and concepts with the L.A. students, proposing a new project situated in a large site. Students are responsible for the design of their building, for including their references and research conducted with the RISD student work at the scale of the city, and for developing clear articulated site concepts that address these issues.

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

*“...AD402 Professional Practice contains curriculum geared primarily around licensure...it does not contain information required to meet this criterion...Acquisition costs, operational costs and life-cycle cost accounting were not in evidence.”*

To address this Condition a new course was implemented in fall 2012, EDAD805 *Professional Practice II*. Informed by research of best-practice at other professional programs the course focuses on issues of practice addressing Financial Considerations, Project Management, and Ethics. Evidence of understanding of Financial Considerations includes financing and funding models and spreadsheets, feasibility and construction cost estimating. This course will need additional revamping after its first run in fall 2012 as the content, learning outcomes, and assessment tools are refined.

EDAD605 *Community Build Studio* also covers construction cost estimates materials schedules, construction scheduling, client agreements and invoicing, budget control and value engineering to reinforce the content of *Professional Practice II*.

Looking forward, the faculty is reviewing the topics and sequences of the professional development courses as they might inform the *Community Build* studio.

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

*“The APR references two courses as satisfaction for this criterion (AD402 Professional Practice and AD602 Design-Build Studio) [In} AD402...there was no evidence in the testing or assessments of student understanding...AD602...does not show evidence that it encompasses sufficient understanding of marketing, consultant selection or alternative project delivery...to meet this criterion.”*

In response to the 2011 VTR a new course was implemented: EDAD805 *Professional Practice II*. Course assignments include evaluation of project management case studies, lectures from architectural and construction professionals with written summaries of the discussions as they relate to large construction projects, and critical paths in construction project scheduling and project delivery methods. Additional evidence of understanding of this Condition includes a graded exam. (This course will need additional revamping after its first run in fall 2012 as the content, learning outcomes, and assessment tools are refined.)

This knowledge base is supplemented by EDAD602 *Community Build*, in which students are responsible for the selection and hiring of consultants (typically structural engineers) to assist in the assessment of their building details.

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

*“In AD402 (Professional Practice) the syllabus indicates that the last lecture of the semester includes a discussion of ethics and the architect’s responsibilities to the public, the client, and to the profession; the date of this last lecture was also the date of the final exam...There is no student work that documents an understanding of these topics. The class assignments did not cover that material nor did the exams provided. There was no material presented in AD602 (Design-Build) that discussed these issues.”*

In response to the 2011 VTR a new required course (EDAD802 *Professional Practice II*) was added to the curriculum, expanding upon the introduction to ethics in EDAD402 *Professional Practice I*. The content develops an understanding of the critical relationship between finance, project management and the ethics of responsibility in design and practice with readings from Thomas Fisher’s [Ethics for Architects: 50 Dilemmas of Professional Practice](#). (This course will need additional revamping after its first run in fall 2012 as the content, learning outcomes, and assessment tools are refined.)

Evidence of understanding of this Condition will include written analyses of several case studies assigned from Fisher's text, identifying alternative courses of action and relating them to the canons from the AIA Code of Ethics of Professional Practice.

***II.3 Evaluation of Preparatory/Pre-Professional Education: Because of the expectation that all graduates meet the SPC, the program must demonstrate that it is thorough in the evaluation of the preparatory or pre-professional education of individuals admitted to the NAAB-accredited degree program.***

*“Although the APR suggests that the architecture program admission policy effectively integrates its assessment of the pre-professional MassArt BFA with rigorous review of the portfolios and experience of applicants from outside MassArt or with non-traditional undergraduate degrees, the team was unable to obtain and review documentation of the application review process...”*

The policy for credit transfer request and evaluation may be found at: [http://www.massart.edu/Admissions/Graduate\\_Programs/Master\\_of\\_Architecture/Placement\\_and\\_Transfer\\_Evaluation.html](http://www.massart.edu/Admissions/Graduate_Programs/Master_of_Architecture/Placement_and_Transfer_Evaluation.html)

In fall 2012 responsibility for the processing and evaluation of all transcripts and credit transfer requests were relocated from the Office of Graduate Programs to the Admissions Office. The policy for a thorough review of preparatory or pre-professional education (which may be found online at the link above) is unchanged, however it is MassArt's expectation that centralizing the processing of these documents in Admissions will provide even greater efficiency and access for the 2013 NAAB Visiting Team. In addition, Graduate Program is now funding an additional FTE in Admissions to oversee the smooth operation of these reviews.

***II.4.3 Access to Career Development Information: In order to assist students, parents, and others as they seek to develop an understanding of the larger context for architecture education and the career pathways available to graduates of accredited degree programs, the program must make the following resources available...***

*“Despite repeated efforts the team could not access the resources required under this condition.”*

The required resources plus additional regional resources are available online here: [http://www.massart.edu/Academic\\_Programs/Architecture/Master\\_of\\_Architecture\\_MArch/Career\\_Resources.html](http://www.massart.edu/Academic_Programs/Architecture/Master_of_Architecture_MArch/Career_Resources.html)

**II.4.4. Public Access to APRs and VTRs**

*“These documents must be housed together and accessible to all. Programs are encouraged to make these documents available electronically from their websites.”*

These documents are housed in the library and available online at: [http://inside.massart.edu/Administration/Academic\\_Affairs/Graduate\\_Programs/MArch\\_NAAB\\_Accreditation.html](http://inside.massart.edu/Administration/Academic_Affairs/Graduate_Programs/MArch_NAAB_Accreditation.html)

#### **II.4.5. ARE Pass Rates**

*“Although the first cohort of M.Arch students graduated in May 2011, they have not yet had time to complete all the NCARB requirements for the ARE exam. The first graduating class will be this year, May, 2011.”*

Students have not yet taken the ARE as they are recent graduates. In spring 2013 we will be conducting a survey of our recent graduates, in addition to obtaining NCARB records to ascertain evidence of progress of our graduates toward completion of their IDP requirements. Although many of our students come from other states that have differing NCARB requirements, sitting for the exam in Massachusetts requires completion of a NAAB accredited degree.

### **Section 1.5 CAUSES OF CONCERN**

#### **1. Design Build**

*“...Despite its admirable organization and lofty aspirations...visiting team members share concern that the APR and faculty heap too much mission onto the design-build experience, as though design-build is the panacea for the diverse requirements of professional education...We commend MassArt’s commitment to underserved and nonprofit communities...but the compressed schedule of the ten-week production schedule may inadvertently distort the representation of professional responsibilities in practice...The loving attention paid to craft, material properties, assembly detailing, fabrication...believe the unavoidable reality of the team room which both in concept and execution lacked craft...Overall the student work was thin...”*

The 2011 Visiting Team’s commentary about Design/Build in the Causes of Concern addressed three discrete issues: 1) the level of craft in Team Room; 2) varying usages of the term Design/Build and 3) craft in the student work.

In response to the question of craft in the team room 1), the program has begun preparations for a more commodious, better equipped team room. A full-time faculty member has been granted course release time to coordinate and construct the team room exhibits and the student archiving of materials is now more expansive.

In response to 2) above the course content for *Design/Build*, which was previously too broad, has been redistributed across the curriculum, particularly into the two professional practice

courses. Reallocating the academic content across the curriculum has allowed this course to focus on developing a collaborative practice in a scaled aspect of the professional role.

The program recognizes that the previous terminology (Design/Build) and course content are not a substitute for the professional series of contracts that specify the *“design-build method of project delivery”* or cite a *“design-builder”* as a party to a contract with an owner as provided by the AIA contracts. Accordingly the course is now more accurately titled *Community Build EDAD605*.

In response to the question of craft in the student work 3), in order to building a robust outcome in all of our studios graphically as well as content, we have in place a plan that includes:

- Graphic Design graduate students to assist in workshops with our students, increased attention to hierarchy in graphics in the boards and verbal presentations, and systems that will attend to navigation in future team rooms.
- Increased reviews for all thesis students. All full time faculty review thesis student work 3-4 times each semester which have benchmark assessments that clarify their goals.
- In the year-long Thesis studio, writing is taught and contextualized to the students as an iterative process, coupled with organized focus on hypotheses as design questions, applied research supporting arguable conclusions, and strong design work.
- Writing in the history courses at the graduate level has been reinforced in preparation for the thesis studio.
- Students attend each others thesis reviews, contributing to the discussion of content and next steps in the design process and in thesis document development.

## **2. Administrative Resources**

*“The ratio of full-time to part-time faculty continues to be a concern, likewise the presence of sufficient administrative support for the program director, who also shoulders significant teaching responsibility...Now is the time to remedy the situation with a dedicated or shared staff FTE.”*

Since the last visit administrative support and faculty have increased:

- A new full time Assistant Professor was hired in September, 2012. As part of his full-time course load, he is tasked with assessment across the curriculum and with working with graduate studio faculty on boards and assessments. In addition, he attended the NAAB presentations at the Administrator’s Conference this fall and will play a supporting role throughout the accreditation process and beyond.
- A new adjunct to teach Thesis I and Thesis II was hired in September, 2012. In addition to teaching these courses, she has also be contracted to work on the development of new curriculum addressing writing and design through the thesis projects, and develop a range of assignments that address the relationship of applied research to the development of project designs. Her background in writing, research and teaching has established a strong base for continued development and evolution in this area.

Her work has been guided by the program head and has served to support her time previously spent on thesis oversight.

### 3. Difficulty at the Beginning

*“MassArt prepared a serviceable and well-written APR, undertook a thoughtful strategic plan, collected and exhibited representative student work, and assembled course documentation...And yet despite this effort the team observed troubling deficits, a consistent pattern of weakness and naivete in the student work, from one end of the curriculum to the other, inconsistency in the quality of craft and graphic and material acuity coming out of the program...mediocre thesis projects, which fail to exhibit a level of accomplishment commensurate with Masters level design and scholarship; and, generally (with too few exceptions), minimal satisfaction of minimum standards...”*

After an intensive review of the VTR, the full-time faculty began a series of meetings at multiple levels to include many constituencies on campus in our program in curriculum development, including the President, Dean (Associate) of Graduate Programs, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the students, and all members of the full- and part-time faculty.

The faculty and administration reviewed the program, the curriculum map and goals, the financial sustainability of the program, and all the resources at hand for student support and graduate education. Armed with the products of these thoughtful deliberations the, program:

- redistributed credits in the studios to match contact hours consistent with the college.
- added courses to reinforce curricular gaps
- refined and rearticulated our identity, mission, strategic plan including short-term and long-term curricular and program goals.
- hired new faculty to work on elevating content, design cogency, writing clarity and and relevance of thesis projects to the profession
- added discussion sections and increased course requirements in the history courses
- developed a series of workshops to support research across the program
- reexamined the entire curriculum with refocused goals through a new mission and program plan that has energized the faculty and students
- conducted reviews of mid-term work in all studios with students, faculty and two prior team chairs, Patricia Kucker and Daniel Friedman, to share their continued insight on evidence and outcomes with the faculty and students
- added workshops to the studios to support graphics layout, and midterm and final board presentation requirements.

To insure that this process continues to evolve, we set up a pilot program to develop a range of course assessment tools that we have been using in our studios. This work is ongoing and evolving:

- Our new FT faculty member and the program director with support and review by Lois Hetland, we developed a series of assessment methods. Professor Hetland teaches in our accredited Art Education Department and plays a national role in college

assessment tools:[http://communityartsed.nationalguild.org/Program/2011/Presenters-\(Page-Title-\)/Lois-Hetland.aspx](http://communityartsed.nationalguild.org/Program/2011/Presenters-(Page-Title-)/Lois-Hetland.aspx)

- With the new hire in Thesis Prep, Thesis I, Thesis II, we have instituted a rigor in thesis that requires a new level of types of evidence, research, and design work we were developing as a new standard for the program.
- The research librarians meet with each of the students in research, writing styles, thesis organization, key word searches, the development of abstracts, titles and additional resources
- With the students, we codified and tested the benchmark reviews assessments

In order to build a robust outcome in all of our studios graphically, we have in place a plan that includes:

- Graphic Design graduate students to assist in workshops with our students, increased attention to hierarchy in graphics in the boards and verbal presentations, and systems that will attend to navigation in future team rooms.

To elevate the discourse on campus:

- Writing in the history courses at the graduate level has been reinforced.
- In Thesis in particular, writing is taught and contextualized to the students as an iterative process, coupled with organized focus on hypotheses as design questions, applied research supporting arguable conclusions, and strong design work.
- All full time faculty review thesis student work 3-4 times each semester which have benchmark assessments that clarify their goals.
- Students attend all reviews, contributing to the discussion of content and next steps in the design process and in thesis document development
- Students are now required to be on campus until completion of the thesis project. These students are sought as teaching assistants throughout our program and in other courses in the undergraduate programs on campus. This semester included students working at the studio foundation level in drawing and elementary form-study courses.