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# 2019 Conditions for Substantial Equivalency

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The National Architectural  
Accrediting Board, Inc.

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Effective January 1, 2020

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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Mission of the National Architectural Accrediting Board**

The mission of the NAAB is leadership in, and the establishment of, educational quality assurance standards to enhance the value, relevance, and effectiveness of the architecture profession.

The NAAB is the only agency recognized by registration boards in the United States to accredit professional degree programs in architecture. Because most registration boards require an applicant for licensure to hold a NAAB-accredited degree, obtaining such a degree is an essential part of gaining access to the licensed practice of architecture. Accreditation by the NAAB is limited to programs based in institutions holding accreditation from a U.S.-based regional accrediting agency.

The NAAB's mission also includes the promotion and advancement of quality-assured architecture education and training standards internationally to enhance the value, relevance, and effectiveness of the architecture profession around the world. This mission is advanced through collaboration with other international architecture accreditation organizations and by offering consultation, training, and learning outcomes assessment services to international stakeholders who seek assistance regarding quality assurance and advancement of architecture education.

The NAAB fully recognizes the rights and responsibilities of the educational institutions that offer degrees in preparation for entry into professional careers in the licensed practice of architecture as defined and governed by the laws of the individual states and jurisdictions. Educational institutions are composed of a faculty responsible for the appropriate development of individual courses and curricula that are required, at a minimum, to provide each student the educational opportunity to meet the student performance criteria as defined by the NAAB.

The NAAB recognizes the institutional rights and responsibilities of the faculty to explore fundamental and innovative educational concepts, scholarship, research, methods, and technologies that exceed the minimum student performance criteria and that will lead to even higher standards of performance within the profession of architecture and related alternative careers of diverse and creative service to society.

### **NAAB Substantial Equivalency (SE)**

The NAAB Board of Directors established the Substantial Equivalency (SE) program in 2003 in order to extend its expertise and services to international stakeholders. "Substantial equivalency" identifies a program as comparable in educational outcomes in all significant aspects to a U.S.-based program and indicates that it provides an educational experience meeting acceptable standards, even though such program may differ in format or method of delivery. While Substantial Equivalency is *not* accreditation, SE recognition by the NAAB represents that a program of architecture has achieved the highest standard of quality assurance in professional architecture education.

Graduates of architecture programs holding SE recognition by the NAAB (at the point of graduation) who wish to have their education credentials reviewed by the Education Evaluation Services for Architects (EESA) are eligible for an expedited review at a discounted fee. Visit [eesa.org](http://eesa.org) for more information.

### **SE Documents**

The NAAB Conditions for Substantial Equivalency and the NAAB Procedures for Substantial Equivalency outline the requirements that degree programs must meet and procedures that they and the visiting teams must follow to ensure minimum standards and

a uniform review process. These documents also contain suggestions that programs and teams are encouraged to follow.

This document is a companion to the current edition of the *NAAB Procedures for Substantial Equivalency*. Each should be read in the context of the other.

Throughout the text, the use of “must,” “shall,” or the imperative form sets forth a minimum requirement.

Areas and levels of excellence will vary among degree programs as will approaches to meeting the conditions and reporting requirements. Nevertheless, schools must present complete and accurate information to demonstrate compliance with each of the NAAB’s Substantial Equivalency Conditions. In addition, positive aspects of a degree program in one area cannot override deficiencies in another.

English is the official language of the NAAB. All documents prepared for the Substantial Equivalency process must be submitted in English.

The *2019 Conditions for Substantial Equivalency* apply to all programs seeking continued substantial equivalency beginning January 1, 2020. Program administrators and others are advised to review the *NAAB Procedures for Substantial Equivalency* currently in effect for information on terms of substantial equivalency as well as the sequence and other procedures that apply to each stage in the process.

### **Program Self-Evaluation Reports**

The Program Self-Evaluation Report serves both as a self-study for the program and as the principal source document for the teams conducting visits 2 and 3.

1. **Content.** The Program Self-Evaluation is, largely, a comprehensive, self-analytical narrative document. It is expected to succinctly describe how a program meets each of the conditions for substantial equivalency. Photographs, tables, or other types of information that support the program’s narrative may also be included, but not to the detriment of the narrative.
2. **Format.** Schools must use the prescribed format for the Program Self-Evaluation. Each part is intended to allow a school to describe how the program’s *unique qualities* and its students’ achievements satisfy the conditions that all substantially equivalent programs must meet.
3. **Program Self-Evaluation Reports** must be submitted electronically as an Adobe PDF; the file must not exceed 7MBs. Reports are limited to 150 pages and must be formatted to fit on an 8½-x-11-inch page. Programs are further required to use the standard templates and matrices found in the appendices to this document for course descriptions and faculty credentials. Where appropriate, programs are encouraged to provide URLs for catalogs, websites, and other promotional materials.

Program Self-Evaluations should have a cover page that identifies the institution, academic unit, program administrator (with email address), chief academic officer, president of the institution, and degree program(s) being evaluated. Use the following headings to organize the table of contents in the Program Self-Evaluation.

#### Part One, Section 1 – Identify and Self-Assessment

- I.1.1 History and Mission
- I.1.2 Learning Culture
- I.1.3 Social Equity

- I.1.4 Defining Perspectives
- I.1.5 Long-Range Planning
- I.1.6 Assessment

Part One, Section 2 – Resources

- I.2.1 Human Resources and Human Resource Development
- I.2.2 Physical Resources
- I.2.3 Financial Resources
- I.2.4 Information Resources
- I.2.5 Administrative Structure and Governance

Part One, Section 3 – Program Characteristics

- I.3.1 Statistical Reports

Part Two, Section 1 – Educational Outcomes and Curriculum

- II.1.1 Student Performance Criteria

Part Two, Section 2 – Curricular Framework

- II.2.1 National Authorization and Institutional Quality Assurance
- II.2.2 Professional Degrees and Curriculum

Part Two, Section 3 – Evaluation of Preparatory Education

Part Two, Section 4 – Public Information

- II.4.1 Statement on Substantially-Equivalent Degrees
- II.4.2 Access to NAAB Conditions and Procedures for Substantial Equivalency
- II.4.3 Access to Career Development Information
- II.4.4 Public Access to Program Self-Evaluation Reports and Visiting Team Reports
- II.4.5 Admissions and Advising
- II.4.6 Student Financial Information

Supplemental Information

- Résumés of faculty teaching in the professional degree program (see p. 8). Program must use the template in Appendix 2 of these *Conditions*.
- Faculty credentials matrices (see p. 8); see sample matrix in Appendix 3 of these *Conditions*.
- Plans or images of physical resources assigned to the program (see p. 9)
- Descriptions of all courses offered within the curriculum of the professional degree program. Program must use the template in Appendix 1 of these *Conditions*.

The specific contents of the Program Self-Evaluation Report with respect to each element of Part One and Part Two are outlined in this document.

More information about the format for the Program Self-Evaluation and additional content for the Appendices can be found in the NAAB *2019 Procedures for Substantial Equivalency*.

The NAAB may choose to modify file size, page limits, and format of the Program Self-Evaluation in succeeding editions of the Procedures for Substantial Equivalency. Please consult the current edition of the Procedures for the most current information before preparing or submitting a Program Self-Evaluation.

**PART ONE (I): INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT AND COMMITMENT TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

This part addresses the commitment of the institution, its faculty, staff, and students to the development and evolution of the program over time.

- **IDENTITY AND SELF-ASSESSMENT:** The program must be defined and sustained through a robust network of policies, documents, and activities related to history, mission, culture, self-assessment, and future planning.
- **RESOURCES:** The program must have access to the human, physical, financial, and information resources necessary to support student learning in a professional degree program in architecture.

Programs demonstrate their compliance with Part One in two ways:

- A narrative report that briefly responds to each request to “demonstrate, describe, or document.”
- A review of evidence, artifacts, and observations by the visiting team, as well as through interviews conducted during the visit.

For instructions on how to present this material in the Program Self-Evaluation and during the visit, see the NAAB Procedures for Substantial Equivalency.

**PART ONE (I): SECTION 1 – IDENTITY AND SELF-ASSESSMENT**

**I.1.1 History and Mission:** The program must describe its history, mission, and culture and how that history, mission, and culture shape the program's pedagogy and development.

- Programs that exist within a larger educational institution must also describe the history and mission of the institution and how that shapes or influences the program.
- The substantially equivalent degree program must describe its active role and relationship within its academic context and university community. The description must include the program's benefits to the institutional setting and how the program as a unit and/or individual faculty members participate in university-wide initiatives and the university's academic plan. The description must also include how the program as a unit develops multidisciplinary relationships and leverages opportunities that are uniquely defined within the university and its local context in the community.

*The Program Self-Evaluation must include the following:*

- *A brief history of the institution, its mission, and founding principles, and a description of how these are expressed in the context of 21st-century higher education*
- *A description of the activities and initiatives that demonstrate the program's benefit to the institution through discovery, teaching, engagement, and service. Conversely, the Program Self-Evaluation should also include a description of the benefits derived to the program from the institutional setting.*
- *A description of the program and how its course of study encourages the holistic development of young professionals through both liberal arts and professional education.*

**I.1.2 Learning Culture:** The program must demonstrate that it provides a positive and respectful learning environment that encourages optimism, respect, sharing, engagement, and innovation between and among the members of its faculty, student body, administration, and staff in all learning environments, both traditional and nontraditional.

- The program must describe the ways in which students and faculty are encouraged to learn both inside and outside the classroom through individual and collective learning opportunities that include but are not limited to field trips, participation in professional societies and organizations, honor societies, and other program-specific or campus-wide and community-wide activities.

*The Program Self-Evaluation must include:*

- *Evidence of plans for implementation of learning culture policies with measurable assessment of their effectiveness.*
- *Evidence that faculty, staff, and students have been able to participate in the development of policies related to learning culture and their ongoing assessment and evaluation.*
- *Evidence that the institution has established policies and procedures for grievances related to harassment and discrimination.*
- *Evidence that the institution has established policies to foster academic integrity (e.g., to avoid cheating, plagiarism).*



**I.1.3 Social Equity:** The substantially equivalent degree program must describe how social equity is defined within the context of the institution or the country in which it is located.

- The program must demonstrate how and describe its approach to providing faculty, students, and staff with a culturally rich educational environment in which each person is equitably able to learn, teach, and work
- The program must demonstrate how its graduates have been prepared to be sensitive to differences in gender, culture, and customs, and be encouraged to assume responsibility as professionals in society.

*The Program Self-Evaluation must include the following:*

- *A copy of all policies related to social equity.*
- *Evidence that faculty, students, and staff have access to these policies and understand the purposes for which they were established.*

**I.1.4 Defining Perspectives:** The program must describe how it is responsive to the following perspectives or forces that affect the education and development of professional architects. The response to each perspective must further identify how these perspectives will continue to be addressed as part of the program's long-range planning activities.

- A. Collaboration and Leadership.** The program must describe its culture for successful individual and team dynamics, collaborative experiences, and opportunities for leadership roles.
- B. Design.** The program must describe its approach to developing graduates with an understanding of design as a multidimensional process involving problem resolution and the discovery of new opportunities that will create value.
- C. Professional Opportunity.** The program must describe its approach to educating students on the breadth of professional opportunities and career paths, including the transition to internship and licensure.
- D. Stewardship of the Environment.** The program must describe its approach to developing graduates who are prepared to both understand and take responsibility for stewardship of the environment and natural resources.
- E. Community and Social Responsibility.** The program must describe its approach to developing graduates who are prepared to be active, engaged citizens able to understand what it means to be professional members of society and to act ethically on that understanding.

*The Program Self-Evaluation must include the following:*

- *A narrative description of the program's response to each of the five perspectives.*
- *A narrative description of the opportunities for student learning and development within the substantially equivalent degree program that are responsive to the five perspectives.*

**I.1.5 Long-Range Planning:** A substantially equivalent degree program must demonstrate that it has a planning process for continuous improvement that identifies multiyear objectives within the context of the institutional and program mission and culture.

*The Program Self-Evaluation must include the following:*

- *A description of the role of long-range planning in other programmatic and institutional planning initiatives.*
- *A description of the process by which the program identifies its objectives for continuous improvement.*
- *A description of the data and information sources used to inform the development of these objectives.*

### I.1.6 Assessment

**A. Program Self-Assessment:** The program must demonstrate that it regularly assesses the following:

- How well the program is progressing toward its mission and stated objectives.
- Progress against its defined multiyear objectives.
- Progress in addressing deficiencies identified at the time of the last visit (if applicable).
- Strengths, challenges, and opportunities faced by the program while continuously improving learning opportunities.

The program must also demonstrate that results of self-assessments are regularly used to advise and encourage changes and adjustments to promote student success.

**B. Curricular Assessment and Development:** The program must demonstrate a well-reasoned process for curricular assessment and adjustments and must identify 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.

*The Program Self-Evaluation must include the following:*

- *A description, if applicable, of institutional requirements for self-assessment.*
- *A description of the program's assessment process, specifically with regard to ongoing evaluation of the program's mission statement, its multiyear objectives, and how it relates to the five perspectives.*
- *A description of the results of faculty, students, and graduates assessments of the substantially equivalent degree program's curriculum and learning context as outlined in the five perspectives.*
- *A description of how the results of self-assessment activities are used to inform long-range planning, curriculum development, learning culture, and responses to external pressures or challenges to institutions.*
- *Any other pertinent information.*

**PART ONE (I), SECTION 2 – RESOURCES**

**I.2.1 Human Resources and Human Resource Development**

The program must demonstrate that it has appropriate 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 demonstrate that it balances the workloads of all faculty to support a tutorial exchange between the student and teacher that promotes student achievement.
- The program must demonstrate that faculty and staff have opportunities to pursue professional development that contributes to program improvement.
- The program must describe the support services available to students in the program, including but not limited to academic and personal advising, career guidance, and internship or job placement.

The Program Self-Evaluation Report *must include the following:*

*Faculty/Staff:*

- *A matrix for each of the two academic years prior to the preparation of the Program Self-Evaluation that identifies each faculty member, the courses he/she was assigned during that time, and the specific credentials, experience, and research that supports these assignments. In the case of adjuncts or visiting professors, only those individuals who taught in the two academic years prior to the visit should be identified. (NOTE 1: See Appendix 3 for a template for this matrix.) (NOTE 2: The faculty matrix should be updated for the current academic year and placed in the team room.)*
- *A résumé (see the template in Appendix 2) for each full-time faculty member who taught in the program during the two academic years before the preparation of the Program Self-Evaluation.*
- *A description of the institution's policies and procedures relative to social equity or diversity initiatives.*
- *The school's policy regarding human resource development opportunities, such as:*
  - *A description of the manner in which faculty members remain current in their knowledge of the changing demands of practice and licensure.*
  - *A description of the resources (including financial) available to faculty and the extent to which faculty teaching in the program are able to take advantage of these resources.*
  - *Evidence of the school's facilitation of faculty research, scholarship, and creative activities, including the granting of sabbatical leaves and unpaid leaves of absence, opportunities for the acquisition of new skills and knowledge, and support of attendance at professional meetings.*
- *A description of the policies, procedures, and criteria for faculty appointment, promotion, and when applicable, tenure.*

**I.2.2 Physical Resources:** The program must describe the physical resources available and how they support the pedagogical approach and student achievement.

Physical resources include but are not limited to the following:

- Space to support and encourage studio-based learning.
- Space to support and encourage didactic and interactive learning, including labs, shops, and equipment.
- Space to support and encourage the full range of faculty roles and responsibilities, including preparation for teaching, research, mentoring, and student advising.

- Information 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, on-site, or hybrid formats have on digital and physical resources.<sup>1</sup>

*The Program Self-Evaluation must include the following:*

- *A general description, together with labeled 8-1/2" x 11" plans of the physical plant, including seminar rooms, lecture halls, studios, offices, project review and exhibition areas, libraries, computer facilities, workshops, and research areas.*
- *A description of any changes to the physical facilities either under construction or proposed.*
- *A description of the hardware, software, networks, and other resources available institution-wide to students and faculty including those resources dedicated to the professional architecture program.*
- *Identification of any significant problem that impacts the operation or services, with a brief explanation of plans by the program or institutional to address it.*

**I.2.3 Financial Resources:** The program must demonstrate that it has appropriate financial resources to support student learning and achievement.

*The Program Self-Evaluation must include the following:*

*Program budgets:*

- *Current fiscal year report(s) showing revenue and expenses from all sources.*
- *A brief narrative describing:*
  - *Pending reductions or increases in enrollment and plans for addressing these changes.*
  - *Pending reductions or increases in funding and plans for addressing these changes.*
  - *Recent changes in funding models for faculty, instruction, overhead, or facilities since the last visit (applies only to visit three) and plans for addressing these changes (include tables if appropriate).*
  - *Any other financial issues the program and/or the institution may be facing.*

**I.2.4 Information Resources:** The program must demonstrate that all students, faculty, and staff have convenient, equitable access to 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 information services that teach and develop the research, evaluative, and critical thinking skills necessary for professional practice and lifelong learning.

*The Program Self-Evaluation must include the following:*

- *A description of the institutional context and administrative structure of the library and visual resources.*
- *An assessment of the library and visual resource collections, services, staff, facilities, and equipment that does the following:*
  - *Describes the content, extent, and formats represented in the current collection, including subject areas represented.*
  - *Evaluates the degree to which information resources and services support the mission, planning, curriculum, and research specialties of the program.*

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<sup>1</sup> In reviewing a program's physical resources, the NAAB is not offering an opinion as to whether, or certifying that, the institution's facilities comply with all applicable fire, safety, building, and health codes and regulations.

- *Demonstrates sufficient funding to enable continuous collection growth.*
- *Identifies any significant problem that affects the operation or services of the libraries, visual resources collections, and other information resource facilities.*

### **I.2.5 Administrative Structure and Governance**

- **Administrative Structure:** The program must describe its administrative structure and identify key personnel within the context of the program and school, college, and institution.
- **Governance:** The program must describe the role of faculty, staff, and students in both program and institutional governance structures. The program must describe the relationship of these structures to the governance structures of the academic unit and the institution.

*The Program Self-Evaluation must include the following:*

- *A description of the administrative structure of the program, the academic unit within which it is located, and the institution.*
- *A description of the opportunities for involvement in governance, including curriculum development, by faculty, staff, and students in the substantially equivalent degree program.*
- *A list of other degree programs, if any, offered in the same administrative unit as the substantially equivalent architecture degree program.*

**Part One (I), Section 3: Program Characteristics**

**I.3.1 Statistical Reports**

Programs must provide statistical data on their students and faculty.

- **Program student characteristics**
  - Number of students enrolled in the substantially equivalent degree program(s).
  - Qualifications of students admitted in the fiscal year prior to the upcoming visit compared to those admitted in the fiscal year prior to the last visit.
  - Time to graduation.
    - Percentage of matriculating students who complete the substantially equivalent degree program within the normal time to completion for each academic year since the last visit (or the past six years).
    - Percentage that complete the substantially equivalent degree program within 150% of the normal time to completion for each academic year since the previous visit.
  
- **Program faculty characteristics**
  - Number of faculty by rank (e.g., professor, associate professor, assistant professor)
  - Number of full-time faculty and part-time faculty
  - Number of faculty promoted each year since the last visit (or the past six years)
  - Number of faculty maintaining licenses in the country of the program each year since the last visit

## **PART TWO (II): EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES AND CURRICULUM**

This part has four sections that address the following:

- **STUDENT PERFORMANCE.** This section includes the Student Performance Criteria (SPC). Substantially equivalent degree programs must demonstrate that graduates are learning at the level of achievement defined for each of the SPC listed in this part. Compliance will be evaluated through the review of student work.
- **CURRICULAR FRAMEWORK.** This section addresses institutional quality assurance and national authorization, credit hour requirements, general education, and access to optional studies.
- **EVALUATION OF PREPARATORY EDUCATION.** The NAAB recognizes that students entering a professional degree program from a preprofessional program and those entering from a non-preprofessional degree program have different needs, aptitudes, and knowledge bases. In this section, programs are required to demonstrate the process by which incoming students are evaluated and to document that the SPC expected to have been met in educational experiences at other institutions have indeed been met.
- **PUBLIC INFORMATION.** The NAAB expects substantially equivalent degree programs to provide information to the public about substantial equivalency activities and the relationship between the program and the NAAB, admissions and advising, and career information.

Programs demonstrate their compliance with Part Two in four ways:

- A narrative report that briefly responds to each request to “describe, document, or demonstrate.”
- A review of evidence, artifacts, and observations by the visiting team, as well as through interviews conducted during the visit.
- A review of student work that demonstrates student achievement of the SPC at the required level of learning.
- A review of web sites, URLs, and other electronic materials.

For instructions on how to present this material in the Program Self-Evaluation Report and during the visit, see the NAAB *Procedures for SE*.

**PART TWO (II), SECTION 1 – STUDENT PERFORMANCE CRITERIA**

The substantially equivalent degree program must demonstrate that each graduate possesses the knowledge and skills defined by the Student Performance Criteria set out below. The knowledge and skills defined here represent those required to prepare graduates for the path to internship, examination, and licensure and to engage in related fields. The program must provide student work as evidence that its graduates have satisfied each criterion.

The criteria encompass two levels of accomplishment<sup>2</sup>:

- **Understanding**—The capacity to classify, compare, summarize, explain and/or interpret information.
- **Ability**—Proficiency in using specific information to accomplish a task, correctly selecting the appropriate information, and accurately applying it to the solution of a specific problem, while also distinguishing the effects of its implementation.

**II.1.1 Student Performance Criteria (SPC):** The NAAB establishes Student Performance Criteria to help substantially equivalent degree programs prepare students for the profession while encouraging educational practices suited to the individual degree program. The SPC are organized into realms to more easily understand the relationships between each criterion.

**Realm A: Critical Thinking and Representation**

Graduates from substantially equivalent degree program must be able to build abstract relationships and understand the impact of ideas based on the study and analysis of multiple theoretical, social, political, economic, cultural, and environmental contexts. Graduates must also be able to use a diverse range of skills to think about and convey architectural ideas, including writing, investigating, speaking, drawing, and modeling.

- Being broadly educated
- Valuing lifelong inquisitiveness
- Communicating graphically in a range of media
- Recognizing the assessment of evidence
- Comprehending people, place, and context
- Recognizing the disparate needs of client, community, and society

The accredited degree program must demonstrate that each graduate possesses the following:

- A.1 Professional Communication Skills: *Ability* to write and speak effectively and use appropriate representational media for both, within the profession and with the public.
- A.2 Design Thinking Skills: *Ability* to raise clear and precise questions, use abstract ideas to interpret information, consider diverse points of view, reach well-reasoned conclusions, and test alternative outcomes against relevant criteria and standards.
- A.3 Investigative Skills: *Ability* to gather, assess, record, and comparatively evaluate relevant information and performance in order to support conclusions related to a specific project or assignment.

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<sup>2</sup> See also *Taxonomy for Learning, Teaching and Assessing: A Revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*. L.W. Anderson & D.R. Krathwold, Eds. (New York: Longman 2001).



- A.4 Architectural Design Skills: *Ability* to effectively use basic formal, organizational and environmental principles and the capacity of each to inform two- and three-dimensional design.
- A.5 Ordering Systems: *Ability* to apply the fundamentals of both natural and formal ordering systems and the capacity of each to inform two- and three-dimensional design.
- A.6 Use of Precedents: *Ability* to examine and comprehend the fundamental principles present in relevant precedents and to make informed choices about the incorporation of such principles into architecture and urban design projects.
- A.7 History and Global Culture: *Understanding* of the parallel and divergent histories of architecture and the cultural norms of a variety of indigenous, vernacular, local, and regional settings in terms of their political, economic, social, ecological, and technological factors.
- A.8 Cultural Diversity and Social Equity: *Understanding* of the diverse needs, values, behavioral norms, physical abilities, and social and spatial patterns that characterize different cultures and individuals and the responsibility of the architect to ensure equity of access to sites, buildings, and structures.

**Realm B: Integrated Building Practices, Technical Skills, and Knowledge:**

Graduates from substantially equivalent degree program must be able to comprehend the technical aspects of design, systems, and materials and be able to apply that comprehension to architectural solutions. In addition, the impact of such decisions on the environment must be well considered.

Student learning aspirations for this realm include

- Creating building designs with well-integrated systems.
- Comprehending constructability.
- Integrating the principles of environmental stewardship.
- Conveying technical information accurately

The substantially equivalent degree program must demonstrate that each graduate possesses skills in the following areas

- B.1 Pre-Design: *Ability* to prepare a comprehensive program for an architecture project that includes an assessment of client and user needs; an inventory of spaces and their requirements; an analysis of site conditions (including existing buildings); a review of the relevant building codes and standards, including relevant sustainability requirements, and an assessment of their implications for the project; and a definition of site selection and design assessment criteria.
- B.2 Site Design: *Ability* to respond to site characteristics, including urban context and developmental patterning, historical fabric, soil, topography, ecology, climate, and building orientation, in the development of a project design.
- B.3 Codes and Regulations: *Ability* to design sites, facilities, and systems that are responsive to relevant codes and regulations, and include the principles of local life-safety and accessibility standards.
- B.4 Technical Documentation: *Ability* to make technically clear drawings, prepare outline specifications, and construct models illustrating and

identifying the assembly of materials, systems, and components appropriate for a building design.

- B.5 Structural Systems: *Ability* to demonstrate the basic principles of structural systems and their ability to withstand gravitational, seismic, and lateral forces, as well as the selection and application of the appropriate structural system.
- B.6 Environmental Systems: *Ability* to demonstrate the principles of environmental systems' design, how design criteria can vary by geographic region, and the tools used for performance assessment. This demonstration must include active and passive heating and cooling, solar geometry, daylighting, natural ventilation, indoor air quality, solar systems, lighting systems, and acoustics.
- B.7 Building Envelope Systems and Assemblies: *Understanding* of the basic principles involved in the appropriate selection and application of building envelope systems relative to fundamental performance, aesthetics, moisture transfer, durability, and energy and material resources.
- B.8 Building Materials and Assemblies: *Understanding* of the basic principles used in the appropriate selection of interior and exterior construction materials, finishes, products, components, and assemblies based on their inherent performance, including environmental impact and reuse.
- B.9 Building Service Systems: *Understanding* of the basic principles and appropriate application and performance of building service systems, including lighting, mechanical, plumbing, electrical, communication, vertical transportation, security, and fire protection systems.
- B.10 Financial Considerations: *Understanding* of the fundamentals of building costs, which must include project financing methods and feasibility, construction cost estimating, construction scheduling, operational costs, and life-cycle costs.

**Realm C: Integrated Architectural Solutions.**

Graduates from substantially equivalent degree program must be able to demonstrate that they have the ability to synthesize a wide range of variables into an integrated design solution.

Student learning aspirations for this realm include

- Comprehending the importance of research pursuits to inform the design process.
- Evaluating options and reconciling the implications of design decisions across systems and scales.
- Synthesizing variables from diverse and complex systems into an integrated architectural solution.
- Responding to environmental stewardship goals across multiple systems for an integrated solution.
- Knowing societal and professional responsibilities

- C.1 Research: *Understanding* of the theoretical and applied research methodologies and practices used during the design process.
- C.2 Integrated Evaluations and Decision-Making Design Process: *Ability* to demonstrate the skills associated with making integrated decisions across multiple systems and variables in the completion of a design project. This

demonstration includes problem identification, setting evaluative criteria, analyzing solutions, and predicting the effectiveness of implementation.

- C.3 Integrative Design: *Ability* to make design decisions within a complex architecture project while demonstrating broad integration and consideration of environmental stewardship, technical documentation, accessibility, site conditions, life safety, environmental systems, structural systems, and building envelope systems and assemblies.

**Realm D: Professional Practice.**

Graduates from substantially equivalent degree program must understand business principles for the practice of architecture, including management, advocacy, and the need to act legally, ethically, and critically for the good of the client, society, and the public.

Student learning aspirations for this realm include

- Comprehending the business of architecture and construction.
- Discerning the valuable roles and key players in related disciplines.
- Understanding a professional code of ethics, as well as legal and professional responsibilities.

The substantially equivalent degree program must demonstrate that each graduate possesses skills in the following areas:

- D.1 Stakeholder Roles in Architecture: *Understanding* of the relationships among key stakeholders in the design process—client, contractor, architect, user groups, local community—and the architect’s role to reconcile stakeholder needs.
- D.2 Project Management: *Understanding* of the methods for selecting consultants and assembling teams; identifying work plans, project schedules, and time requirements; and recommending project delivery methods.
- D.3 Business Practices: *Understanding* of the basic principles of a firm’s business practices, including financial management and business planning, marketing, organization, and entrepreneurship.
- D.4 Legal Responsibilities: *Understanding* of the architect’s responsibility to the public and the client as determined by local regulations and legal considerations involving the practice of architecture and professional service contracts.
- D.5 Professional Conduct: *Understanding* of the ethical issues involved in the exercise of professional judgment in architectural design and practice and understanding the role of local rules of conduct and ethical practice.

*The Program Self-Evaluation must include:*

- *A brief narrative or graphic overview of the curricular goals and content for each substantially equivalent degree program for meeting the requirements of the professional degree program.*
- *For each substantially equivalent degree program, provide a matrix that identifies each required course with the SPC it fulfills.*
  - *Where appropriate, the top section of the matrix should indicate those SPC expected to have been met in preparatory education prior to admission to the substantially equivalent program (see also Part II, Section 3).*
  - *The bottom section of the matrix should include only criteria that are demonstrated in the substantially equivalent degree program.*

*In all cases, the program must highlight only the 1-2 cells on the matrix that point to*

2019 Conditions for Substantial Equivalency

*the greatest evidence of student achievement. (For a sample matrix, see Appendix 5.)*

*[NOTE: Do not include elective courses in the matrix.]*

**PART TWO (II): SECTION 2 – CURRICULAR FRAMEWORK**

**II.2.1 National Authorization and Institutional Quality Assurance:** The institution offering the substantially equivalent degree program must be or be part of an institution that has been duly authorized to offer higher education in the country in which it is located. Such authorization may come from a government ministry or other type of agency.

The institution must have explicit, written permission from all applicable national education authorities in that program's country or region.

At least one of the agencies granting permission must have a system of institutional quality assurance and review which the institution is subject to and which includes periodic evaluation.

*The Program Self-Evaluation must include a copy of the most recent letter, certificate, or charter from the ministry/agency regarding the institution's authorization.*

**II.2.2 Professional Degrees and Curriculum:**

For substantial equivalency, the NAAB requires degree programs in architecture to demonstrate that the program is comparable in all significant aspects to a program offered by a U.S. institution. Further, the program must demonstrate that the degree awarded at the conclusion of this program of study entitles the graduate to practice architecture in his/her home country, subject to meeting any requirements for experience and/or examination. Substantially equivalent degree programs must include (or otherwise acknowledge) general studies, professional studies, and electives.

Curricular requirements are defined as follows:

- **General Studies.** A professional degree program must include general studies in the arts, humanities, and sciences, either as an admission requirement or as part of the curriculum. It must ensure that students have the prerequisite general studies to undertake professional studies. The curriculum leading to the architecture degree must include a course of study comparable to 1.5 years of study or 30% of the total number of credits for an undergraduate degree. These courses must be outside architectural studies either as general studies or as electives with content other than architecture.

If this education is acquired prior to university-level education, the program must describe the system for general studies education in the local context, and how it is substantially equivalent to the requirement stated above.

- **Professional Studies.** The core of a professional degree program consists of the required courses that satisfy the NAAB Student Performance Criteria (SPC). The professional degree program has the discretion to require additional courses including electives to address its mission or institutional context.
- **Electives.** A professional degree program must allow students to pursue their special interests. The curriculum must be flexible enough to allow students to complete minors or develop areas of concentration, inside or outside the program.

*The Program Self-Evaluation must include the following:*

- *Title(s) of the degree(s) offered or degree sequence*
- *For each degree program offered, an outline of the curriculum showing the distribution of general studies, required professional courses (including prerequisites), required courses, professional electives, and other electives*

- *For each degree offered, examples of the minors or concentrations students may elect to pursue*
- *A list of the minimum number of credit hours required for each semester or term, respectively*
- *A brief description of the method for determining credit hours and grades*
- *A list identifying the courses and their credit hours required for professional content and the courses and their credit hours or prerequisites required for general education for each substantially equivalent degree program offered*
- *A list of off-campus programs, description of facilities and resources, course requirements, and length of stay*

**PART TWO (II): SECTION 3 – EVALUATION OF PREPARATORY EDUCATION**

The program must demonstrate that it has a thorough and equitable process for evaluating the preparatory or preprofessional education of individuals admitted to the substantially equivalent degree program.

- Programs must document their processes for evaluating a student’s prior academic course work related to satisfying NAAB student performance criteria when a student is admitted to the professional degree program.
- In the event a program relies on the preparatory educational experience to ensure that admitted students have met certain SPC, the program must demonstrate it has established standards for ensuring these SPC are met and for determining whether any gaps exist.

*The Program Self-Evaluation Report must include the following:*

- *A description of the process by which the preparatory education of students admitted to the substantially equivalent program is evaluated. This description should include the process for verifying general education credits, professional credits, and, where appropriate, the basis for granting “advanced standing.” These are to be documented in a student’s admissions and advising record (see also I.2.1).*
- *If applicable, SPC that are expected to have been met in preparatory or pre-professional education are to be documented in the top line of the SPC matrix (see Part II, Section 1).*

*[NOTE: A review of course titles and descriptions in and of itself is not considered sufficient for this activity.]*

**PART TWO (II): SECTION 4 – PUBLIC INFORMATION**

The NAAB expects programs to be transparent and accountable in the information provided to students, faculty, and the public. As a result, the following conditions require all substantially equivalent degree programs to make certain information publicly available online.

*The Program Self-Evaluation Report must include links to the URLs where the various required documents/text in this section can be found.*

**II.4.1 Statement on Substantially Equivalent Degrees**

In order to promote an understanding of the substantially equivalent professional degree by prospective students, parents, and the public, all schools offering a substantially equivalent degree program or any candidacy program must include in catalogs and promotional media the *exact language* found in the NAAB Conditions for Substantial Equivalency, Appendix 6.

#### **II.4.2 Access to NAAB Conditions and Procedures for Substantial Equivalency**

In order to assist parents, students, and others as they seek to develop an understanding of the body of knowledge and skills that constitute a professional education in architecture, the school must make the following documents available online and accessible by all students, parents, and faculty:

*2019 Conditions for Substantial Equivalency*

*Procedures for Substantial Equivalency* (edition currently in effect)

#### **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 substantially equivalent degree programs, the program must make appropriate resources related to a career in architecture available to all students, parents, staff, and faculty.

#### **II.4.4 Public Access to Program Self-Evaluation Reports and Visiting Team Reports**

In order to promote transparency in the process of substantial equivalency in architecture education, the program is required to make the following documents available to the public:

The final decision letter from the NAAB

The most recent Program Self-Evaluation<sup>3</sup>

The final edition of the most recent *Visiting Team Report*, including attachments and addenda

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

#### **II.4.5. Admissions and Advising**

The program must publicly document all policies and procedures that govern how applicants to the substantially equivalent program are evaluated for admission. These procedures must include first-time, first-year students as well as transfers within and from outside the institution.

This documentation must include the following:

- Application forms and instructions
- Admissions requirements, admissions decisions procedures, including policies and processes for evaluation of transcripts and portfolios (where required), and decisions regarding remediation and advanced standing
- Forms and a description of the process for the evaluation of degree content
- Requirements and forms for applying for financial aid and scholarships
- Students' social equity initiatives

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<sup>3</sup> This is understood to be the Program Self-Evaluation Report from the previous visit (if applicable), not the Program Self-Evaluation for the visit currently in process.

**APPENDICES**

- Appendix 1    Template for Course Descriptions
- Appendix 2    Template for Faculty Résumés
- Appendix 3    Sample Matrix for Faculty Credentials
- Appendix 4    Documents to Be Available in the Team Room
- Appendix 5    Sample SPC Matrix
- Appendix 6    Statement on Substantially Equivalent Degrees Required Text for  
catalogs, websites, and promotional material
- Appendix 7    History of the National Architectural Accrediting Board



**Appendix 1: Template for Course Descriptions**

**Number & Title of Course (total credits awarded):**

ARC 101, Principles of Design, 3 credits

**Course Description (limit 25 words):**

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat.

**Course Goals & Objectives (list):**

- Students will explore all forms of visual communication from freehand drawing through building information modeling software.
- Students will learn presentation skills to be used throughout their academic careers.

**Student Performance Criterion addressed (list number and title):**

A.1. Communication Skills

A.3. Visual Communication Skills

**Topical Outline (include percentage of time in course spent in each subject area):**

Drawing and other representational techniques (60%)

Presentation skills (40%)

**Prerequisites:**

None

**Textbooks/Learning Resources:**

Gardner, Howard. *Frames of Mind* (Basic Books, 1983, 2004)

**Offered (semester and year):**

Fall only; annually

**Faculty assigned (list all faculty assigned during the two academic years prior to the visit):**

John Doe (adjunct)

Andrew Smith (F/T)

***[limit 1 page per course]***

**Appendix 2 – Template for Faculty Résumés**

**Name:** John Doe

**Courses Taught (two academic years prior to current visit):**

ARC 101 Principles of Design  
ARC 102 Principles of Practice  
ARC 210 History of Architecture – Western Hemisphere  
ARC 211 History of Architecture – Eastern Hemisphere  
ARC 433 Design Studio III – Historic Structures  
ARC 434 Design Studio IV – Affordable Housing

**Educational Credentials**

B.Arch., XYZ University, 1988  
M.S. E.D., University of ABC, 1992

**Teaching Experience**

Assistant Professor, Name of University, 1993–1998  
Associate Professor, Name of University, 1998–2005  
Professor, Name of University, 2006–present

**Professional Experience**

Intern, Name of Architecture Firm or Other Business/Government Entity, Madrid, 1988–1991  
Project Architect, Gensler, Dubai, UAE, 1992–present

**Licenses/Registration (as appropriate)**

XXX

**Selected Publications and Recent Research**

*Effect of Newton's Third Law of Thermodynamics on Straw, Twigs, and Brick: A study of three clients* (John Wiley, 2008)

**Professional Memberships**

Royal Institute of British Architects  
Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture

***[limit one page per faculty member]***

**Appendix 3: Sample Matrix for Faculty Credentials**  
**Term/Semester (e.g., Fall 2011)**

Faculty member (alpha order)	Summary of expertise, recent research, or experience (limit 25 words)	ARC 101	ARC 202	ARC 210	ARC 211	ARC 301	ARC 400	ARC 433	ARC 434
John Doe	Designs affordable housing for Chicago Habitat for Humanity; M.S. thesis on adaptive use of historic structures in urban core.	<b>X</b>		<b>X</b>				<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
Andrew Smith	Recent research on Meso-American structures and building materials.			<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>		<b>X</b>		

#### **Appendix 4: Documents to Be Available in the Team Room**

The following documents must be included in Part I of the Program Self-Evaluation. These documents should also be available in the team room. The documents must be provided in English.

- Learning Culture
- Self-Assessment Policies and Objectives
- Personnel Policies including:
  - Position descriptions for all faculty and staff
  - Rank, Tenure, and Promotion
  - Reappointment
  - Social Equity
  - Faculty Development, including but not limited to research, scholarship, creative activity, or sabbatical
- Admissions requirements
- Advising policies; including policies for evaluation of students admitted from preparatory programs where SPC are expected to have been met in educational experiences in non-substantially equivalent programs
- Policies on use and integration of digital media in architecture curriculum
- Policies on academic integrity for students (e.g., cheating and plagiarism)
- Policies on library and information resources collection development

## Appendix 5: Sample SPC Matrix

An SPC matrix must be completed for each substantially equivalent degree program. The matrix will show how each course offered in the professional degree program meets the the requirements of the professional degree program.

- Where appropriate, the top section of the matrix should indicate those SPC expected to have been met in preparatory education prior to admission to the substantially equivalent program (see also Part II, Section 3).
- The bottom section of the matrix should include only criteria that are demonstrated in the substantially equivalent degree program.

In all cases, the program must highlight only the 1-2 cells on the matrix that point to the greatest evidence of student achievement.

NOTE: Do not include elective courses in the matrix.

	A.1	A.2	A.3	A.4	A.5	A.6	A.7	A.8	A.9	A.10	B.1	B.2	B.3	B.4	B.5	B.6	B.7	B.8	B.9	B.10	B.11	B.12	C.1	C.2	C.3	C.4	C.5	C.6	C.7	C.8	C.9	
<b>SPC expected to have been met in preparatory or pre-professional education, if applicable</b>																																
	<b>Realm A</b>										<b>Realm B</b>												<b>Realm C</b>									
	X	X	X	X						X	X	X																				
<b>SPC met in NAAB substantially equivalent program</b>																																
	<b>Realm A</b>										<b>Realm B</b>												<b>Realm C</b>									
ARC 211	X																															
ARC 311		X																														
ARC 334				X																												
ARC 411							X	X																								

## Appendix 6: Required Text for Catalogs, Websites, and Other Promotional Materials

The following statement must be included, in its entirety, in the catalogs, websites, and promotional materials of all programs that have been designated as “Substantially Equivalent.”

The term “Substantial Equivalency” identifies a program as comparable in educational outcomes in all significant aspects to a program accredited by the NAAB in the United States and indicates that it provides an educational experience meeting acceptable standards, even though such program may differ in format or method of delivery. The designation is valid for six years beginning 1 January of the year in which the final visit (Visit 3) took place. In order to maintain the designation, the program must be visited again in the sixth year of the designation.

Schools with programs identified as Substantially Equivalent are not formally “accredited” as that term is used with reference to programs in the United States and may not refer to their programs as “accredited” by the NAAB. However, students who graduate from Substantially Equivalent programs are able to apply for individualized review of their credentials on an expedited basis for purposes of the Educational Evaluation Services for Architects program administered by the NAAB on behalf of the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards.

*[Name of university, name of academic unit]* has received the Substantial Equivalency designation from the National Architectural Accrediting Board for the following professional degree program or sequence:

*[Name of degree] [Year substantial equivalency designation was awarded]*

### SAMPLE:

Any University, College of Art and Design, Department of Architecture, has received the Substantial Equivalency designation for the following degree program:

***Bachelor of Science in Architecture – 2017***

## Appendix 7: History of the National Architectural Accrediting Board

### History of Accreditation in Architecture Education

The first step leading to architectural accreditation was taken in Illinois where the first legislation regulating the practice of architecture was enacted in 1897. Following that enactment, in 1898 the Illinois Board of Examiners and Regulators of Architects gave its first examination. By 1902 they had established a rule restricting the examination to graduates of the state's approved 4-year architecture curriculum. In 1903, the board expanded this policy to include graduates from Cornell, Columbia, and Harvard universities, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and the University of Pennsylvania. That action demonstrated the need for national standards of architectural education.

The first attempt to establish national standards came with the founding of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (ACSA) in 1912 and its adoption two years later of "standard minima," which schools were required to meet to gain ACSA membership. While these standard minima were in place, ACSA membership was equivalent to substantial equivalency.

In 1932, the ACSA abandoned the standard minima, causing an 8-year hiatus in the profession's national system of professional architecture education—a hiatus brought to an end when the ACSA, The American Institute of Architects (AIA), and National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) established the NAAB and gave it authority to accredit schools of architecture nationally. The founding agreement of 1940 also announced the intention to create an integrated system of architectural education that would allow schools with varying resources and circumstances to develop according to their particular needs.

In 1972, the membership of the NAAB Board of Directors was expanded to include one student representative nominated by "the Association of Student Chapters/AIA<sup>4</sup>" and one graduate student nominated by schools accredited by the NAAB. In 1999, this representation was further refined to be two individuals nominated by the American Institute of Architecture Students.

The foundation for the system, or model, for substantial equivalency in architecture education that many know today was first outlined in an inter-collateral report, *The Restructuring of the NAAB*, which was completed in 1975. In that report, the collateral organizations identified two overarching goals for the NAAB:

- Advancement of all phases of architecture education, with a view toward the promotion of public welfare.
- Provide guidance, encourage improvement and innovation in the architecture system process, program experience, and product with a view toward serving the public interest and meeting societal needs.

The report also identified three objectives for the accreditation process:

- To hold a school accountable to its own stated objectives to the student, the profession, the institution, and the public community.
- To improve educational programs in schools of architecture by continuing a systematic review and assessment of education programs and resources through the self-evaluation process.

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<sup>4</sup> The Association of Students Chapters/AIA was later renamed The American Institute of Architecture Students (AIAS).

- To identify to prospective students, the public community, the profession, educational institutions, governmental agencies and state registration boards and to grant public recognition to those architecture education programs which meet and maintain established qualifications.

Finally, the report identified 13 policies; of which many remain central to the process. Among the 13, the following four relate to the continuous review and evaluation of the *Conditions for Accreditation*. The NAAB will:

- Accredit professional degree programs in architecture rather than institutions, colleges, departments, or schools.
- Accredit only the first professional degree program in architecture.
- Avoid rigid standards of curriculum content as a basis for accreditation in order to prevent standardization of programs and support well-planned experimentation.
- Establish and maintain procedures for reviewing and evaluating programs and informing schools of their accreditation status and for appeals by schools.

Today, the NAAB's accreditation system for *professional degree programs* within schools requires a self-assessment by the substantially equivalent degree program, an evaluation of that assessment by the NAAB, and a site visit by a NAAB team that concludes with a recommendation on whether to grant the program substantial equivalency. The decision to grant substantial equivalency is then made by the NAAB Directors.

#### **Board of Directors**

The NAAB directors bring varied insight and concerns to the substantial equivalency process and provide a broad and inclusive view of architecture. In addition to two nonarchitects, one with a background in academia and the other a generalist who together represent the public interest, the members include representatives from the four organizations that serve the profession of architecture:

- The American Institute of Architects. Since 1857, the AIA has represented the professional interests of America's architects. The AIA numbers more than 79,000 licensed architects, emerging professionals, and allied partners who, in design, express their commitment to excellence and livability in our nation's buildings and communities.
- The American Institute of Architecture Students. Founded in 1956, the AIAS serves architecture and design students throughout North America by promoting and complementing architectural education and by representing the concerns of students to the profession and the public.
- The Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture. The mission of ACSA, founded in 1912, is to advance architectural education through support of member schools, their faculties, and their students.
- The National Council of Architectural Registration Boards. Founded in 1919, the NCARB today provides assistance in protecting the public's health, safety, and welfare to 55 boards regulating architecture in the 50 states, 4 territories, and District of Columbia.