

Southern California Institute of Architecture
Interim Progress Report for Year Five

November 22, 2023

Interim Progress Report

Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-Arc)

Department of Academic Affairs

Bachelor of Architecture (172 credits) [changed to: 166 credit hours as of AY19-20]

Master of Architecture 1 (undergraduate degree plus 111 credits)

Master of Architecture 2 (undergraduate degree plus 78 credits)

Year of the previous visit: 2018

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

Chief administrator for the academic unit in which the program is located:

Name: Paul Holliday

Title: Chief Administrative Officer

Email Address: paul_holliday@sciarc.edu

Physical Address: SCI-Arc
960 E 3rd Street
Los Angeles, CA 90013

Chief academic officer for the institution:

Name: John Enright

Title: Vice Director / Chief Academic Officer

Email Address: john_enright@sciarc.edu

Physical Address: SCI-Arc
960 E 3rd Street
Los Angeles, CA 90013

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

a. Progress in Addressing Not-Met Conditions

N/A

b. Progress in Addressing Not-Met Student Performance Criteria

A.1 Professional Communication Skills: Ability to write and speak effectively and use representational media appropriate for both within the profession and with the public.

2018 Visiting Team Assessment: Evidence of student achievement in written communication skills was provided in the team room and was labeled as 'low pass' and 'high pass' for the B.Arch, M.Arch 1, and M.Arch 2 degree programs. However, evidence provided for 'low pass' work, which represents the minimal baseline of competency, did not support students' "ability" to write effectively in either the B.Arch and M.Arch 1 programs. Evidence at the minimally prescribed level was found in the M.Arch 2 degree program. As described in the VTR and as witnessed during the site visit, the representation-centric curriculum, intensive making/iterative processes, and intensive exposure to desk crits and critiques (one-on-one and formal, large-scale reviews) foster ability in verbal communication skills to effectively explain complex design matter. Required writing ability by B.Arch and M.Arch 1 students will benefit from the recently implemented Writing Lab to strengthen critical writing and editing skills.

SCI-Arc, 2021 Response:

B.Arch degree: In order to actively address the Not-Met Conditions and Student Performance Criteria: A.1 Professional Communication Skills from the 2018 visiting team assessment, we have undertaken the following measures in the undergraduate program:

1. We have re-vamped the Liberal Arts content and sequence across all years to focus on writing. We were aware of this deficiency in advance of the assessment and were already assessing at the time of the visit. Our Liberal Arts Coordinator, the notable philosopher Graham Harman, began observation of classes and writing outcomes in 2018. Through a thorough assessment of the program, with input by all Liberal Arts faculty and the Chair, was undertaken, resulting in a set of values and goals for increasing students' abilities to write and express their ideas.
2. A second writing class was added as part of the roll-out of the revised Liberal Arts curriculum in fall 2021. Students are now required to take LA 8011: Forms of Writing I and LA 8111: Forms of Writing II in their first year of study. In addition, to allow for more one-on-one feedback of students' writing, we doubled the faculty in those two classes. [Attachment 1_B.Arch Syllabus_LA 8011: Forms of Writing I]
3. All Liberal Arts core classes now have writing requirements, including a midterm paper that is edited based on faculty comments to produce a longer, well-edited final paper.
4. The Liberal Arts and History + Theory programs are both gearing up to do double-marking of sample student papers beginning in 2022, in order to better gauge student writing outcomes as we roll in these changes. The purpose is to get more faculty feedback and open a larger discussion among Liberal Arts and History + Theory faculty, identify trends, and propose methods of improvement.
5. We have made significant changes to our History + Theory (HT) core curriculum sequence to build writing skills as students advance. These changes were made in response to observed

weaknesses in ability to read and describe works of art and architecture, in a committee of History + Theory faculty, our HT Coordinator Marrikka Trotter, PhD, and the Undergraduate Program Chair. Improvements made are as follows:

- a. HT 2012: History of Architecture I: This course now includes ekphrastic descriptive writing with a focus on precision, brevity, and directness; iterative writing and editing assignments along with live, inclass writing workshops. [Revised syllabus available spring 2022.]
- b. HT 2024: History of Architecture II: This course now includes the above, plus research and writing with sources, with a focus on scrupulous and active engagement with texts, using scholarly material with integrity and creativity, and building persuasive arguments.

[Attachment 2_B.Arch Syllabus_HT 2024: History of Architecture II]

- c. HT 2025: History of Architecture III: Above, plus engagement with landmark works of architectural theory and criticism, and physical buildings encountered via field work (as opposed to studied via images) with an emphasis on balancing critical thinking with appreciation. [Revised syllabus available spring 2022.]

M.Arch degrees: In order to actively address the Not-Met Conditions and Student Performance Criteria: A.1 Professional Communication Skills from the 2018 visiting team assessment, during the past three years the M.Arch 1 program has undertaken a series of evaluations, committee meetings, and policy/resource implementations in order make sure that communication skills would be supported through the HT SCI-Arc curriculum. While the visit team assessment has been a decisive factor to motivate the school, communication skills have been identified as an area needing improvement during our yearly faculty retreat. In response to that, SCI-Arc's Graduate and Undergraduate Chairs, HT and Liberal Arts coordinators, along with the Vice Director took a series of steps that resulted in:

- 1. We have changed our History + Theory core curriculum sequence deliverables to build writing skills as students advance:

- a. HT2100: Introduction to Contemporary Architecture: Focus on active, engaged reading with an emphasis on identifying positions, tracing intellectual influences and sources, and recognizing argumentation strategies and other writing tactics. Students produce short, informed, clear, well-edited written commentary. [Attachment 3_M.Arch 1 Syllabus_HT 2100: Introduction to Contemporary Architecture]
- b. HT 2101: History of Architecture and Urbanism I: Ekphrastic descriptive writing with a focus on precision, brevity, and directness; iterative writing and editing assignments along with live, in-class writing workshops. [Revised syllabus available spring 2022.]
- c. HT 2120: History of Architecture and Urbanism II: Above, plus research and writing with sources, with a focus on scrupulous and active engagement with texts, using scholarly material with integrity and creativity, and building persuasive arguments. [Attachment 4_M.Arch 1 Syllabus_HT 2021: History of Architecture and Urbanism II]
- d. HT 2121: History of Architecture III: Above, plus engagement with landmark works of architectural theory and criticism, and physical buildings encountered via field work (as opposed to studied via images) with an emphasis on balancing critical thinking with appreciation. [Revised syllabus available spring 2022.]

- 2. We have added required student blogs for all core history courses, creating additional opportunities for students to practice writing and giving peer feedback in a supervised and constructive academic environment.

Institutional Initiatives:

Turnitin: SCI-Arc has recently acquired and adopted Turnitin plagiarism software to utilize across all programs to curb a documented rise in plagiarism at the school. Alongside that, we have now defined specific and clear internal procedures for its use and appropriateness, and we have instituted teaching students (especially our international students) at the beginning of the year what constitutes plagiarism, how to avoid it, and what good practices are. Finally, SCI-Arc has put in place a clear, fair, and strict procedure for dealing with students who are caught plagiarizing, to dissuade them from academic dishonesty in the future. This has had an immediate effect, with a noticeable drop in plagiarism cases since the software was implemented. Teaching Fellows: SCI-Arc has established a teaching fellowship program for all core History + Theory seminar courses. The program offers qualified PhD students/candidates the opportunity to work alongside full-time History + Theory faculty at SCI-Arc to support instruction of the seminar and to offer more robust feedback and writing assistance to our students. In addition, we have added discussion sections for all core History + Theory seminar courses to create additional time for students to practice supervised live debate and allocate scheduled periods during class for writing exercises and workshops.

SCI-Arc, 2023 Response: [Click here to enter text.](#)

B.ARCH DEGREE:

In order to actively address the Not-Met Conditions and Student Performance Criteria: A.1 Professional Communication Skills from the 2018 visiting team assessment, we have undertaken the following measures in the undergraduate program:

1. We have re-vamped the Liberal Arts content and sequence across all years to focus on writing. We were aware of this deficiency in advance of the assessment and were already assessing it at the time of the visit. Our Liberal Arts Coordinator, the notable philosopher Graham Harman, began observation of classes and writing outcomes in 2018. A thorough assessment of the program, with input by all Liberal Arts faculty and the Chair, was undertaken, resulting in a set of values and goals for increasing students' abilities to write and express their ideas.
2. A second writing class was added as part of the roll-out of the revised Liberal Arts curriculum in fall 2021. Students are now required to take LA 8011: Forms of Writing I and LA 8111: Forms of Writing II in their first year of study. In addition, to allow for more one-on-one feedback of students' writing, we doubled the faculty in those two classes.

[Appendix 1_B.Arch Syllabus_LA 8011_Forms of Writing I]

[Appendix 2_B.Arch Syllabus_LA 8111_Forms of Writing II]

3. All Liberal Arts core classes now have writing requirements, including a midterm paper that is edited based on faculty comments to produce a longer, well-edited final paper.
4. The HT core seminars have added the requirement of a research dossier to be submitted as an accompaniment to the final research paper. The research dossier contains research materials accessed for writing the final paper, annotated readings, class notes and glossary of terms.
5. We have made significant changes to our History + Theory (HT) core curriculum sequence to build writing skills as students advance. These changes were made in response to observed weaknesses in ability to read and describe works of art and architecture. Improvements made are as follows:

a. HT 2012: History of Architecture I: This course teaches students to write with a focus on precision, brevity, and directness; iterative writing and editing assignments along with live, in-class writing workshops.

[Appendix 3_B.Arch Syllabus_HT 2012_History of Architecture I]

b. HT 2024: History of Architecture II: This course now includes the above, plus research and writing with sources, with a focus on scrupulous and active engagement with texts, using scholarly material with integrity and creativity, and building persuasive arguments.

[Appendix 4_B.Arch Syllabus + Assignment_HT 2024_History of Architecture II]

[Appendix 5_B.Arch Student Work Sample 1_HT 2024_History of Architecture II]

[Appendix 6_B.Arch Student Work Sample 2_HT 2024_History of Architecture II]

[Appendix 7_B.Arch Student Work Sample 3_HT 2024_History of Architecture II]

c. HT 2025: History of Architecture III: Above, plus engagement with landmark works of architectural theory and criticism and buildings with an emphasis on balancing critical thinking with appreciation.

[Appendix 8_B.Arch Syllabus_HT 2025_History of Architecture III]

M.ARCH 1 DEGREE: In order to actively address the Not-Met Conditions and Student Performance Criteria: A.1 Professional Communication Skills from the 2018 visiting team assessment, we have undertaken the following measures in the M Arch 1 graduate program:

We have changed our History + Theory (HT) core curriculum sequence deliverables to build writing skills as students advance. These changes were made in response to observed weaknesses in ability to read and describe works of art and architecture. Improvements made are as follows:

a. HT2100: Introduction to Contemporary Architecture: Focus on active, engaged reading with an emphasis on identifying positions, tracing intellectual influences and sources, and recognizing argumentation strategies and other writing tactics. Students produce short, informed, clear, well-edited written commentary.

[Appendix 9_M.Arch 1 Syllabus_HT 2100_Introduction to Contemporary Architecture]

[Appendix 10_M.Arch 1 Student Work Sample 1_HT 2100_Introduction to Contemporary Architecture)

[Appendix 11_M.Arch 1 Student Work Sample 2_HT 2100_Introduction to Contemporary Architecture)

[Appendix 12_M.Arch 1 Student Work Sample 3_HT 2100_Introduction to Contemporary Architecture)

b. HT 2101: History of Architecture and Urbanism I: This course teaches students to write with a focus on precision, brevity, and directness; iterative writing and editing assignments along with live, in-class writing workshops.

c. HT 2120: History of Architecture and Urbanism II: Above, plus research and writing with sources, with a focus on scrupulous and active engagement with texts, using scholarly material with integrity and creativity, and building persuasive arguments.

[Appendix 13_M.Arch 1 Syllabus_HT 2120_History of Architecture and Urbanism II]

d. HT 2121: History of Architecture III: This course now includes the above, plus research and writing with sources, with a focus on scrupulous and active engagement with texts, using scholarly material with integrity and creativity, and building persuasive arguments.

II. Changes or Planned Changes in the Program

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

SCI-Arc, 2023 Response: [Click here to enter text.](#)

LEADERSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION

Leadership Changes: In September 2022, following an independent investigation into allegations regarding abuse of power and student internship practices, the Undergraduate Program Chair (Tom Wiscombe) resigned. An advisory committee comprised of SCI-Arc's Director, Vice-Director/Chief Academic Officer, faculty, program chairs, coordinators, and staff was created to lead the selection process of the new Undergraduate Chair position. The selection process resulted in SCI-Arc faculty Kristy Balliet and Marcelyn Gow being selected as Chairs of the Undergraduate Program.

[Appendix 14_CV_Kristy Balliet_Undergraduate Program Chair]

[Appendix 15_CV_Marcelyn Gow_Undergraduate Program Chair]

Faculty Coordinators: Since the 2018 NAAB visit, SCI-Arc has made changes with several of our academic curriculum coordinators. Specifically, in 2019-2020 Graham Harman was appointed Liberal Arts Coordinator; in 2020-2021 William Virgil was appointed coordinator of the Making+Meaning summer program; in 2021-2022 Anna Neimark was named Visual Studies Coordinator, Jackilin Bloom was named Graduate Thesis Coordinator, Maxi Spina was named Undergraduate Thesis Coordinator, and Angelica Lorenzi was named coordinator of the Design Immersion Days (DID) summer program.

STUDENT SERVICES AND WELLNESS:

Growth Of Student Services and Student Wellness: In 2019 A Student Services Specialist staff position was created to act as an advocate for both the student and SCI-Arc. The position serves as liaison between students and the Student Union, staff, faculty, and administration; provides referral services for students; assesses and coordinates student wellness and support services and career development programs; and improves upon existing programs and processes in a changing environment. A new Student Services budget was created, and funds made available to support this new position by providing support resources and creative programming to the students at SCI-Arc.

In 2018, the school developed a partnership with the Downtown Mind Wellness (DMW) organization in downtown Los Angeles to offer mental health support services to SCI-Arc students. DMW is a group of psychologists, therapists, nurse practitioners, and behavioral intervention specialists with experience offering mental health support to college-aged individuals. Through this partnership, SCI-Arc now makes available an onsite therapist twice a week to students on an appointment or walk-in basis. For students in need of long-term counseling, DMW is in network for students on SCI-Arc student health care plan, making for a smoother transition

from emergency care to long-term treatment. SCI-Arc also brings in representatives from DMW to offer training to faculty and staff on how to identify and support students who may be struggling or in need of support. In addition,

SCI-Arc has provided funds for student services staff to attend conferences offered by NASPA (Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education) towards learning new strategies to support student life at SCI-Arc.

Other highlights of SCI-Arc improved wellness program include annual resource update for all programming and recommended support services (onsite and local offsite) for students in need; free yoga classes offered each week and funded by the SCI-Arc Student Union; and a monthly poster campaign placed around the building which provides education and support for topics such as boosting self-esteem, stress management, social wellness, and self-care.

Creation of Career Services: In December of 2022, the Office of Career Services was developed with the creation of a Career Advisor position. The Career Advisor counsels students and alumni on career issues and strategies, job search methods, assists with resume and interview preparation, and manages internships. Implementation of a Career Advisor role has also led to a formalized internship program through increased policy, documentation requirements, approval, and surveying. A student internship policy was developed to implement guidelines on what qualifies as an academic internship for SCI-Arc credit and which students are eligible to participate in the internship course.

Health and Safety: In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, SCI-Arc created the position of Environmental Health and Safety Coordinator in 2020. The position's responsibility is to establish and enforce health and safety programs at SCI-Arc, monitor, update and evaluate the effectiveness of existing programs and processes, and implement policies and procedures to meet federal, state, and local statutes and guidelines.

AIAS at SCI-Arc: In 2023-2024 SCI-Arc started its first chapter of the American Institute of Architecture Students (AIAS) - a independent, nonprofit, student-run organization dedicated to providing unmatched progressive programs, information, and resources on issues critical to architecture and the experience of education. The SCI-Arc AIAS Chapter focuses on professional life after school, licensure, networking with the architecture community outside of school, and connecting with the American Institute of Architects (AIA).

Facilities Improvements: SCI-Arc has continued to invest in overall improvements to the facilities and resources for students, faculty, and staff. In 2017, large scale improvements were made to the school parking lot. This included a full re-surfacing of the property; new fencing and guard booth; installation of a basketball court; and renovated lunch area with exterior seating and shade structures. Other improvements have included a renovation to the faculty lounge; energy efficient LED lighting installed throughout the building; computer hardware and program upgrades; remodeled restrooms throughout the building; and improved signage for the exterior of the SCI-Arc building; a complete remodel of all classrooms with technology upgrades, new furniture, and lighting/acoustic improvements; completion of a new Robot Annex, a temporary 35'x50' tent structure to house a new grant-funded IRB 6700 Robot; relocation of the Supply Store and Print Center into the building; installation of 65" teaching monitors in all studio locations, and remodel the SCI-Arc Café.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION:

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiatives: In response to the global movement for racial= justice and Black lives in 2020, SCI-Arc developed Structural Actions to improve our institutional culture, develop partnerships with the local community, and create new scholarships for students from backgrounds historically excluded in architecture and design (i.e. individuals who are Black,

Indigenous, Latinx, Asian/Asian American and Pacific Islander, multiracial; LGBTQ+; women; veterans, and individuals with disabilities).

Current Initiatives to support these Structural Actions are made available to the public through a DEI Progress Report available on SCI-Arc's website.

Creation of the Office of Diversity Equity and Inclusion (2021): SCI-Arc created an official department of Equity + Inclusion in 2021 and hired a full-time Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and full-time Community Engagement Coordinator. The Director of DEI is responsible for creating programs, initiatives, policies, training, and developing a sustainable strategy that promotes a welcoming and supportive environment for all members of our school community. Director of DEI develops and delivers school wide trainings on special anti-bias topics (racial bias, gender, bias, allyship, etc.), manages a mentoring program for Equity + Inclusion scholarship recipients, leads the Equity + Inclusion Committee, coordinates affinity group meetings, leads special DEI sessions for faculty and staff, and coaches students and employees on inclusive practices specific to their roles, as well as working directly with the Community Engagement Coordinator who develops, coordinates, and implements short-term and long-term local partnerships for the school.

Funds For Equity + Inclusion Scholarships: In 2023, SCI-Arc allocated over \$900,000+ for full-tuition scholarships for students from groups historically excluded in architecture and design. The scholarships are applied to the program the student is admitted to and are renewable contingent on students maintaining a 2.7 GPA. SCI-Arc also created scholarships to promote greater access and inclusion with the Southern California chapter of the National Organization of Minority Scholarships (SoCal NOMA). The SoCal NOMA scholarships provide full-tuition scholarships to students engaged in SoCal NOMA activities related to youth outreach and professional development. The scholarships are part of a five-year partnership that allows for greater collaboration between the organizations. SCI-Arc has awarded eight SoCal NOMA scholarships and graduated one student to date.

DEGREE PROGRAMS:

B.Arch Degree Changes: In addition to the changes in Liberal Arts, History + Theory, and our writing curriculum that spans between them (listed above), the undergraduate program has undertaken other significant changes as well. We have increased our focus on design expertise combined with a liberal arts education. Professional practice and licensure are central to our B.Arch program. We also think that it is crucial to teach ethics, communication, and an understanding of history. We are confident that this approach is needed in architectural education, especially at the undergraduate level, which we believe should be a holistic college education. Our focus on communication, design discourse, and articulating ideas is what makes SCI-Arc's approach unique. The Undergraduate Curriculum Committee meets regularly to discuss and refine this mission in the context of fast-changing contemporary discourse about social issues, diversity, equity, and empowerment, reviewing syllabi and students' work to identify areas for improvement.

The emphasis on increased equity and inclusion is a school-wide effort. The B.Arch studios references and seminars references have been evaluated and expanded to include anticolonial perspectives and diversify beyond Eurocentric points of view, through the goals of an anti-racist pedagogy. As a nimble administration we were able to make quick changes in our program. These changes have been discussed at student union meetings and events, curriculum committee meetings, and SCI-Arc's annual retreat, with administration and faculty working toward the common goal of improving our curriculum by expanding its histories, current discourses and points of view, engaging a much wider audience than ever before.

Another major change in our curriculum is exploring new approaches to sustainable thinking, green energy, and environmental awareness, considering how these issues can be integrated into architectural thinking and design. Through design studios and applied studies seminars, SCI-Arc is creating a learning environment focused on how architecture can be fundamentally transformed by engaging issues of sustainability and net zero building. Recent studios have taken this on including second-year studio, which investigates the relationship between landscape and built form, and applied studies seminars conducting research into biopolymers. We look forward to developing further curricular adaptations in this direction through our curriculum committee including Applied Studies Coordinator, Herwig Baumgartner, AIA, and other Applied Studies faculty. Our goal is for SCI-Arc to become an experimental and provocative voice in this arena that can attract the interest of city leaders in LA and beyond.

In the B.Arch degree program we reduced the number of units required to graduate, to both bring our units in line with peer institutions, and address student concerns about workload in the third year which focuses on comprehensive building design. Previously, our number of units was 172, higher than average, and it was reduced to 166. The B.Arch Curriculum Committee identified that the Visual Studies and History Theory courses in the third year were partially redundant, and could therefore be removed from the curriculum without affecting curricular goals and NAAB requirements. This change was implemented in the 2019-2020 academic year.

Finally, in terms of our enrollment and student body makeup in the undergraduate program, we have increased our focus on the recruitment of transfer students by creating additional articulation agreements with our transfer partner schools. This enables us to diversify our student body by engaging more local community college students, many of whom are historically underrepresented in architecture and it is a financial necessity as first-year numbers have begun to slow due to larger societal shifts such as the reduction in high school graduates in the US in general. We currently take approximately 14 transfer students every year into second and third years. These students yield far better during the admissions process, and they fare well at SCI-Arc. We plan to continue reaching out to an ever-broader range of community colleges around the state and the West in the coming years.

M.Arch 1 Degree Changes: In addition to the changes in History + Theory listed, both graduate programs have undertaken few changes to refine their position in relationship to equity and inclusion.

The graduate program has promoted a collective effort to review studio and seminar syllabi and students' work to identify areas for improvement. Social issues, diversity, equity, along student and faculty empowerment have been at the center of the curricular changes for both M.Arch 1 and M.Arch 2 in the past few years. The mission behind the changes was to combine SCI-Arc core disciplinary competencies, while expanding the reach of our expertise, archives, and outreach, and to align the curriculum with the school-wide commitment to social justice in the ways we teach, interact with each other, and train a new generation of architects for the future of the profession. The M.Arch studios references and seminars references have been evaluated and expanded to include anticolonial perspectives and diversify beyond Eurocentric points of view, through the goals of an anti-racist pedagogy. As a nimble administration we were able to make quick changes in our program. These changes have been discussed at student union meetings and events, curriculum committee meetings, and SCI-Arc's annual retreat, with administration and faculty working toward the common goal of improving our curriculum by expanding its histories, current discourses and points of view, engaging a much wider audience than ever before.

The graduate program is planning to strengthen its offerings of knowledge and design strategy on **sustainability, ecology, and building resilience**. This planned change will take place in both design studios and applied studies seminars, targeting the knowledge of cutting-edge technology along with embracing a new way of designing for our complex global environment.

Finally, in terms of our enrollment and international student body makeup in the graduate program, we have increased our focus on the recruitment of students by initiating international articulation agreements with several universities in India, Middle East and Europe in addition to China.

STEM Designation (CIP CODE): In 2018, the CIP codes for SCI-Arc's degree programs were designated as official STEM degree programs through the Department of Education, SEVP, and USCIS. This new designation allows international students who graduate from these degree programs to be eligible to extend their F-1 Visas for a maximum of 36 months.

CHALLENGES:

COVID Response: In March 2020, SCI-Arc and the entire education community had to instantly react and adjust to the dramatic effects that the COVID-19 pandemic had. We had to quickly transition from an in-person, studio based academic model to an all-remote learning model throughout the 2020-2021 academic year. The school transitioned to a hybrid instruction model during the 2021-2022 year and returned to fully in-person in 2022-2023. Like most schools, for the past three years students, faculty, administration, and staff have had to adjust new teaching and learning styles, learn new technologies, manage delicate staffing and financial challenges, upgrade resources, and learn the new complexities of a healthy live/work balance, all while continuing to offer access to a quality education and ensure the integrity of each degree.

Enrollment Management: While the school has weathered the COVID pandemic in the past three years with relatively little impact to financial stability and enrollment, there are challenges ahead regarding maintaining the current population goal of 485 full time students. The AY 23/24 incoming class is 12% lower than expected, and this year will require reassessing the previous 3-year budget forecast. During AY 23/24 the administration will be reviewing the anticipated new enrollment goals for AY 24/25 and creating a plan for implementation in AY 24/25.

Challenges include the increasing cost of tuition and attendance, a dip in international students from China due to economic and political issues, and visa constraints. The school continues to recruit internationally in other countries including the Middle East, Europe, North and South America, and a recent focus in India.

SCI-Arc hired the enrollment consultancy firm RNL Associates in AY 22/23 to help assess admissions and recruiting, as well as admissions scholarship awards. This involved Academic Leadership, Academic Affairs, Admissions, Finance, and Communications working to respond and improve the admissions process. The results of this process included new Slate software for tracking applicants, better inter-departmental communications, better rubrics for assessing scholarships, and improved social media and data-based decision making.

2022 Investigation into Student Internship Practices: In early 2022, the institution investigated allegations regarding abuse of power and student internship practices. The investigation involved the Undergraduate Programs Chair and Coordinator of the History + Theory curriculum and students working as interns at their independent architecture firms. Leadership alongside the Board of Trustees quickly engaged the services of a crisis-management consultant and an investigator to address the allegations and concerns. The outcome of the investigation led to the resignation of the Undergraduate Program Chair and History + Theory Coordinator. A working group was formed of faculty, administration, students, and alumni, in creating a new SCI-Arc Internship Policy which was implemented in the 2022-2023 academic year. A new Career Services Advisor position was created to assist in overseeing policies and guidelines for the student internship program.

CURRENT PRIORITIES AND PLANS

New Bachelor of Science In Design (BS Design) Program (pending WSCUC approval):

Beginning in the 2024-2025 academic year (pending WSCUC approval), SCI-Arc will begin a new four-year nonprofessional liberal-arts based degree program to prepare students for interdisciplinary creative careers in cinematic design, gaming, and data based environments, using architecture as a platform for exploration. A program where visually sophisticated, spatially informed, and technologically literate designers are forged and empowered to expand diverse cultural horizons and social affordances of tomorrow's media industries and urban infrastructures. Graduates will learn to confidently seize the opportunities arising between different fields of emerging technologies, and be well-positioned for employment across multiple industries, entrepreneurial ventures, and academic pathways. Career opportunities include game designer, production designer, creative director, concept artist, interaction technologist, asset developer, worldbuilder, narrative designer, urban strategist, data visualization specialist, 3D generalist, and architectural designer. The BS Design program is currently under Substantive Change Review with WASC. Anticipated approval in Spring 2024.

New Director/CEO Search: In Summer 2024, SCI-Arc will begin the search for the next Director/CEO. Designed to be open and transparent, the process will be led by SCI-Arc's Board of Trustees and will seek input from the school's four main constituency groups faculty, students, staff, and alumni. These groups will assist the Board's efforts to identify the professional experience and personal characteristics that would be important for the next Director/CEO of SCI-Arc. We expect that this will be an energizing moment for the entire community who look forward to beginning a process of reflection regarding the future Mission, Vision, and Strategic Plan for the college moving forward. The anticipated start date of SCI-Arc's next Director/CEO will be Fall 2025.

III. Summary of Preparations for Adapting to [2020 NAAB Conditions](#)

Please provide a brief description of actions taken or plans for adapting your curriculum/ classes to engage the 2020 Conditions.

SCI-Arc, 2023 Response: [Click here to enter text.](#)

SHARED VALUES:

We acknowledge the changes from the previous 2014 NAAB conditions regarding the Defining Perspectives towards the 2020 NAAB conditions of Shared Values. While there are some overlapping similarities, we note the additional shared values of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Knowledge and Innovation, and Lifelong Learning. Below is a review of SCI-Arc's progress regarding the 2020 NAAB conditions for Shared Values. These topics are discussed at the yearly academic retreats, and in the school's longer-term strategic planning initiatives.

Design: Design is at the heart of the SCI-Arc curriculum, and design studios in all programs are tailored to providing young architects by graduation with the skills necessary to engage in design activity that is a multi-stage process involving complex problems that have the power to provide cultural value towards an improved future.

The design studio curriculum is differentiated for the specific student body of each program whether the five-year B.Arch undergraduate program, three-and-half-year M.Arch 1 graduate program, or two-and-half-year M.Arch 2 program.

All three design studio curricula progress from basic design problems toward increasing complexity. The core design studios of B.Arch from first to fourth year, the first and second years of the M.Arch 1 program, and the first year of the M.Arch 2 program are all staged to

incrementally increase the challenges of building type, scale of project, program, and design complexity. Students build on the skills learned from each core studio, applying the knowledge gained in seminars, and integrating this knowledge into their projects. Throughout the core design studios, students learn the importance of different design strategies, how to consider options, evaluate various decisions, perform rigorous research, apply technical expertise, and most importantly demonstrate in tangible terms through drawings, models, and various media how to frame an architectural argument and position. Multiple formal juries and informal pin-ups with SCI-Arc faculty and outside experts give students the opportunity to present and test their design strategies as they progress in each semester.

After the core design studios, students in all three programs are mixed in their final year before thesis and are given the opportunity to choose through a lottery system their vertical design studios and instructors, usually from 10-12 different options. This gives the students the ability to focus on their individual interests by allowing them to choose to work with a diverse array of senior and invited faculty on a variety of architectural projects. The vertical studios serve as a bridge to their final thesis project, where students are expected to define their own project. Prior to the thesis design studio semester, the thesis research seminar in all programs involves rigorous research including; design methodology, precedents, site, and theoretical positions that help to frame their individual arguments and positions.

Environmental Stewardship and Professional Responsibility: SCI-Arc educates young architects to understand and take responsibility towards stewardship of the environment. Throughout the curriculum, environmental considerations are embedded in design studios and seminars. Particularly in the advanced Applied Studies courses, students learn the importance of understanding natural conditions, sustainable practices, and how to implement these considerations into an architectural project in their design studios.

Core courses include; (B.Arch) AS3020 and AS3031: Environmental Systems I and II; (M.Arch 1) AS3121 and AS3124: Environmental Systems; (M.Arch 2) AS3201 Advanced Building Systems. These seminar courses form the backbone of students learning of the importance of climate, geography, sustainability, energy, and the responsibilities architects have towards the environment. The combined courses of the Integrative Studios (B.Arch: DS1031 and AS3040) / (M. Arch 1: DS1120 and AS3122) / (M.Arch 2: DS1200 and AS3222), focus on students demonstrating how buildings can better respond to the environment. In the Design Development seminars, highly technical and focused workshops on solar design and envelope design serve to demonstrate to the students how their studio projects can serve as positive responses to the environment. These address thermal comfort parameters, air quality, energy, climate data, and include state-of-the-art digital software to simulate performance and optimize positive environmental outcomes.

In the following courses; (B.Arch) AS3050: 5A Professional Practice, (M.Arch 1) AS3130: 3GA Practice Environments, and (M.Arch 2) AS3230 3GBX Practice Environments—the instructor lectures on the NCARB Rules of Conduct and the AIA Code of Ethics, assigns readings, and presents examples discussing the ethical roles of professional responsibility.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: An equitable, diverse, and inclusive SCI-Arc community has always been a goal of the institute. Under Director/CEO Hernán Díaz Alonso, the first Hispanic/Latino director in SCI-Arc's history, this goal has grown into a mission in order to improve diversity within the faculty, students, and Board of Trustees. SCI-Arc continues to work to create a learning environment where different design backgrounds, teaching pedagogies, politics, ideas, people, genders, races, and cultures are welcomed and encouraged—and provide a valuable addition to the learning culture of the SCI-Arc community.

For more recent information regarding Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, please see “Section II. Changes or Planned Changes in the Program” of this document under “Equity and Inclusion.”

Knowledge and Innovation: SCI-Arc has always valued knowledge and innovation as the very mission of the institute has been to teach architects to engage, speculate, and innovate; to take the lead in reimagining the limits of architecture. Our students and faculty critically examine the rich possibilities of the built environment. From design and materials to culture and experience, SCI-Arc asks questions regarding new theoretical constructs and designed realities to constitute possible futures. We contribute an imaginative, rigorous, and forward-thinking approach to help shape the future of the architectural profession.

SCI-Arc was founded on the notion of a school driven by an expansive studio culture. For all those at SCI-Arc, this entails a commitment to open exploration and questioning about architecture and urban issues played out in the context of a design studio environment. From the outset, studio culture at the school resisted institutional, hierarchical models, but rather invested in those that foster genuine exploration, experimentation, and evolving dialogues. The student work in all design studios at SCI-Arc are where the combined knowledge of the curriculum results in applied building designs that leverage innovation towards contributions to the discipline.

Leadership, Collaboration, and Community Engagement: SCI-Arc prides itself on developing young leaders in the profession and we work to foster opportunities for leadership throughout the student experience. We also believe that the education of young architects must involve a deep understanding of the collaborative skills necessary for students to navigate the complexity of the built environment, and that leadership is a form of teamwork.

Students work in teams at multiple points in the core curriculum of all three accredited programs, including design studios; DS1010: 1A Studio: Interactions I; DS1031: 3B Studio: Assemblies II, DS1120: 2GA Comprehensive Design Studio; DS1200: 2GAX Computational Design Studio I; and the Design Development seminars AS3040: Design Development (B.Arch); AS3122: Design Development and Documentation (M.Arch 1); and AS3222: Design Development and Documentation (M.Arch 2). The collaborative nature of architectural design is reinforced as students learn the skills necessary to navigate complex architectural problems and the diverse world of practice in a team environment. Outside experts in various fields are invited to lecture, serve on juries, and review student work, demonstrating to students the inherent diversity of expertise that is needed in architecture, and how to navigate complex decisions. The Professional Practice seminars of AS3050: Professional Practice (B.Arch), AS3130: Practice Environments (M.Arch 1); and AS3230: Practice Environments (M.Arch 2), further ensure students learn the complexity of teamwork in the professional realm, involving contracts, project delivery methods, and the broad range of stakeholders involved.

STUN, the SCI-Arc Student Union, is the official voice of the student body, holding elections each fall for representatives of each program and year level. STUN serves as a forum for developing student leaders, acts to bring important issues to the administration, and elects the student representative to the SCI-Arc Board of Trustees. This position helps inform the administration and Board of Trustees on student issues and involves the students in the administrative activities of the school. Each year, SCI-Arc recognizes student leadership at graduation with the SCI-Arc Service Award, and the Alpha Rho Chi Medal, which "encourages student leadership." STUN members also attend and participate on the Academic Council Committee, actively discussing issues with faculty and administration.

Qualifying graduate students serve as teaching assistants in many courses, a system that allows the best student leaders to actively engage in the curriculum. Many of these students will pursue teaching careers in their future, and the TA positions give them opportunities to collaborate with faculty, learn how teaching is a team approach, and prepare them as future leaders in education.

Every student at SCI-Arc in the accredited programs is required to do a final thesis project, a project of their own making involving intensive research. As part of the thesis program, whether in the spring term for the B.Arch program, or the beginning of fall in the M.Arch 1 and M.Arch 2

programs, students present their projects to the younger students before final reviews and those students are encouraged to help the thesis students on their projects during the final week. This fosters the ability for students nearing graduation to learn how to inspire others and learn to manage a team of assistants. The students who help thesis students are given an opportunity to see how they may approach their own thesis in the future and learn from the experience in a collaborative manner.

Since moving to the Santa Fe Building in the Arts District of Los Angeles in 2001, SCI-Arc has been actively involved in the surrounding community. On an administrative level, the school participates in local community groups including the Arts District Business Improvement District (BID), and the Los Angeles River Artists and Business Association (LARABA). SCI-Arc's Board of Trustees is made up of many individuals with strong ties to downtown Los Angeles and the local Arts District. The school consistently hosts outside groups that use the Keck Auditorium as forums for community engagement such as; LAAIA and National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA), as well as meetings for the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro), and Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LA DOT) on planning and public forums regarding local improvement projects. All of these events are open to faculty and students to attend and serve to directly connect the student body with the community and engender them as active participants.

The Outreach Coordinator at SCI-Arc is responsible for outreach to local organizations that are interested in architectural education at the K-12 level. Collaborations include inviting and hosting Los Angeles Unified School District teachers and students at SCI-Arc and collaborating with the Inner-City Arts through SCI-Arc's Pop-Arc program to develop their architectural curriculum. These programs involved both SCI-Arc students and faculty and served to better strengthen SCI-Arc's connections to the local K-12 community, and as an avenue towards diversity outreach. In 2021 the new staff position of Community Engagement Coordinator was created to help support and continue SCI-Arc's relationship with local community of Los Angeles at all levels.

SCI-Arc students are active participants in the local Los Angeles Arts District. The SCI-Arc Student Union (STUN) has organized events such as a drive to donate lunches and personal hygiene kits to the homeless in the Arts District and Skid Row communities and donating food during Thanksgiving. STUN also has a Community Outreach Committee to further develop aid programs and ties to the local community.

Various design studio projects focus on the importance of community as it pertains to social issues. All SCI-Arc design studio reviews are open to the public, and the annual Spring Show, Undergraduate Thesis, and Graduate Thesis reviews are well attended by the local community. The SCI-Arc series of public lectures also serve as a forum for students to be exposed to social issues from a variety of viewpoints.

Lifelong Learning: SCI-Arc's academic programs foster the school's open-ended spirit of inquiry as well as respond to shifts in society, technology, and culture with a constantly evolving learning environment where faculty and students work together to advance to the next generation of the architectural discipline. All of the professionally accredited programs embody the notion of a broad and deep understanding of the discipline. From Design Studio, Applied Studies, Liberal Arts, History + Theory, and Visual Studies coursework, students are immersed in the idea that architecture plays an active role in all aspects of cultural production. The programs are led by a faculty of practitioners and scholars who are actively engaged in contemporary architectural discourse and production worldwide, working in fields ranging from design and engineering to visual studies and liberal arts.

While our students and faculty critically examine the rich possibilities of the built environment, they also understand that in an ever-changing field, learning is a lifelong commitment for the practice of architecture. This involves embracing the connections between the profession and the

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M.Arch 2 updated 2020 NAAB Matrix

****SCI-Arc response to Shared Values described above.**

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After this first phase, the Graduate Curricular Committee has evaluated the evidence relative to the curricular changes during the recurring yearly graduate faculty retreat in the summer. The summer assessment has been used as a point of departure for discussion during the fall and spring 2022-23 curricular meetings. During these meetings, the committee members in collaboration with the Graduate Programs Chair have proposed minor modifications to be made to its curricula/matrix based on findings from this first assessment cycle. In particular, Applied Study modules have been geared towards strengthening certain areas of the curriculum in the comprehensive design studios. The goal is to use this 2023-2024 academic year to test the results of these changes, before the visiting team reconvenes at SCI-Arc in 2026.

IV. Appendix (include revised curricula, syllabi, and one-page CVs or bios of new administrators and faculty members; syllabi should reference which NAAB SPC a course addresses. Provide three examples of minimum-pass student work for each SPC 'not met' in the most recent VTR.)

SCI-Arc, 2023 Response: [Click here to enter text.](#)

List of all Appendix included below:

Appendix 1_B.Arch Syllabus_LA 8011_Forms of Writing I

Appendix 2_ B.Arch Syllabus_LA 8111_Forms of Writing II

Appendix 3_B.Arch Syllabus_HT 2012_History of Architecture I

Appendix 4_B.Arch Syllabus + Assignment_HT 2024_History of Architecture II

Appendix 5_B.Arch Student Work Sample 1_HT 2024_History of Architecture II

Appendix 6_B.Arch Student Work Sample 2_HT 2024_History of Architecture II

Appendix 7_B.Arch Student Work Sample 3__HT 2024_History of Architecture II

Appendix 8_B.Arch Syllabus_HT 2025_History of Architecture III

Appendix 9_M.Arch 1 Syllabus_HT 2100_Introduction to Contemporary Architecture]

Appendix 10_ M.Arch 1 Student Work Sample 1_ HT 2100_Introduction to Contemporary Architecture

Appendix 11_ M.Arch 1 Student Work Sample 2_ HT 2100_Introduction to Contemporary Architecture

Appendix 12_ M.Arch 1 Student Work Sample 3_ HT 2100_Introduction to Contemporary Architecture

Appendix 13_M.Arch 1 Syllabus_HT 2120_History of Architecture and Urbanism II]

Appendix 14_CV_Kristy Balliet_Undergraduate Program Chair

Appendix 15_CV_Marcelyn Gow_Undergraduate Program Chair