Department of Architecture

Introduction

Architecture is inherently an interdisciplinary field of study, integrating knowledge from art, science, and the humanities. As a method of practice, it is a complex, collaborative, professional activity aimed at improving the quality of life for people and the planet. The discipline requires creative, critical, agile, and integrative thinking. Architecture deals with highly complex problems and aims to solve them not only competently, but in a way that ennobles society. The curriculum responds to these considerations by offering a series of overlapping sequences in professional and academic course work.

Mission

The Department of Architecture engages in progressive knowledge generation, dissemination, and application through its core activities of teaching, scholarship, and service to enhance the quality of life for people and the planet. The department furthers this mission by offering 4 degrees:

- The Master of Architecture (an NAAB-accredited professional degree);
- The Bachelor of Arts in Architectural Studies (a pre-professional program); and
- 2 post-professional graduate degrees,
  - the Master of Arts in Architecture
  - the Ph.D. in Architecture

Undergraduate Programs

Master of Architecture Program (5-year)

“In the United States, most state registration boards require a degree from an accredited professional degree program as a prerequisite for licensure. The National Architectural Accrediting Board (http://www.naab.org) (NAAB), which is the sole agency authorized to accredit U.S. professional degree programs in architecture, recognizes three types of degrees: the Bachelor of Architecture, the Master of Architecture, and the Doctor of Architecture. A program may be granted a six-year, three-year, or two-year term of accreditation, depending on the extent of its conformance with established educational standards. Master’s degree programs may consist of a preprofessional undergraduate degree and a professional graduate degree that, when earned sequentially, constitute an accredited professional education. However, the preprofessional degree is not, by itself, recognized as an accredited degree.”

— National Architectural Accrediting Board

Prospective students who apply for admission to the accredited 5-year degree program and are accepted through the undergraduate admissions process are admitted directly into the Master of Architecture program. These students pay undergraduate tuition through the first 4 years and are considered graduate students for the final year. Students holding a baccalaureate degree apply through graduate admissions and enter a 3-plus-year program (those holding a preprofessional degree in architecture receive advanced standing and usually complete the degree in 2 years plus 1 summer).

Bachelor of Arts in Architectural Studies

The B.A. in Architectural Studies is designed to serve as a platform or foundational degree for students who plan to specialize in architecture and other disciplines that focus on the design, planning and construction of the built environment. It exposes students to ideas and practices currently followed in all of the School’s design disciplines and it focuses on many of the business, communications and organizational skills that are not covered in the technical requirements of the graduate curricula.

Students at KU who start in the B.A. in Architectural Studies, co-enroll in graduate professional degrees and take courses that count toward the B.A. and the graduate professional degree.

Graduate Programs

The Department of Architecture offers 3 distinct plans for graduate study:

1. A Master of Architecture (M.Arch.), a 3-year professional degree for students already holding bachelor’s degrees in any field (those with architecture degrees are considered for advanced placement);
2. A Master of Arts in Architecture (M.A.) — Academic/Research Track for students interested in the study of architecture from an academic and scholarly perspective;
3. A Doctor of Philosophy in Architecture (Ph.D.) for students interested in engaging in robust, innovative inquiry that adds to the body of knowledge in architecture and its related fields.

Of these 3 degree programs, only the 3-year Master of Architecture is a professional degree. The other degrees are post-professional degrees that do not place the student on the path for architectural registration. Students seeking a career change into a professional curriculum, should apply for admission to the 3-year M.Arch. degree.