

BACKGROUND

Kent State University

Bachelor of Arts in Architectural Studies

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/RECOMMENDATION

This program clearly meets Regents' standards for baccalaureate degree programs. There were no serious concerns raised in the review.

Request: Kent State University seeks approval for a Bachelor of Arts in Architectural Studies. The Bachelor of Arts in Architectural Studies is a non-professional degree program housed in the College of Architecture and Environmental Design (COED). The College currently offers a Bachelor of Science (pre-professional), a Bachelor of Arts in Interior Design (professional), Master of Architecture (professional), Master of Urban Design, Master of Architecture and MBA dual degree (with the College of Business Administration), and Master of Architecture and master of Urban Design (dual degree). The degree program provides an opportunity for study within architectural design that is more broadly-based in liberal arts than the pre-professional or professional program routes. The professional programs within the College of Architectural and Environmental Design are accredited by the National Architectural Accreditation Board.

Program Purpose/Mission: The Bachelor of Arts in Architectural Studies is designed to prepare students interested in the field of architecture for study and eventual employment in cultural theory and criticism, urban planning and design, studio art and other fields where architectural sensibility may provide strategic advantage. The program is also designed for students who ultimately seek a professional masters degree or seek an alternative to a full-studio/technical architecture program and desire a career in the rapidly expanding design profession that combines study in architecture with other fields such as journalism, geography, information technology, graphic design, marketing and management.

Curriculum: The curriculum of the proposed baccalaureate degree provides a foundation year in basic design theory, courses in architectural design, history, theory and technology as well as writing-intensive courses. During the fourth year students have the opportunity to pursue one of four areas of study: architectural design and theory (for students planning to apply to the professional masters program), architectural history and criticism (for students considering graduate work in art history, architectural history or journalism), urban design infrastructure and environmental design (for students interested in urban design or landscape architecture) and an allied major option for students interested in additional study in other fields.

Faculty: Kent State University will primarily draw upon its existing faculty and advisors in the College of Architecture and Environmental Design for the proposed program.

Evidence of Need: The Bachelor of Arts in Architectural Studies will provide a non-professional companion to the Bachelor of Science degree. Professional programs emphasize the development of technical skills essential to production work in design practice through a highly structured curriculum. The B.A. in Architectural Studies and other such emerging programs provide the flexibility to explore contemporary theoretical approaches and are focused on design literacy (vs. technical skill). Students will develop substantial literacy concerning architecture, architectural criticism and provide a strong background for advanced study. Analogous programs have emerged nationally, including programs in Chicago and Toronto. Kent State is the region's only architecture school and one of only a few programs in the state. Numerous graduate programs and private design firms have indicated strong support of the program option. The proposed program will provide opportunities to retain more students to degree completion, particularly those students who do not decide to pursue an architecture program or are not accepted to these highly competitive programs.

Resource Needs: Current needs of the program are primarily met by existing faculty and facilities. Many of the courses for the proposed baccalaureate degree already exist within the professional program curriculum. With the addition of some new courses, approximately 46 hours of new adjunct faculty would be required for the program as well as minimal start-up costs. The estimated enrollment for this program is approximately 30 students in the first year, drawn from existing bachelors degree students and new entrants into the field of study, with a cohort size of 50 upon program maturation.