

Organizational Forms for Architectural Education

Strategic Plan for the Department of Architecture

Texas A&M University

Summary

The strategic plan for the Department of Architecture defines the goals and actions by which the Department can fulfill its mission and achieve excellence. The context for the strategic plan includes University strategic issues of diversity, internationalization and information technology; College goals of enhancing the University-wide themes and maintaining recognition; and social, economic and professional trends. This document presents a consensus view of themes that the Department defines as important:

1. Knowledge-based design,
2. International studies,
3. Interdisciplinary studies,
4. Communication skills and visual studies,
5. Aesthetics and creativity,
6. Ethics, and
7. Service.

It derives from the Mission Statement strategic goals that are states and outcomes to be reached in the future:

1. An innovative architecture and environmental design curriculum.
2. A creative and supportive architectural culture.
3. A supportive research infrastructure.
4. An effective infrastructure for service, outreach and marketing.
5. Mechanisms for continuous assessment.

These goals are supported collectively by eight initiatives. The initiatives are intended to institutionalize the activities and processes that will assure high quality in the Department. They are:

1. Visual Studies programs.
2. Design Creativity and Education Lab.
3. Infrastructure Management Initiative.
4. Bureau of Delight.
5. Off-Campus and International Studies Unit.
6. Office for Service, Outreach and Marketing.

7. Office for Architectural Research.
8. Office for Assessment.

With modest additional support in faculty and financial resources, Texas A&M University can achieve a Department of Architecture that is widely identified as in the top 10 in the nation and prominent across the world.

Introduction

The purpose of the strategic plan is to declare goals and initiatives that will guide our actions over the next four years in fulfilling our mission. A goal is defined as “a desired state or outcome that results from planned and controlled activity.” The goals are to be elaborated by identifying change in our programs in terms of “what, when and how much.” Faced with demographic shifts, technological innovations, and continuing changes in the professions of architecture and visualization sciences, the Department must devise strategies that will enable us to meet the challenges of the near and long-range future.

The College of Architecture strategic planning goals are to enhance the University-wide theme, and to maintain or achieve national and international recognition and leadership. The University has adopted themes of diversity, internationalization and information technology. These issues coincide closely with the strengths and aspirations of our Department. Led by our graduate programs, the Department student body is increasingly diverse in ethnic, racial, and cultural profile. Our faculty is exceptionally diverse in terms of fields of knowledge and cultural background. We have particular strengths in an international orientation, drawing students from Europe, the Americas and Asia, providing international experiences in off-campus programs, and presenting our faculty in professional venues around the world. Finally, our leadership in computing and other information technologies is widely recognized.

Our actions now in setting the strategies for the Department will enable us to focus upon key issues and step into the limelight as among the best architectural education programs anywhere.

Evaluation of Progress

Past strategic plans provide a context of effort and intention. A careful assessment of the Department of Architecture Strategic Plan of 1998-2000 has been conducted to classify initiatives as *Accomplished*, *In progress*, *No change*, *Declined* or *No longer applicable*. It is attached as an appendix.

The retrospective view indicates that there are several clear achievements. The creation of cross disciplinary certificate programs in Environmental Hazard Management, Facilities Management, Health Systems and Design, and Historic Preservation within the graduate programs, and the consistent offering of new courses across several disciplines and departments, is an indication of a vital and effective cross disciplinary educational community. Improvement of student computing resources, and improvement of faculty computing resources demonstrates a degree of achievement in providing alternative career opportunities and focused graduate programs. The faculty continues to contribute aggressively to research in architecture and environmental design.

Some initiatives are as yet unimplemented, sometimes because of redefinition of objectives and strategies but sometimes because of insufficient focus or resources. Integration of foundation

coursework across College Departments has not achieved substantial progress. An interdisciplinary focus among new hires has not been accomplished due to immediate needs of replacing faculty in specialized positions. Although there is support from the College for small research projects and substantial travel funds, there may still be a weakness in support for faculty development, research development, or incentives that focus faculty upon specific targeted areas. Although computing resources have improved in many ways, the number of computer-based undergraduate studios has not increased as rapidly as desired.

A general comment is that the old Strategic Plan is very difficult to assess due to inclusion of very few measurable indicators. Most initiatives remain in progress and frankly have not been written to provide milestones that could measure progress. The most important criticism of the past plan is that although it defines aspirations and objectives, it does not define mechanisms for improvement. A pursuit of excellence must be expressed in the administrative organization and the institution of the Department.

Environment, Context and Values

Within the Department of Architecture, there is a degree of consensus regarding the social, economic and cultural environment and context for planning for the future. The environment may be characterized by both external factors deriving from the society at large and internal factors deriving from self-identity and shared values of the departmental community. Seven themes have been developed to organize and express the context for strategizing within the Department of Architecture.

The themes are highly influenced by emerging economic, social and technical trends. Yet the themes also derive from the particular strengths and specializations that are traditionally part of architecture. They are:

- 1. Knowledge-based design.** The Department agrees in general that the invention and creation of architecture should be founded upon rigorous, validated and verifiable knowledge. Building technology, including energy systems, structures, and construction methods, is a crucial part of knowledge-based design. Information technology, already a nationally recognized strength within the Department, plays a key role in knowledge-based design. The basis for architectural design decisions is a scientific method that observes phenomena, collects evidence, and derives conclusions through objective and documented methods. A pervasive knowledge-based theme is an opportunity for closely linking the research-oriented programs in the Department with the undergraduate studies and professional programs.
- 2. International studies.** National and regional economies are moving toward a single global scope. Transnational corporations are achieving dominant market positions. The practice of architecture is consequently transforming to become more international and more cross-cultural. The Department of Architecture celebrates these changes and adopts as an area of particular interest the knowledge and understanding of many cultures. A responsibility of the Department is to facilitate investigation of cultural, social, legal and industrial differences throughout the world and how they affect the built environment.
- 3. Interdisciplinary studies.** Trends toward business reengineering and organizational innovation are adjusting academic and professional boundaries, as exemplified by the increasing popularity of the four Certificate programs. Architecture as a profession is

being heavily affected by the emergence of other centers of influence in the building industry, such as construction management, professional engineering, facility management, and software companies. The Department prefers to cultivate positions of mutual respect and appreciation with allied professions and intends to pursue investigations within the general area of human habitat but expanded across social, discipline and intellectual boundaries.

4. **Communication skills and visual studies.** The practice of architecture depends upon collaboration among many participants and constituents. The tradition of architecture has strongly emphasized graphic skills; the Department asserts that the ability to draw is fundamental to architectural communication and inquiry. In addition, the abilities to write, to speak publicly, to create digital representations and to employ telecommunications tools are all important skills within the field of architecture.
5. **Aesthetics, creativity, invention and innovation.** The Department professes an allegiance and commitment to beauty. An architectural education should include strong components for the study of beauty, the fostering of imagination, and the novel solution of problems. Degradation in urban, suburban, rural and natural environments has reached a point of general social consciousness. Architecture is an intentional and critical arrangement of conditions designed to produce aesthetic value. The beauty, care, and fit of the places of human “being” are associated with mental and physical health.ⁱ Society should expect that architects would always strive to create beautiful, careful, and fitting placesⁱⁱ through an innovative, critical, and ethical practice.ⁱⁱⁱ Architecture can contribute immensely to ameliorating the degradation and reversing the trend.
6. **Ethics.** The highest standards of ethics are essential if architects are to play an effective leadership role as creators of habitable environments and responsible use of natural and cultural resources. The Department understands its role as including investigation of the long-range, societal, legal and environmental consequences of architectural decisions. Global warming, fossil fuel shortages, transportation failure, and unchecked crime rates are critical problems facing society that have an architectural dimension. Topics in sustainability, social justice, historic preservation, respect for legal constraints, and environmental stewardship are clearly important components of excellence in education of architects.
7. **Service to community.** The Department embraces a role of service to the communities to which it belongs, including the College of Architecture, the University, the profession of architecture, the adjacent communities and the general public.

Strategic Goals

The Department embraces strategic goals that derive directly from the Mission Statement. The Mission statement consists of six parts:

1. To create a multi-dimensional curriculum that provides for a well-rounded education in Architecture, within both its natural and cultural contexts;
2. To establish and maintain a positive learning *ethos* in which all appropriate practical and intellectual skills can be acquired and enhanced, as reinforcement for the practice of our knowledge-based profession;

3. To promote a framework of inter-disciplinary collaboration and understanding, within which the diverse strengths and interests of both faculty and students may be advanced and cultivated;
4. To develop and maintain close links to and continuous interaction with the design professions in the local, national and international realms;
5. To provide an active and articulate presence for Architecture as a discipline, and for the professional degree program, in the college, the university and community;
6. To broadcast our aspirations and achievements effectively through appropriate national and international channels.

Limitations in our current operations and attitudes necessitate changes that will enable the achievement of our Mission. Rather than goals whose attainment is determined by how those outside the department perceive us, the Departmental goals are defined to be qualities and characteristics of our culture and academic environment. The goals represent excellence in our research, teaching and service. The goals are changes to our mechanisms, organizational structures and patterns of behavior that will enable attainment of excellence.

The goals are action-oriented: the personnel of our Department and the support provided by the College and University will meet these goals through our behavior and activities. The goals also lead to a pattern of constant measurement and continuous improvement that conforms our programs to social, economic and cultural needs of Texas, the nation and the international community.

The first three goals relate to the first three points of our Mission. They address the seven themes drawn from the discussion of environment, context and values and the University strategic issues of diversity, internationalization, and technology. They are:

1. An innovative architecture and environmental design curriculum.

The Department of Architecture is committed to devising a curriculum that responds to social, cultural and technological changes and produces knowledgeable, ethical professionals. The profession of architecture is undergoing dramatic changes due to reorganization of American business, international opportunities, and the impact of information and communications technology^{iv}. Yet, the architectural curriculum at Texas A&M University and throughout schools in the United States is largely unchanged in comparison to curricula designed half a century ago^v. Digital technology is putting a strain upon the current forms of design education^{vi}. Texas A&M University has an opportunity to assume a leadership role in defining an architectural curriculum for the 21st century. Our work with advisors from active practitioners, industry analysts, and government has already led to the introduction of certificate programs that provide a cross-disciplinary overlay to the professional and research degree programs. We will continue the analysis of change to achieve an innovative architecture curriculum that will serve as a model for leadership, as we did in 1968 and again in 1995.

Nevertheless, the design studio with its educational model of project-based learning is the heart of architectural education. All courses in the Department should be coordinated and supportive of the open-ended, problem solving inquiry that is incorporated into the studio experience^{vii}. The studio experience provides a successful and proven approach to achieving holistic problem solving in the pursuit of the innovation and creation of

beautiful, careful, and fitting places^{viii}. The studio also provides a vehicle for research in that every design project is concerned with whether data and/or information have beautiful, careful, and fitting “shapes” or “forms” that convey meaning and provide high performance^{ix}

A current strength of the Department is its international programs. An international focus that addresses trends toward economic globalization is the starting point for our curricular innovation. The Department of Architecture will strengthen the international dimensions of its teaching, research and service activities by providing international opportunities to its students, faculty and staff that will:

- enable them to respect and understand other cultures and
- provide them with the knowledge and understanding of global systems essential to productivity and success in contemporary professional life.

2. A creative and supportive architectural culture.

Creativity depends upon reward for risk-taking, an ability to embrace change, and time for reflection. In recent years, many businesses have realized that employees are more productive when they are happy and appreciated. Critical to the success of the Department of Architecture is a social and physical environment that is fun, cooperative and supportive. Faculty, staff, and students can derive personal satisfaction and enjoyment from an environment that is aesthetically beautiful, culturally diverse, and intellectually challenging.

In addition, the administrative tasks that support faculty must be carefully managed to be highly efficient and effective. Information technology can play an important role in assisting faculty in routine tasks, such as room scheduling, annual reports, creation of syllabi, academic advising, and computing services. By streamlining these operations, more time can be made available for all faculty to focus upon productive work of fostering a vibrant architectural culture of research and learning.

3. Supportive research infrastructure.

The complexity and richness of research within the Department will be supported by organizational structures and institutional support that enable excellence. Improved departmental structures will complement the capabilities provided by the College Research Council and the existing Research Labs and Centers of the College. Already the Department of Architecture is recognized as a leading research institution in the field of architecture. By devoting appropriate resources, coordinating efforts, and publicizing our achievements, we can strengthen our capabilities and consolidate a position in the top five national research institutions and top 10 international research institutions in the field of architecture. Enhanced infrastructure within the Department to support research will solidify our position. By coordinating research efforts and sharing results, it will be possible to contribute more dramatically to the knowledge of architecture and environmental studies.

A fourth goal addresses points 4-6 of the Mission Statement:

4. An effective infrastructure for service, outreach and marketing.

Numerous guests have expressed surprise to learn of the depth and breadth of research and programs within our Department. A concerted and directed promotional effort can raise the perception of our Department among the design professions, potential students, the general public and our educational peers. An increased awareness of our contributions will also enable the Department to serve better our direct and indirect constituents.

The Department also frequently collaborates with public agencies to examine the range of potential solutions to architectural and planning problems. These efforts provide tangible benefits to the general public.

Finally, a fifth goal arches over all other goals as an organizational commitment to rational assessment and management:

5. Mechanisms for continuous assessment.

All processes and activities within the Department will be assessed as a routine and expected part of operations to support a culture of continuous improvement. A fundamental principle of quality assurance in business processes is to collect assessment data and adjust the processes in response to that data^x. The strength of the research programs in the Department of Architecture indicate that our faculty is capable of rigorous investigation and search in response to difficult technical and management problems. The Department will apply this investigative and analytical strength upon itself to assure that our administrative and operational practices are second to none in quality. The Department will establish baselines and develop procedures that measure our progress toward attainment of other goals. Measurements will be applied to all aspects of Departmental activity, including teaching, research, service and community outreach.

Information technology will play a critical role in these assessment procedures. Student performance can be measured through computer-based methods that enable statistical analysis of student activities and test responses. Management information systems will provide information regarding productivity and performance that will enable process reengineering of departmental procedures.

Strategic Initiatives

The initiatives are proposals to institutionalize processes and behaviors that can attain the goals described above. They are as follows:

1. Visual Studies Programs

As Texas A&M University initiates programs in art and culture, it has become important to distinguish a visual studies mission from that of the Environmental Design and Architecture programs. Building on the strength of the Visualization Sciences Lab and the program for a Master of Science in Visualization Sciences, a new academic unit is needed to focus on visual studies. The Department of Architecture plans to contribute faculty and resources toward the creation of these new programs. Such a program will specifically address the diversity of offerings at Texas A&M University and help to maintain and increase our leadership in information technology. The visual studies program is an important step in devising an innovative curriculum. This effort is already underway.

Resource needs have been listed in the proposal for a visual studies degree program. They include several new faculty positions, new facilities and new administrative resources.

Assessment of this program will be devised by the Office of Assessment within the Department of Architecture and later the College of Architecture. Assessment measures are anticipated to include number of students entering the program, quality of students applying, career success of students completing the program as indicated by salary level and satisfaction with jobs, national and international reputation, and other typical metrics for assessing an academic program.

2. Design Creativity and Education Lab

Interested and committed faculty will undertake research to devise new curricula in architecture and environmental design for the Department. The Lab will conduct surveys, interviews, focus groups, and other research activities to determine the most important factors affecting architects and designers in the future. The Lab will conduct a critical review and assessment of past and present architectural education models, and identify novel and successful education models from outside the architectural tradition. The Lab will deliver reports on its objective findings, a curriculum, model syllabi for courses, a reading list and recommended activities for the courses. Furthermore, the Lab will identify a profile for a faculty that can effectively teach to the model curriculum. The Lab will provide education and training to the Texas A&M University faculty to equip our faculty to successfully teach to this curriculum.

This initiative will address the seven themes described earlier. In particular, the Department intends to extend the steps already taken in professional outreach and cross disciplinary learning that are already embodied in the Certificate programs, by integrating diverse cultures, an understanding of international business and practice, and the information technology into the new curriculum."

Faculty resources must be devoted to this effort. A director of the lab will coordinate efforts. Research funds will be required to enable the study of industry needs and trends.

Design Creativity and Education Lab

Resource	Financial commitment
Director. Tenured faculty assigned to 25% time to administering the initiative.	\$20,125.00
Faculty fellows. A total equivalent of 25% time for a faculty member will be dispersed among faculty undertaking special research projects related to this initiative.	\$20,125.00
Administrative support staff. 50% time over twelve months.	\$10,350.00
Student workers, 20 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.	\$8,600.00
Total cost per year for four years	\$59,200.00

This will be a recurring cost each year over four years. If funding can be obtained, the Lab will be initiated by the Fall of 2002 and then will produce periodic white papers and an annual summary report.

Assessment of this initiative will be devised by the Office of Assessment within the Department of Architecture. Assessment will focus upon attainment of goals of creating a coherent and innovative curriculum. Reputation among other schools of architecture and willingness of other

schools to adopt the model curriculum will also be an indicator. Influence of the curriculum upon national bodies such as the National Architectural Accreditation Board will also serve as evidence of success or failure. Surveys of professional architects and designers who are familiar with the program can also establish whether the objectives have been met.

3. Infrastructure Management Initiative

Faculty with an interest and expertise in administration and information technology will be collected into a unit that can act to implement an infrastructure management approach to operating the Department. Infrastructure management is a cutting edge approach to business operations that constitutes a holistic approach to managing personnel, facilities, task assignments, and support services. An infrastructure manager identifies all non-core activities in an enterprise and then applies coordinated decision-making and management processes to the non-core activities. This approach enables other personnel to focus upon core activities. In an educational institution, the core activities are teaching and research. Non-core activities include enrollment management, human resources, facilities operations and maintenance, distribution of syllabi, and administrative tasks. Information technology plays a key role in infrastructure management through Management Information Systems, Computer Aided Facility Management, and Web-based intranet services.

Faculty resources will be needed to undertake this effort. External consulting resources may be needed. Several graduate student assistants will be needed to construct and maintain the information systems.

Infrastructure Management Initiative

Resource	Financial commitment
Coordinator. Tenured faculty assigned to 25% time to analyzing administrative and academic processes and devising information systems support.	\$20,125.00
Implementation specialists. These may be consultants or graduate assistants.	\$30,000.00
Total cost per year for two years	\$50,125.00

It is anticipated that this project will require two years to complete. It should be initiated as soon as possible. In a first year, surveys of personnel and pilot implementations will be completed. Widespread implementation will take place in the second year.

Assessment will be undertaken by the Office of Assessment and will focus upon productivity of faculty and staff in the Department, as well as quality, quantity and timeliness of information provided to faculty, staff, students and administrators.

4. Bureau of Delight

Drawing from the definition of architecture put forward by the Roman architect Vitruvius, our program must incorporate a strong component of delight. Interested faculty will enlist in the Bureau of Delight to provide cultural enrichment activities in the Department. The Bureau will organize and sponsor exhibits, guest lectures, social events, performance art happenings, movie screenings, and various other activities that put art, aesthetics, excitement, and joy front stage.

This initiative directly addresses diversity on the Texas A&M University campus. An emphasis will be placed upon expressing in a public forum alternative viewpoints that challenge assumptions and norms.

A fund for paying expenses of events will be required. Some faculty resources must be allocated toward managing the Bureau, coordinating events, and publicizing events. The director will devote effort to obtaining additional outside funds to support exhibits, events and honoraria.

Bureau of Delight

Resource	Financial commitment
Director. Tenured faculty assigned to 25% time to administering the initiative.	\$20,125.00
Administrative support staff, 50% time over twelve months.	\$10,350.00
Student workers, 20 hours per week, 50 weeks per year.	\$8,600.00
Exhibit funds and honoraria for speakers.	\$10,000.00
Total cost per year for four years	\$49,075.00

These funds will be needed each year for a period of four years. The Bureau will prepare a lecture and event schedule for the academic year of 2001-2002. Formation of the Bureau and its administrative infrastructure will take place during that academic year. Full activities of the Bureau will begin in Fall of 2002 if funds are procured.

The Office of Assessment will devise assessment of this initiative. It will focus upon counting cultural events, surveying students and faculty in the Department, the College and the University to determine appreciation of the programs, and public perception of the program.

5. Off-Campus and International Studies Unit

In alignment with College goals and University goals to emphasize international studies and issues of globalization, the Department will collect faculty who have interests in international studies to enable coordinated actions. The Unit will perform a variety of tasks in support of students, research and development, serving as a single point of information and responsibility for services related to international and off-campus programs. The distance education programs within the Department of Architecture will be a particular focus of this effort. Interdisciplinary activities will also be addressed through these programs. Aided by staff, faculty with specific assignments in this area will:

- act as a departmental liaison to College and University international programs;
- market off-campus programs to students, the profession and the public;
- provide logistic support to students;
- mentor and provide guidance to off-campus faculty;
- arrange cross-registration for students with collaborating educational institutions;
- arrange faculty exchanges;
- monitor size and quality of off-campus programs;
- develop regional, national, and international internship opportunities;
- host guests who can provide lectures and workshops in international studies;

- expand information and communications technology distance education;
- identify funding sources and obtain grants; and
- introduce international issues into the curriculum.

The success of this initiative can be assessed by examining measures such as

- Number of students participating annually in an international program or off-campus program;
- Number of graduating seniors annually who have obtained an international experience;
- Number of new international and off-campus programs (study abroad, reciprocal exchange, continuing education, internships, etc.) developed;
- Number of faculty traveling abroad for research or professional presentations;
- Introduction of a course that focuses upon global practice; enrollment in that course;
- Number of international studies anchor sites, adding sites in Barcelona and Mexico City;
- Number of reciprocal exchange programs and number of students participating in the programs;
- Survey students to assess satisfaction with international programs and the attainment of learning objectives through participation in those programs.

Assessment will be conducted with assistance of the Office of Assessment.

This far-reaching effort will require dedication of appropriate faculty, staff and funding resources. Necessary resources are as follows:

Off-Campus and International Studies Unit

Resource	Financial commitment
Director. Tenured faculty assigned to 50% time to manage the initiative and provide advising to students.	\$40,250.00
Administrative support staff, 50% time over twelve months.	\$10,350.00
Graduate teaching assistant, 50% time over twelve months.	\$11,610.00
Travel funds. Allow director to visit off-campus programs for coordinating efforts and promoting programs.	\$10,000.00
Total cost per year for four years	\$72,210.00

This commitment must be on-going and continuous over the next four years. Assignment of faculty resources should be accomplished during the Fall of 2001. Other staffing and funds should be established in the ensuing months. A plan of action will be prepared by Fall of 2002 and then implemented in following years.

6. Office for Service, Outreach and Marketing

A working group will be organized from faculty who are interested in the challenges of serving the community, working with the profession, improving the image of the Department, and providing interfaces beyond the Department. This group will identify continuing education markets, community service projects, and internship opportunities, among other opportunities. It will oversee maintenance of an informational Web site, creation of marketing brochures, publication of research descriptions, and other endeavors to disseminate information about the Department. Particular emphasis will be placed upon outreach to diverse cultural and social groups and international constituents.

Faculty resources must be devoted to this effort. Substantial travel funds should be set aside to market our programs to feeder schools. Funds will be required for commissioning the design of marketing materials and their printing. These funds will be needed each year for four years. Allocation of faculty resources must come first and should be accomplished in the upcoming academic year. Support infrastructure should be put in place afterward. A plan of action should be prepared and approved during the 2001-2002 academic year to allow full implementation by Fall of 2002.

Service, Outreach and Marketing Initiative

Resource	Financial commitment
Coordinator. Tenured faculty assigned to 25% time to lead the initiative and provide advising to students.	\$20,125.00
Administrative support staff, 25% time over twelve months.	\$5,175.00
Graduate teaching assistant, 25% time over twelve months. Graphic design.	\$5,805.00
Travel funds. Allow recruiting visits.	\$5,000.00
Marketing materials printing and publication.	\$5,000.00
Total cost per year for four years	\$41,105.00

Assessment of this initiative will be conducted by the Office of Assessment and will focus upon determining the public image of the Department.

7. Office of Architectural Research

The Office will act as a clearinghouse for research and requests for proposals within the Department of Architecture, complementing the efforts of the College Research Council and responding to special needs of researchers within the Department. The Office will work closely with the Research Centers and Labs to assure that faculty of the Department are fully aware of opportunities. A staff person will collect information about research and disseminate it throughout the Department. In cooperation with faculty members, the staff person will help identify promising grant programs and requests for proposals and disseminate the information to the faculty. This person will organize research symposia and events and help to bring independent researchers together into collaborative groups. A faculty person in charge of this initiative, (the Coordinator), will examine research results and suggest ways to incorporate them into courses. The coordinator will provide advice and assistance with regard to proposal writing; grant administration; and Institutional Review Board approval. The staff person will provide support in technical writing and proof reading.

Research within the Department is well known in addressing diverse cultures, in its international scope, and in applying the most advanced information technologies. This initiative will further these goals that are endorsed by the University.

Faculty resources at the Departmental level must be devoted to this effort. Travel funds will be needed to present research results and to interview industry leaders and identify potential sponsors. Funds will be needed for running symposia and events and for printing publications. A staff position is needed to assist faculty and graduate students in technical writing.

Architectural Research Coordination Initiative

Resource	Financial commitment
Coordinator. Tenured faculty assigned to 25% time to lead the initiative and provide advising to faculty researchers.	\$20,125.00
Administrative support staff and technical writer, 50% time over 12 months	\$10,350.00
Travel funds. Research presentations, confer with agency sponsors.	\$5,000.00
Symposia, start up funds.	\$5,000.00
Total cost per year for four years	\$40,475.00

Implementation will begin as soon as funds are acquired. After appointment of a coordinator, the technical staff will be hired and objectives further defined. The Office should be fully operational by Fall of 2002.

Assessment will focus upon the fund generated in sponsored projects and the research publications, as well as reputation of the Department for its research. The Office of Assessment will lead the assessment effort.

8. Office of Assessment

Assessment of these initiatives is critical to achieving excellence. The Department will allocate resources to continuous assessment of its operations and its performance using valid, verifiable metrics. The methods to be used include surveys of faculty, students, professionals and industry representatives, interviews, National Architectural Accreditation Board criteria, and analysis of data collected routinely by the Department.

Each of the other strategic initiatives must be assessed by first, documenting the current state of our department with regards to the initiative, and then documenting change over time that can be attributed to the initiative. Participants in the Office of Assessment will investigate assessment methods in industry and academia and develop benchmarks.

Assessment is not intended to produce judgments of whether a program should continue or not. Instead, it is intended to help the Department to document its achievement and identify effective ways to improve quality.

Faculty resources will be required. Funds will be required for implementing paper surveys or Web based assessment instruments. Implementation will require appointment of a coordinator or interim coordinator during the Fall of 2001. During the Spring of 2002, a plan of action will be devised for implementation beginning in the Fall of 2002.

Assessment Initiative

Resource	Financial commitment
Coordinator. Tenured faculty assigned to 50% time to lead the initiative.	\$40,250.00
Administrative support staff to conduct surveys, analyze results, coordinate assessment instruments.	\$10,350.00

Administrative support funds for overhead, supplies and communications.	\$5,000.00
Total cost per year for four years	\$55,600.00

In-progress initiatives

Two efforts that are in progress at this time also deserve mention. These are not initiatives for the future but current initiatives. Nevertheless they must be completed to enable attainment of our goals.

Renovation of our space, including lecture classrooms, seminar rooms and studio laboratories is critical to improving morale, attracting top students and faculty, and accommodating changing learning methods. Several lecture rooms and seminar rooms have received new equipment, but studio renovations have not been completed.

Incorporation of computing infrastructure is the second initiative that is in-progress. Although substantial progress has been achieved, particularly in provision of output devices and open-access laboratories, infrastructure that will allow integration of computing into studio courses remains uncompleted.

These two initiatives must be carried to completion in short order.

Summary of resources

The resources for undertaking all of the initiatives amount to \$367,790.00 per year or a total of \$1,370,910.00 over four years (note that some initiatives are not scheduled to require support for all of four years). The kinds of resources needed are mostly personnel, including faculty, staff and student workers. Other funds will be expended on travel, publishing, events and infrastructure. Given commitment from the University and private donors, these initiatives will enable the Department to achieve preeminence among schools of architecture and the excellence that is indicated by such a reputation.

Conclusion

The Department has identified seven themes of importance in architecture that align closely with the University strategic issues. These seven themes have led to five goals that can be achieved through eight strategic initiatives. Although this strategic plan is complex, it reflects the diversity and richness of the Department of Architecture and programs that are already underway. These initiatives address all of teaching, research and service and assure a state-of-the-art administration and operation. Key to success is the inclusion of an explicit program of assessment that will make possible continuous improvement of our programs.

Although some of these initiatives may be productively undertaken at a College level or even a University level, the Department of Architecture has identified that these must be achieved to enable the success of the Department. Thus, the Department stands ready to accept responsibility and authority over these initiatives and requests the support and funding to see that they are successfully implemented. The Department is eager to act as a pilot study for the College and University and to lead the College and the University in these areas.

The Department of Architecture is poised at the threshold of national and international prominence. Small steps are needed that focus our efforts to anticipate the future. Our strong research position can be turned toward the educational component of our mission to produce an

innovative Department. Managing and administering our resources can enable us to meet the varied aspects of our Mission. The initiatives outlined in this plan will enable us to provide an innovative curriculum, a creative culture, strong research programs, a well known and widely admired public presence, and the evidence that demonstrates convincingly the truth of our beliefs.

Appendix: Detailed Assessment of 1998-2001 Strategic Plan

Theme	Initiative	Status	Comments
Expand understanding of the value of architecture and design	Develop new knowledge that can be applied to the profession of architecture	In progress	This is a continuous process. No metrics are given to establish the degree of success.
	Provide the University with lecture courses	Accomplished	Art and architecture history classes provide art core requirement for the University. New courses in ARCH and visual studies will also serve the University.
	Provide community outreach services	In progress	There are no clear metrics.
Increase the national and international leadership through degree programs and research centers	Publicize and promote the tradition of leadership in professional societies	In progress	Faculty clearly play leadership roles in various professional societies. There are no clear metrics nor defined mechanisms for support.
	Continue developing a higher profile	In progress	There are no clear metrics.
	Develop the existing Web site	Accomplished	Although this has been achieved, it will remain a continuing focus of effort.
	Encourage faculty and Ph.D. students to publish abstracts	In progress	This is a continuous process. Fall symposium is an accomplishment in this area. No metrics are given to establish the degree of success.
	Publish award winning designs	In progress	There has been mild success in this area. However, there is not a clear mechanism for continuing the process.
	Include and advertise the diverse faculty and students	In progress	There has been mild success in this area. However, there is not a clear mechanism for continuing the process.

Theme	Initiative	Status	Comments
Increase the national and international leadership through degree programs and research centers (Continued)	Enhance the quality of infrastructure through faculty and staff training	In progress	The metric is vague. This is an on-going activity.
	Increase the role of internal publications	In progress	There is no clear way to measure this.
	Continue an aggressive recruiting strategy	In progress	There is no clear way to accomplish this or metric to demonstrate degree.
	Increase the role of faculty in continuing education and summer workshops	In progress	There is no clear metric.
	Use available communications technology to expand continuing education opportunities	In progress	The distance education M Arch program is a step toward this, but there is still no strong continuing education program.
	Continue a leadership role in international programs	In progress	This is an ongoing intention rather than a measurable activity.
Provide undergraduate alternative career opportunities and focused graduate programs	Present undergraduates with the full range of career options	In progress	Arguably, this has declined as course offerings have changed. Nevertheless, the program of tracks establishes several distinguishable careers.
	Present graduates with a range of emphasis areas	Accomplished	Substantial progress has been achieved in the certificate programs.
	Improve written, spoken and graphic communication skills	In progress	This remains a difficulty problem. There are no metrics specified and no mechanism to accomplish this.
	Introduce teamwork approach	No change	Efforts are on-going but there is not a clear designation of responsibility for this.
	Fully integrate computers and computer technology	In progress	Slow progress has been achieved.
	Increase available computer hardware for student access and faculty use	In progress	Faculty computing in particular has been enhanced, and student computing has been improved. There remains much to improve.

Theme	Initiative	Status	Comments
Provide undergraduate alternative career opportunities and focused graduate programs (continued)	Require all students to purchase and use their own computers and provide network resources	No longer applicable	Due to University and College decisions, this is not a preferred goal.
	Upgrade computer software in CADD capability	Accomplished	Our computing software availability is very good.
	Increase the number of electronic design studios	Declined	Due to faculty reassignment and changes in College computing policy, there are fewer studios courses using computers than in the past.
	Finalize computer resource policy	In progress	Under continuous reevaluation.
	Evaluate and revise computer related course inventory	Accomplished	This has been achieved as evidenced by the creation of ENDS 170.
	Increase the use of the Web in teaching	In progress	This is a continuous process. No metrics are given to establish the degree of success.
	Increase the level of student financial support	In progress	Development of additional scholarship and fellowship funds shows substantial accomplishment.
	Increase opportunities for study-abroad and internships	In progress	No clear metrics.
	Integrate international opportunities	In progress	No clear metrics. There is still much to achieve.
	Expand summer programs	In progress	Efforts have been directed toward this but University constraints have limited the success.
	Develop Ph.D. tracks	In progress	Certificate programs are a step toward this, but it is still in progress.
	Develop a formal job placement service	No change	Faculty retirements have slowed the achievement of this goal.
Improve the quality and security of the teaching environment	In progress	Renovation of the facilities is still in progress.	

Theme	Initiative	Status	Comments
Cultivate a mutually supportive interdisciplinary community	Integrate one or two years of early coursework across departments	Declined	There is no consensus across departments regarding course requirements.
	Integrate graduate coursework across departments	Accomplished	Certificate programs demonstrate a degree of achievement.
	Develop interdisciplinary course groupings	In progress	Design/Build courses demonstrate a degree of achievement.
	Develop interdisciplinary approaches to teaching, research and creative activities	In progress	There continue to be occasional alliances across departments. However, there is still no mechanism for achieving this and no metric.
	Foster interdisciplinary work	In progress	There is no clear metric.
	Reinforce the interdisciplinary opportunities with new hires	No change	New hires have not kept up with retirement. New hires have not emphasized interdisciplinary ability but instead specialist skills.
	Support faculty development	No change	There has not been substantial progress in this area.
	Provide incentives for faculty to focus on priority areas	No change	There has not been substantial progress in this area.
	Cultivate local informal spaces to support community interaction	Accomplished	The addition of the Azimuth Café represents substantial achievement. Efforts are continuing to improve the physical environment.
	Provide support for editing and grant writing for faculty	No change	There is still no clear mechanism for achieving this.
Develop "two-degree" interdisciplinary opportunities	In progress		

Endnotes

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