



University of Toronto

OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT AND PROVOST

TO: Committee on Academic Policy and Programs

SPONSOR: Edith Hillan
CONTACT INFO: edith.hillan@utoronto.ca

DATE: December 14, 2005

AGENDA ITEM: 6(b)

ITEM IDENTIFICATION:

School of Graduate Studies: Admission requirements in the Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design Master of Architecture (M.Arch)

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

The Committee has the authority to approve admission policies relating to minor changes to individual programs or to divisional practices and policies.

PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:

HIGHLIGHTS:

The Master of Architecture (M.Arch.) program is designed as a three and a half year program. The program admits students from a wide range of undergraduate backgrounds. It does not require previous training in architecture. The Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design currently offers a first Master of Architecture degree (3.5 years). At present the Faculty offers the possibility for highly qualified applicants having excellent academic records and having completed at least four design studio courses to be admitted into the *second year* with “advanced standing.”

This proposal requests approval to offer the possibility for entry into the *third year* of the degree for a small number (3) of highly qualified candidates who hold an accredited professional degree from a recognized university. This has the effect of producing a one and a half year (12 months) post-professional Master of Architecture option for candidates interested in engaging advanced study and in enhancing their professional education beyond what they have already received. This option would not grant students a professionally accredited degree, rather holding a professionally accredited degree is a prerequisite for admission.

The post-professional Master of Architecture advanced standing option will be available to students as follows:

The prerequisite for entry into the *third year* of the Master of Architecture program is the possession of an accredited professional degree. The requirement for this advanced standing option is distinct from the existing option where students eligible to enter the *second year* of the professional degree do not possess a professional degree and are seeking a first professional degree in architecture. Typically these students hold pre-professional degrees such as a four-year Bachelor of Architectural Studies or, for example, transfer from what is referred to as a 4-plus-2-year first professional degree in architecture. Students eligible for advanced placement into *second year* have four design studio courses, have accrued the time and background in architectural studies, and are of exceptional academic standing to exempt them from the first year of the professional program.

Students entering the *third-year* post-professional advanced standing option possess an accredited professional degree. They are seeking an opportunity to engage in advanced design and research beyond what was required for their professional accreditation. The required course load and time to completion in a first professional degree limits the possibilities for advanced study. Students accepted into the post-professional advanced standing option will have completed accreditation requirements and thus are able to focus on research that will enhance their professional careers or prepare them for academic careers. The course of study includes 7.5 FCE over three academic sessions including a proseminar (0.5), thesis preparation and research (0.5), two design studio options (1.0 each), a design or research thesis (1.5), and six elective courses (0.5 each). It is proposed that the thesis may take the form of either a design or a research thesis.

The Faculty notes that the proposed change will enhance the experience of graduate students in the Faculty's existing degree programs by introducing a small number of incoming students— maximum of three (3) - with professional credentials and experience. Secondly, the incoming post-professional students are offered an opportunity to revisit and refresh their skills in preparation for re-entry into professional practice, as a mid-career transition, or for new career paths in research and teaching. Thirdly, the proposal has the effect of diversifying the various paths into, through, and between the design professions as they also enhance the range of options for advanced professional study. This coincides with increased demand for advanced professional training at mid-career and at various generational junctures for a diverse range of design professionals. Fourthly, the proposal is intended to foster a more diverse student cohort in terms of intellectual development, professional and personal experience. Finally, the proposal has the effect of more fully utilizing our existing faculty cohort and course offerings while simultaneously bringing our degree program streams into symmetry with the offerings of peer institutions in North America.

The proposal was approved by the Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Design Faculty Council (including graduate student representation), Curriculum Committee and Faculty Executive Committee at the Winter 2005 meeting. The proposal was approved by the Council of the School of Graduate Studies on November 22, 2005.

FINANCIAL AND/OR PLANNING IMPLICATIONS:

The Faculty anticipates that the new optional stream through the existing M.L.A. degree offering will require a single additional course offering per academic year (0.5 credit pro-seminar) and will yield a small number of additional applicants, matriculants, and graduates over the coming years. As such, few budgetary or planning impacts are anticipated. There are no new/additional financial resources required.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs approve:

THAT the Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design offer a Post-Professional Advanced Standing Option in the Master of Architecture program, as described above, effective September 2006.