National Architectural Accrediting Board

2024 Visiting Team Report

Program: Worcester Polytechnic Institute (M.Arch.)

Type of Visit: Initial Candidacy

Date of Visit: October 20-22, 2024

Contents

A. Summary of Visit

a. Acknowledgments and Observations

The team thanks Dean Dr. John McNeill, Department Head Dr. Nima Rahbar, Program Director Dr. Steven Van Dessel, Administrative Specialist Julie Bleyhl, and many others for their time and efforts in providing the team with thorough program and course information and for facilitating an effective and informative in-person visit. Their hard work leading up to and during the visit helped make our time here at WPI productive and enjoyable.

Provost Dr. Andrew Sears also generously shared his time and insights regarding the new M.Arch. program within the School of Engineering and how it will complement WPI's emphasis on Theory and Practice-based education and project-based learning.

It is clear the program enjoys full support and enthusiasm from administration, faculty, staff, students, and the professional community toward the shared goal of establishing a quality M.Arch. degree within the Architectural Engineering program. As with establishing any new degree program, there are many financial, physical, human, and other resources necessary to ensure success, and at the time of this visit, it seems clear to the team that the program leadership and administration are meeting these needs and are equipped to continue to address them as the program and student population grows.

At the time of the visit, there are active students across all four years of undergraduate study in the already established Architectural Engineering program, one admitted student to the M.Arch. degree program, and countless other students that have applied or intend to apply to the M.Arch. program. Students are articulate, authentic, passionate about their studies and future careers and generally seem excited about the opportunities the new M.Arch. degree will provide.

While at the time of this visit there are conditions that are Not Yet Met, the program appears on track with its Plan for Achieving Initial Accreditation and the team has no concerns in their ability to ultimately fulfill the NAAB Conditions for Accreditation. If Candidacy is approved by the NAAB Board, the next scheduled Continuation of Candidacy Visit is currently slated for Fall of 2026.

Moving forward the faculty and administration seem fully aware of and ready for the work that remains to meet the remaining conditions, including refining already well-defined assessment processes in place for ABET accreditation to more closely align with NAAB accreditation, and to ensure physical, financial, human, and other resources continue to be provided as the M.Arch. program grows. The team encourages the program to use the insights gained from this visit and process as well as this report to help guide their efforts towards that milestone.

b. Conditions with a Team Preliminary Finding as Not Achieved

3. Program and Student Criteria	
PC.2 Design	**Not Yet Met**
PC.4 History and Theory	**Not Yet Met**
PC.6 Leadership and Collaboration	**Not Yet Met**
SC.1 Health, Safety and Welfare in the Built Environment	**Not Yet Met**
SC.2 Professional Practice	**Not Yet Met**
SC.5 Design Synthesis	**Not Yet Met**
SC.6 Building Integration	**Not Yet Met**
4. Curricular Framework	
4.3 Evaluation of Preparatory/Pre-Professional Education	**Not Yet Met**
5. Resources	
5.2 Planning and Assessment	**Not Yet Met**
5.3 Curricular Development	**Not Yet Met**
6. Public Information	
6.1 Statement on NAAB-Accredited Degrees	**Not Yet Met**
6.2 Access to NAAB Conditions and Procedures	**Not Yet Met**
6.4 Public Access to Accreditation Reports and Related Documents	**Not Yet Met**
6.5 Admissions & Advising	**Not Yet Met**
6.6 Student Financial Information	**Not Yet Met**

B. Progress Since the Previous Site Visit

This section is not applicable for initial candidacy visits.

C. Program Changes

If the Accreditation Conditions have changed since the previous visit, a brief description of changes made to the program because of changes in the Conditions is required.

2024 Team Analysis: Not applicable

D. Compliance with the 2020 Conditions for Accreditation

1—Context and Mission (*Guidelines*, p. 5)
To help the NAAB and the visiting team understand the specific circumstances of the school, the program must describe the following:

- The institutional context and geographic setting (public or private, urban or rural, size, etc.), and how the program's mission and culture influence its architecture pedagogy and impact its development. Programs that exist within a larger educational institution must also describe the mission of the college or university and how that shapes or influences the program.
- The program's role in and relationship to its academic context and university community, including how the program benefits–and benefits from–its institutional setting and how the program as a unit and/or its individual faculty members participate in university-wide initiatives and the university's academic plan. Also describe how the program, as a unit, develops multidisciplinary relationships and leverages unique opportunities in the institution and the community.
- The ways in which the program encourages students and faculty to learn both inside and outside the classroom through individual and collective opportunities (e.g., field trips, participation in professional societies and organizations, honor societies, and other program-specific or campus-wide and community-wide activities).

Program Summary Statement of 1 – Context and Mission

Team Findings: Met

2024 Team Analysis: Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) is the nation's third-oldest private technical university. Located in Worcester, MA, New England's second-largest city, the 80-acre privately owned urban campus serves 4,177 undergraduates, 1,962 postgraduates, and 478 academic staff as of 2022. The university prides itself on being a "global leader in project-based learning" by applying "the theory learned in the classroom to the practice of solving real-world problems." This is evident from the frequent reference to several cross-campus programs including the Interactive Qualifying Project (IQP) and the Major Qualifying Project (MQP). Similarly, WPI hosts numerous study abroad opportunities and interdisciplinary collaborative research projects at "more than 50 project centers." The university's mission states that "WPI transforms lives, turns knowledge into action to confront global challenges, and revolutionizes STEM through distinctive and inclusive education, projects, and research."

The Master of Architecture program is situated in the School of Engineering, within the Department of Civil, Environmental, and Architectural Engineering. The BS-AREN program is the primary undergraduate feeder for the M.Arch. program which provides for close collaboration with other degree students in the school. This provides students with breadth and depth of education, and for exploration of a deeper understanding on many topics outside of architecture. The other programs (Civil Engineering and Environmental Engineering) within the department and school offer many required and elective courses to support the AREN undergraduate program, and, by default, the integrated five-year program (four-year BS Architectural Engineering and one-year M.Arch.).

The M.Arch. program offers concentrations in either Structures or Climate Adaptation which aligns well with the program's main goal "to educate the next generation of designers who will create the sustainable built environment of tomorrow." The program's set of Core Values and

Fundamental Studio Values are well developed and align with the overall university's stated mission.

The program focuses on individual driven education by keeping class sizes small within design studios and lectures. Lifelong learning is important to the program and is illustrated by the engagement of the advisory board, staff and faculty, and local professionals. Also, the Office of Graduate and Professionals Studies hosts numerous activities and events and offers numerous student resources.

2—Shared Values of the Discipline and Profession (*Guidelines,* p. 6)
The program must report on how it responds to the following values, all of which affect the education and development of architects. The response to each value must also identify how the program will continue to address these values as part of its long-range planning. These values are foundational, not exhaustive.

Design: Architects design better, safer, more equitable, resilient, and sustainable built environments**.** Design thinking and integrated design solutions are hallmarks of architecture education, the discipline, and the profession. (p.7)

Environmental Stewardship and Professional Responsibility: Architects are responsible for the impact of their work on the natural world and on public health, safety, and welfare. As professionals and designers of the built environment, we embrace these responsibilities and act ethically to accomplish them. (p.7)

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: Architects commit to equity and inclusion in the environments we design, the policies we adopt, the words we speak, the actions we take, and the respectful learning, teaching, and working environments we create. Architects seek fairness, diversity, and social justice in the profession and in society and support a range of pathways for students seeking access to an architecture education. (p.7)

Knowledge and Innovation: Architects create and disseminate knowledge focused on design and the built environment in response to ever-changing conditions. New knowledge advances architecture as a cultural force, drives innovation, and prompts the continuous improvement of the discipline. (p.8)

Leadership, Collaboration, and Community Engagement: Architects practice design as a collaborative, inclusive, creative, and empathetic enterprise with other disciplines, the communities we serve, and the clients for whom we work. (p.8)

Lifelong Learning: Architects value educational breadth and depth, including a thorough understanding of the discipline's body of knowledge, histories and theories, and architecture's role in cultural, social, environmental, economic, and built contexts. The practice of architecture demands lifelong learning, which is a shared responsibility between academic and practice settings. (p.8)

Team Findings: Met

2024 Team Analysis:
Design: The program APR cites a robust embrace of design culture within the academic setting at WPI. It is evident that design thinking and education has been given much thought with the structure of the curriculum and design course sequence. The Interactive Qualifying Projects (IQP) and Major Qualifying Projects (MQP) are collaborative interdisciplinary design endeavors that all

students complete, further reinforcing design thinking and integrative design solutions. It was expressed repeatedly to the team in the student meetings on-site how much they enjoy the term systems, with "short bursts of intensive focus" on solving design problem. The history of WPI's ability to target long term plans, develop and extend programs, and complete the necessary research and funding for their support is evident. The growth of the student centric curriculum that engages and balances theory and practice was most recently evident in the development of the AREN program over the past ten years. Their recent commitment to extend offerings to include a M.Arch. program and apply for NAAB accreditation will take time. However, WPI seems equipped to meet that goal. The program notes in their APR that this value is part of both curricular assessment as well as long-range planning efforts, which includes annual program evaluations.

Environmental Stewardship and Professional Responsibility: The history of WPI naturally supports a robust program focused on the importance of environmental stewardship and professional responsibility. Embedded within their courses derived from the AREN program is a strong legacy of environmental awareness and professional responsibility for health, safety and welfare and the importance of implementing these tenants into a professional degree and ultimately practice. The program notes in their APR that this value is part of both curricular assessment as well as long-range planning efforts, which includes annual program evaluations.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: The institution, college, and department incorporate equity, diversity, and inclusion as a central mission with support through the university's DEIB unit which provides definitions and concepts of equality that speak directly to WPI's core values. The program notes in their APR that this value is part of both curricular assessment as well as long-range planning efforts, which includes annual program evaluations.

Knowledge and Innovation: The program APR describes the values of knowledge and innovation as being central to WPI's identity and academic culture. Faculty members are actively engaged in funded research and support of PhD students, leading to research opportunities for undergraduate students, who are encouraged to pursue innovation in their coursework. It is noted that collaboration occurs with faculty and students in other engineering related disciplines. The APR cites this value is assessed annually and part of long-range planning efforts for continued improvement. Access to research, particularly through the MQP projects, is very open ended to allow for a broad range of opportunities for research. In the student meeting, it was discussed that whether research is internal to the field of architecture or external (but complimentary to architecture/engineering) that, research is the fundamental building block that "helps produce well rounded professionals who also know how to write and speak." The program notes in their APR that this value is part of both curricular assessment as well as long-range planning efforts, which includes annual program evaluations.

Leadership, Collaboration and Community Engagement: At the meeting with the provost and key leadership it was explained that classes and studios are often taught with a combination of architects and engineers as well as a combination of faculty and professionals providing a divergence of views that naturally foster the need for dialogue and collaboration. The involvement of professionals in classes coupled with a robust Advisory Board reflects the level of community leadership and engagement. The APR puts a lot of emphasis on "A Day in Practice", and rightly so; during the student meetings the students described the process for setting up over 50 meetings with firms that allow them to better understand the broad choices within the architectural field, to connect with leaders within those firms, and compare notes with their student colleagues. The program notes in their APR that this value is part of both curricular assessment as well as long-range planning efforts, which includes annual program evaluations.

Long-range planning related to this value is also informed by the advisory board, students, alumni, and community partners.

Lifelong Learning: Lifelong learning is important to the program and is illustrated by the engagement of the advisory board, staff and faculty, and local professionals. Also, the Office of Graduate and Professionals Studies hosts numerous activities/events, and has resources available. The program notes in their APR that this value is part of both curricular assessment as well as long-range planning efforts, which includes annual program evaluations.

3—Program and Student Criteria (*Guidelines*, p. 9)
These criteria seek to evaluate the outcomes of architecture programs and student work within their unique institutional, regional, national, international, and professional contexts, while encouraging innovative approaches to architecture education and professional preparation.

3.1 Program Criteria (PC) (*Guidelines*, p. 9)
A program must demonstrate how its curriculum, structure, and other experiences address the following criteria.

PC.1 Career Paths
How the program ensures that students understand the paths to becoming licensed as an architect in the United States and the range of available career opportunities that utilize the discipline's skills and knowledge. (p.9)

Team Findings: Met

2024 Team Analysis: As cited in the APR, the program addresses this criterion primarily through extracurricular experiences and an elective course. The APR cites the guest lecture series, Day-in-Practice Initiative (mandatory for second year students as noted in the program's PC-1 Assessment document), exposure to professionals through networking events and guest critics, and the program appointed AXP (a local practitioner) as the extracurricular experiences that address this criterion. The elective course CE501, Professional Practice is the sole course the program identifies as addressing this criterion.

The program has a well-defined assessment process derived from their ABET accreditation requirements, and an assessment report was provided for this PC based on student/alumni surveys. The program conducts these student learning outcome surveys annually, responses are reviewed against benchmarks, and each PC/SC assessment report includes planned improvements for the year ahead. What seems to be missing from this assessment process is review by the faculty/program leadership of student work and course materials against student learning outcomes / student achievement review. Generally, the assessment process for each SC/PC could also be refined to more closely reflect NAAB requirements as the existing framework still closely relates to the ABET process/requirements. The program should refer to team analysis of 5.2.2 in this report for further comments regarding assessment.

Student and faculty discussions during the visit, further reinforced the program's description in the APR of how this condition is met. From both the Day-in-Practice Initiative and Professional Practice course, students are aware of and understand the pathways to becoming a licensed architect and are aware of the numerous career opportunities available to them.

PC.2 Design
How the program instills in students the role of the design process in shaping the built environment and conveys the methods by which design processes integrate multiple factors, in different settings and scales of development, from buildings to cities. (p.9)

Team Findings: Not Yet Met

2024 Team Analysis: The PC/SC Matrix provided within the APR cites this criterion as being met in the eleven below noted courses. At the time of this visit, ARCH 599 Thesis Design had not yet been taught.

- AREN 2002 Architectural Design I
- AREN 2004 Architectural Design II - Light and Lighting Systems
- AREN 3002 Architectural Design III
- AREN 3020 Architectural Design IV - Building Energy Simulation
- AREN 3022 Architectural Design V - Building Envelope
- IQP Interactive Qualifying Project
- MQP Major Qualifying Project (3 terms / courses)
- ARCH 599 Thesis Design (2 semesters / courses; 4 terms)

The program has a well-defined assessment process derived from their ABET accreditation requirements, and an assessment report was provided for this PC based on student/alumni surveys. The program conducts these student learning outcome surveys annually, responses are reviewed against benchmarks, and each PC/SC assessment report includes planned improvements for the year ahead. What seems to be missing from this assessment process is review by the faculty/program leadership of student work and course materials against student learning outcomes / student achievement review. Generally, the assessment process for each SC/PC could also be refined to more closely reflect NAAB requirements as the existing framework still closely relates to the ABET process/requirements. The program should refer to team analysis of 5.2.2 in this report for further comments regarding assessment.

From the site-visit and evidence of course materials and student work provided to the team, it is clear that WPI has a strong emphasis on technical design and solutions-based thinking, however the team was unable to find evidence of the design process (iterative thinking, design studies/explorations, etc.); from the student work shown in the team room, design seems to be more outcomes based vs process based.

PC.3 Ecological Knowledge and Responsibility
How the program instills in students a holistic understanding of the dynamic between built and natural environments, enabling future architects to mitigate climate change responsibly by leveraging ecological, advanced building performance, adaptation, and resilience principles in their work and advocacy activities. (p.9)

Team Findings: Met

2024 Team Analysis: The PC/SC Matrix provided within the APR cites this criterion as being met in the below noted courses.

- AREN 3024 Building Physics
- AREN 3003 Introduction to HVAC Design
- AREN 3020 Architectural Design IV – Building Energy Simulation
- AREN 3006 Advanced HVAC Design

- ARCH 599 Thesis Design

The program has a well-defined assessment process derived from their ABET accreditation requirements, and an assessment report was provided for this PC based on student/alumni surveys. The program conducts these student learning outcome surveys annually, responses are reviewed against benchmarks, and each PC/SC assessment report includes planned improvements for the year ahead. What seems to be missing from this assessment process is review by the faculty/program leadership of student work and course materials against student learning outcomes / student achievement review. Generally, the assessment process for each SC/PC could also be refined to more closely reflect NAAB requirements as the existing framework still closely relates to the ABET process/requirements. The program should refer to team analysis of 5.2.2 in this report for further comments regarding assessment.

In the M.Arch. curriculum the students have a choice of two focus areas, Structures or Climate Adaptation. Although not all M.Arch. students will choose the Climate Adaptation path, those who do will have adequate course offerings. The program did provide evidence in the form of policy documents, individual course materials (e.g., syllabi), and student work.

PC.4 History and Theory
How the program ensures that students understand the histories and theories of architecture and urbanism, framed by diverse social, cultural, economic, and political forces, nationally and globally. (p.9)

Team Findings: Not Yet Met

2024 Team Analysis: The PC/SC Matrix provided within the APR cites this criterion as being met in the below noted courses, including coverage of the topic in the studio design courses. The guest lecture series offered by the program is another offering to students that the program suggests addresses this criterion.

- AR 2114 Modern Architecture in the American Era *(required)*
- AR 2115 Topics in Architecture Since 1960 *(elective)*
- AR 3112 Modernism, Mass Culture, and the Avant-Garde *(elective)*
- HI 1311 Introduction to American Urban History *(elective)*
- HI 2310 Topics in Urban History *(elective)*

The program has a well-defined assessment process derived from their ABET accreditation requirements, and an assessment report was provided for this PC based on student/alumni surveys. The program conducts these student learning outcome surveys annually, responses are reviewed against benchmarks, and each PC/SC assessment report includes planned improvements for the year ahead. What seems to be missing from this assessment process is review by the faculty/program leadership of student work and course materials against student learning outcomes / student achievement review. Generally, the assessment process for each SC/PC could also be refined to more closely reflect NAAB requirements as the existing framework still closely relates to the ABET process/requirements. The program should refer to team analysis of 5.2.2 in this report for further comments regarding assessment.

Findings from the program alumni and student surveys indicate the program has not consistently met their required benchmark, with student comments confirming the need for a stronger emphasis on history and theory. The program's assessment report for this PC notes the program will continue to refine its approach to History and Theory coverage as well as seeking more detailed feedback from student/alumni surveys.

While course content provided to the team suggests that students gain an understanding of histories and theories of architecture and urbanism, the team felt that a diverse framing, especially cultural and global in nature was lacking.

PC.5 Research and Innovation
How the program prepares students to engage and participate in architectural research to test and evaluate innovations in the field. (p.9)

Team Findings: Met

2024 Team Analysis: The PC/SC Matrix provided within the APR cites this criterion as being met in the following courses:

- IQP Interactive Qualifying Project
- MQP Major Qualifying Project (3 terms / courses)
- Arch 599 Thesis Design (2 semesters / courses; 4 terms)

The program has a well-defined assessment process derived from their ABET accreditation requirements, and an assessment report was provided for this PC based on student/alumni surveys. The program conducts these student learning outcome surveys annually, responses are reviewed against benchmarks, and each PC/SC assessment report includes planned improvements for the year ahead. What seems to be missing from this assessment process is review by the faculty/program leadership of student work and course materials against student learning outcomes / student achievement review. Generally, the assessment process for each SC/PC could also be refined to more closely reflect NAAB requirements as the existing framework still closely relates to the ABET process/requirements. The program should refer to team analysis of 5.2.2 in this report for further comments regarding assessment.

Research and Innovation is dominant within this engineering-based program. The site visit, including meetings with the faculty and students, demonstrated to the team how the WPI core tenet of "theory and practice" informs how this condition is met through the architectural engineering curriculum – this was evident in the project work that students complete as well as the labs within which they work. Additionally, research process is evident in the Great Problems Seminar (GPS), the Interactive Qualifying Project (IQP), and the Major Qualifying Project (MQP).

PC.6 Leadership and Collaboration
How the program ensures that students understand approaches to leadership in multidisciplinary teams, diverse stakeholder constituents, and dynamic physical and social contexts, and learn how to apply effective collaboration skills to solve complex problems. (p.9)

Team Findings: Not Yet Met

2024 Team Analysis: The PC/SC Matrix provided within the APR cites this criterion as being met within the Interactive Qualifying Project (IQP) and Major Qualifying Project (MQP) courses.

The program has a well-defined assessment process derived from their ABET accreditation requirements, and an assessment report was provided for this PC based on student/alumni surveys. The program conducts these student learning outcome surveys annually, responses are reviewed against benchmarks, and each PC/SC assessment report includes planned improvements for the year ahead. What seems to be missing from this assessment process is review by the faculty/program leadership of student work and course materials against student learning outcomes / student achievement review. Generally, the assessment process for each

SC/PC could also be refined to more closely reflect NAAB requirements as the existing framework still closely relates to the ABET process/requirements. The program should refer to team analysis of 5.2.2 in this report for further comments regarding assessment.

The connection to the architecture context needs to be specified, clarified, and strengthened. The students and faculty did note on the site visit that additional student organizations and leadership opportunities outside of coursework are being explored and that there are plans to establish additional student organizations within the program.

PC.7 Learning and Teaching Culture
How the program fosters and ensures a positive and respectful environment that encourages optimism, respect, sharing, engagement, and innovation among its faculty, students, administration, and staff. (p.9)

Team Findings: Met

2024 Team Analysis: The APR only cites this criterion as being addressed in the non-curricular 'Day in Practice', but the team found evidence of this criterion being addressed throughout the courses offered and the learning approach provided by the program.

The program has a well-defined assessment process derived from their ABET accreditation requirements, and an assessment report was provided for this PC based on student/alumni surveys. The program conducts these student learning outcome surveys annually, responses are reviewed against benchmarks, and each PC/SC assessment report includes planned improvements for the year ahead. What seems to be missing from this assessment process is review by the faculty/program leadership of student work and course materials against student learning outcomes / student achievement review. Generally, the assessment process for each SC/PC could also be refined to more closely reflect NAAB requirements as the existing framework still closely relates to the ABET process/requirements. The program should refer to team analysis of 5.2.2 in this report for further comments regarding assessment.

Findings from the annual alumni and student surveys for this condition reflect a positive perception with the program exceeding its benchmark. Student and alumni comments reflect positively on the program, highlighting the studio culture and the guest lecture series. Given positive feedback and assessment above the benchmark, the program does not have any planned improvements at the moment.

The program APR describes a program that seeks to foster a sense of community through an open-door policy with faculty, small class sizes, and the culture of the studio environment. Bi-weekly events bring food and social interaction into the studio space. It also seems that the industry advisory board and Day-in-Practice program help foster a positive learning/teaching culture.

PC.8 Social Equity and Inclusion
How the program furthers and deepens students' understanding of diverse cultural and social contexts and helps them translate that understanding into built environments that equitably support and include people of different backgrounds, resources, and abilities. (p.9)

Team Findings: Met

2024 Team Analysis: While the matrix provided by the program in the APR only cites this criterion as being addressed in the non-curricular 'Day in Practice,' the team found that the courses noted below also contributed to appropriate levels of understanding for this PC.

- CE 3070 Urban and Environmental Planning
- CE 4071 Land Use Development and Controls
- ENV 2201 Planning for Sustainable Communities
- ENV 2710 Designing for Climate Resistance + Justice
- ENV 3100 Adventures in Sustainable Design
- BP 290X Urban Ecology + Environmental Justice

The program has a well-defined assessment process derived from their ABET accreditation requirements, and an assessment report was provided for this PC based on student/alumni surveys. The program conducts these student learning outcome surveys annually, responses are reviewed against benchmarks, and each PC/SC assessment report includes planned improvements for the year ahead. What seems to be missing from this assessment process is review by the faculty/program leadership of student work and course materials against student learning outcomes / student achievement review. Generally, the assessment process for each SC/PC could also be refined to more closely reflect NAAB requirements as the existing framework still closely relates to the ABET process/requirements. The program should refer to team analysis of 5.2.2 in this report for further comments regarding assessment.

WPI has targeted the NE for recruitment, with a resulting 13% minority population, and 43% female. The faculty brings with them diverse, global cultures which are reflected in the course content. Course work includes an emphasis on societal concern from both the urban planning and environmental perspectives.

3.2 Student Criteria (SC): Student Learning Objectives and Outcomes (*Guidelines*, p. 10)
A program must demonstrate how it addresses the following criteria through program curricula and other experiences, with an emphasis on the articulation of learning objectives and assessment.

SC.1 Health, Safety, and Welfare in the Built Environment
How the program ensures that students understand the impact of the built environment on human health, safety, and welfare at multiple scales, from buildings to cities. (p.10)

Team Findings: Not Yet Met

2024 Team Analysis: The program matrix provided in the APR cites five courses where this criterion is addressed, while the matrix provided during the visit cites thirteen courses that address this criterion. The team encourages the program to be consistent in identification of supporting courses for SC/PC *(Matrix in APR and Team Room should match)* in future visits to avoid confusion by the team.

The program has a well-defined assessment process derived from their ABET accreditation requirements, and an assessment report was provided for this SC based on student/alumni surveys. The program conducts these student learning outcome surveys annually, responses are reviewed against benchmarks, and each PC/SC assessment report includes planned improvements for the year ahead. What seems to be missing from this assessment process is review by the faculty/program leadership of student work and course materials against student learning outcomes / student achievement review. Generally, the assessment process for each SC/PC could also be refined to more closely reflect NAAB requirements as the existing

framework still closely relates to the ABET process/requirements. The program should refer to team analysis of 5.2.2 in this report for further comments regarding assessment.

The evidence provided (e.g., Course Descriptions and Learning Objectives with corresponding PC/SC references) do not meet the expectations of this criteria. Although many courses cite projects at multiple scales, from buildings to cities, the criterion is not addressed. The program did not provide evidence in the form of policy documents, individual course materials/ documentation of activities occurring outside specific courses, or for the courses not yet taught (Thesis Studio, as identified in the SC/PC matrix provided in the APR).

SC.2 Professional Practice
How the program ensures that students understand professional ethics, the regulatory requirements, the fundamental business processes relevant to architecture practice in the United States, and the forces influencing change in these subjects. (p.10)

Team Findings: Not Yet Met

2024 Team Analysis: The program addresses this criterion through the below noted courses, two of which are required, the other courses are from an offering of elective courses within which students must select and complete two undergraduate courses and one graduate course related to professional practice.

- CE 3022 Legal Aspects of Professional Practice ***(required)***
- CE 501 Professional Practice ***(required)***
- CE 3020 Project Management
- CE 3025 Project Evaluation
- CE 580 Advanced Project Management
- CE 584 Advanced Cost Estimating Procedures

The program has a well-defined assessment process derived from their ABET accreditation requirements, and an assessment report was provided for this SC based on student/alumni surveys. The program conducts these student learning outcome surveys annually, responses are reviewed against benchmarks, and each PC/SC assessment report includes planned improvements for the year ahead. What seems to be missing from this assessment process is review by the faculty/program leadership of student work and course materials against student learning outcomes / student achievement review. Generally, the assessment process for each SC/PC could also be refined to more closely reflect NAAB requirements as the existing framework still closely relates to the ABET process/requirements. The program should refer to team analysis of 5.2.2 in this report for further comments regarding assessment.

The course curriculum, syllabi, and schedules provided for the CE 501 Professional Practice course are still engineering focused in nature, with little context specific to architectural practice. As evidenced from the faculty meeting during the site visit, the program is aware of this and new syllabi are being completed at this time for a revised course structure (to be taught starting spring 2025) that incorporates content specific to architectural practice.

SC.3 Regulatory Context
How the program ensures that students understand the fundamental principles of life safety, land use, and current laws and regulations that apply to buildings and sites in the United States, and the evaluative process architects use to comply with those laws and regulations as part of a project. (p.10)

Team Findings: Met

2024 Team Analysis: The PC/SC Matrix provided within the APR lists four courses in which this criterion is addressed. The team also found evidence in other courses that address codes and regulatory requirements:

- AREN 2023 Intro to Arch. Engineering (Includes Intro to codes/standards)
- CE4071 Land Use Development and Controls
- CE3022 Legal Aspects of Professional Practice
- MQP Major Qualifying Project (3 terms / courses)
- CE501 Professional Practice

The program has a well-defined assessment process derived from their ABET accreditation requirements, and an assessment report was provided for this SC based on student/alumni surveys. The program conducts these student learning outcome surveys annually, responses are reviewed against benchmarks, and each PC/SC assessment report includes planned improvements for the year ahead. What seems to be missing from this assessment process is review by the faculty/program leadership of student work and course materials against student learning outcomes / student achievement review. Generally, the assessment process for each SC/PC could also be refined to more closely reflect NAAB requirements as the existing framework still closely relates to the ABET process/requirements. The program should refer to team analysis of 5.2.2 in this report for further comments regarding assessment.

The team found evidence of this condition in both the virtual course binders that were provided in advance of the visit as well as the student and course work present in the team room during the visit.

SC.4 Technical Knowledge
How the program ensures that students understand the established and emerging systems, technologies, and assemblies of building construction, and the methods and criteria architects use to assess those technologies against the design, economics, and performance objectives of projects. (p.10)

Team Findings: Met

2024 Team Analysis: The PC/SC Matrix provided within the APR lists ten courses in which this criterion is addressed. At the time of the visit, the 5th year Thesis Design course (Arch 599) has not yet been taught.

- CE 2002 Introduction to Analysis and Design
- AREN 3003 Introduction to HVAC Design
- AREN 3006 Advanced HVAC Design
- CE 3008 Design of Reinforced Concrete Structures
- CE 3006 Design of Steel Structures
- MQP Major Qualifying Project (3 terms / courses)
- Arch 599 Thesis Design (2 semesters / courses; 4 terms)

The program has a well-defined assessment process derived from their ABET accreditation requirements, and an assessment report was provided for this SC based on student/alumni surveys. The program conducts these student learning outcome surveys annually, responses are reviewed against benchmarks, and each PC/SC assessment report includes planned improvements for the year ahead. What seems to be missing from this assessment process is

review by the faculty/program leadership of student work and course materials against student learning outcomes / student achievement review. Generally, the assessment process for each SC/PC could also be refined to more closely reflect NAAB requirements as the existing framework still closely relates to the ABET process/requirements. The program should refer to team analysis of 5.2.2 in this report for further comments regarding assessment.

The APR cites that with "foundational mathematics, physics, and engineering courses, we ensure that students gain expertise in various technical aspects relevant to architectural practice." From evidence provided to the team including virtual course binders, student work in team room, and through discussions with faculty and students on-site it is clear that technical knowledge is not just a priority, but foundational to the identity of the program and central to student education – it is a clear strength of the program.

SC.5 Design Synthesis
How the program ensures that students develop the ability to make design decisions within architectural projects while demonstrating synthesis of user requirements, regulatory requirements, site conditions, and accessible design, and consideration of the measurable environmental impacts of their design decisions. (p. 12)

Team Findings: Not Yet Met

2024 Team Analysis: The program addresses this criterion primarily through the design studio courses from the 2nd year forward (noted below). At the time of the visit, the 5th year Thesis Design course (Arch 599) has not yet been taught. While Design Synthesis may be part of the curriculum for each of the courses noted below, in the future the team encourages the program to consider identifying only 2-3 courses where the outcome is most evident as primary sources for NAAB verification, while identifying the remaining courses as secondary sources for verification.

- AREN 2002 Architectural Design I
- AREN 2004 Architectural Design II – Light and Lighting Systems
- AREN 3002 Architectural Design III
- AREN 3020 Architectural Design IV – Building Energy Simulation
- AREN 3022 Architectural Design V – Building Envelope Design
- MQP Major Qualifying Project (3 terms)
- Arch 599 Thesis Design (2 semesters / 4 terms)

The program has a well-defined assessment process derived from their ABET accreditation requirements, and an assessment report was provided for this SC based on student/alumni surveys. The program conducts these student learning outcome surveys annually, responses are reviewed against benchmarks, and each PC/SC assessment report includes planned improvements for the year ahead. What seems to be missing from this assessment process is review by the faculty/program leadership of student work and course materials against student learning outcomes / student achievement review. Generally, the assessment process for each SC/PC could also be refined to more closely reflect NAAB requirements as the existing framework still closely relates to the ABET process/requirements. The program should refer to team analysis of 5.2.2 in this report for further comments regarding assessment.

WPI's scaffolded approach to studios with deeper dives through interactive projects and electives provides students opportunities to customize their own pathways, with an emphasis on technical design rooted in architectural engineering. At the time of the visit, student work was not available for review from the not yet taught Arch 599 courses. Of the work that was reviewed on-site, the MQP: "Hurricane Resistant HUBs: Designing Modular Shipping Containers in the

Mountain Regions of PR" (Puerto Rico) was a noteworthy design synthesis project. Generally, the team did feel that synthesis of regulatory requirements and site conditions was not yet fully evident in student work presented.

SC.6 Building Integration
How the program ensures that students develop the ability to make design decisions within architectural projects while demonstrating integration of building envelope systems and assemblies, structural systems, environmental control systems, life safety systems, and the measurable outcomes of building performance. (p. 12)

Team Findings: Not Yet Met

2024 Team Analysis: The program addresses this criterion primarily through the design studio courses from the 3rd year forward (noted below). At the time of the visit, the 5th year Thesis Design course (Arch 599) has not yet been taught.

- AREN 3020 Architectural Design IV – Building Energy Simulation
- AREN 3022 Architectural Design V – Building Envelope Design
- MQP Major Qualifying Project (3 terms)
- Arch 599 Thesis Design (2 semesters / 4 terms)

The program has a well-defined assessment process derived from their ABET accreditation requirements, and an assessment report was provided for this SC based on student/alumni surveys. The program conducts these student learning outcome surveys annually, responses are reviewed against benchmarks, and each PC/SC assessment report includes planned improvements for the year ahead. What seems to be missing from this assessment process is review by the faculty/program leadership of student work and course materials against student learning outcomes / student achievement review. Generally, the assessment process for each SC/PC could also be refined to more closely reflect NAAB requirements as the existing framework still closely relates to the ABET process/requirements. The program should refer to team analysis of 5.2.2 in this report for further comments regarding assessment.

While WPI's polytechnic approach and the structure of the AREN and M.Arch. program seem well suited to meet this condition, the team did not yet have student work from all the courses to review. Of work that was reviewed on-site, the strength in students understanding of and ability to detail building envelope systems and environmental control systems while accounting for building performance was clear; however, the team felt integration of structural systems and life safety systems was not yet fully evident.

4—Curricular Framework (*Guidelines*, p. 13)
This condition addresses the institution's regional accreditation and the program's degree nomenclature, credit-hour and curricular requirements, and the process used to evaluate student preparatory work.

4.1 Institutional Accreditation (*Guidelines*, p. 13)
For the NAAB to accredit a professional degree program in architecture, the program must be, or be part of, an institution accredited by one of the following U.S. regional institutional accrediting agencies for higher education:

- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)
- Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE)
- New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE)
- Higher Learning Commission (HLC)

- Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)
- WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC)

Team Findings: Met

2024 Team Analysis: As cited in the APR, "Worcester Polytechnic Institute is accredited by the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE). The most recent letter re-affirming accreditation was issued on April 7, 2022. The next comprehensive evaluation will be scheduled for Fall 2031." The program notes the accreditation letter from NECHE as an Appendix item to the APR, but it seems to have been left out of the document. However, the team was able to find the letter on WPI's website.

4.2 Professional Degrees and Curriculum (*Guidelines*, p. 13)
The NAAB accredits professional degree programs with the following titles: the Bachelor of Architecture (B.Arch.), the Master of Architecture (M.Arch.), and the Doctor of Architecture (D. Arch.). The curricular requirements for awarding these degrees must include professional studies, general studies, and optional studies.

4.2.1 **Professional Studies**. Courses with architectural content required of all students in the NAAB-accredited program are the core of a professional degree program that leads to licensure. Knowledge from these courses is used to satisfy Condition 3—Program and Student Criteria. The degree program has the flexibility to add additional professional studies courses to address its mission or institutional context. In its documentation, the program must clearly indicate which professional courses are required for all students. (p.13)

4.2.2 **General Studies**. An important component of architecture education, general studies provide basic knowledge and methodologies of the humanities, fine arts, mathematics, natural sciences, and social sciences. Programs must document how students earning an accredited degree achieve a broad, interdisciplinary understanding of human knowledge.

In most cases**,** the general studies requirement can be satisfied by the general education program of an institution's baccalaureate degree. Graduate programs must describe and document the criteria and process used to evaluate applicants' prior academic experience relative to this requirement. Programs accepting transfers from other institutions must document the criteria and process used to ensure that the general education requirement was covered at another institution. (p.14)

4.2.3 **Optional Studies.** All professional degree programs must provide sufficient flexibility in the curriculum to allow students to develop additional expertise, either by taking additional courses offered in other academic units or departments, or by taking courses offered within the department offering the accredited program but outside the required professional studies curriculum. These courses may be configured in a variety of curricular structures, including elective offerings, concentrations, certificate programs, and minors. (p.14)

NAAB-accredited professional degree programs have the exclusive right to use the B.Arch., M.Arch., and/or D.Arch. titles, which are recognized by the public as accredited degrees and therefore may not be used by non-accredited programs.

The number of credit hours for each degree is outlined below. All accredited programs must conform to minimum credit-hour requirements established by the institution's regional accreditor.

4.2.4 **Bachelor of Architecture.** The B.Arch. degree consists of a minimum of 150 semester credit hours, or the quarter-hour equivalent, in academic coursework in general studies, professional studies, and optional studies, all of which are delivered or accounted for (either by transfer or articulation) by the institution that will grant the degree. Programs must document the required professional studies courses (course numbers, titles, and credits), the elective professional studies courses (course numbers, titles, and credits), the required number of credits for general studies and for optional studies, and the total number of credits for the degree.

4.2.5 **Master of Architecture**. The M.Arch. degree consists of a minimum of 168 semester credit hours, or the quarter-hour equivalent, of combined undergraduate coursework and a minimum of 30 semester credits of graduate coursework. Programs must document the required professional studies classes (course numbers, titles, and credits), the elective professional studies classes (course numbers, titles, and credits), the required number of credits for general studies and for optional studies, and the total number of credits for both the undergraduate and graduate degrees.

4.2.6 **Doctor of Architecture**. The D. Arch. degree consists of a minimum of 210 credits, or the quarter-hour equivalent, of combined undergraduate and graduate coursework. The D. Arch. requires a minimum of 90 graduate-level semester credit hours, or the graduate-level 135 quarter-hour equivalent, in academic coursework in professional studies and optional studies. Programs must document, for both undergraduate and graduate degrees, the required professional studies classes (course numbers, titles, and credits), the elective professional studies classes (course numbers, titles, and credits), the required number of credits for general studies and for optional studies, and the total number of credits for the degree.

Team Findings: Met

2024 Team Analysis: Course requirements and syllabi provided. The ability to support complimentary goals and benchmarks for the architectural program were clarified in the faculty meeting through dialogue on a co-teaching approach of architect and engineer, faculty and professional. This approach is both appropriate to the projected scale of the program and complimentary in the need for both architecture and engineering to be very collaborative in nature,

4.2.1: Professional Studies. There are 90 credit hours required for Professional Studies in the M.Arch. program. These courses are clearly articulated in the matrix of course requirements.

4.2.2: General Studies: There are 69 credit hours required for General Studies in the M.Arch. program.

4.2.3: Optional Studies: There are 12 credit hours reserved for Optional Studies (electives) in the M.Arch. program.

4.2.4: B.Arch: Not applicable.

4.2.5: M.Arch: The M.Arch degree at WPI consists of a minimum of 171 credit hours (as defined above). The required courses and sequence are well documented. Professional requirements are clearly articulated.

4.2.6: D.Arch: Not Applicable.

4.3 Evaluation of Preparatory Education (*Guidelines*, p. 16)
The NAAB recognizes that students transferring to an undergraduate accredited program or entering a graduate accredited program come from different types of programs and have different needs, aptitudes, and knowledge bases. In this condition, a program must demonstrate that it utilizes a thorough and equitable process to evaluate incoming students and that it documents the accreditation criteria it expects students to have met in their education experiences in non-accredited programs.

4.3.1 A program must document its process for evaluating a student's prior academic coursework related to satisfying NAAB accreditation criteria when it admits a student to the professional degree program.

4.3.2 In the event a program relies on the preparatory education experience to ensure that admitted students have met certain accreditation criteria, the program must demonstrate it has established standards for ensuring these accreditation criteria are met and for determining whether any gaps exist.

4.3.3 A program must demonstrate that it has clearly articulated the evaluation of baccalaureate-degree or associate-degree content in the admissions process, and that a candidate understands the evaluation process and its implications for the length of a professional degree program before accepting an offer of admission.

Team Findings: Not Yet Met

2024 Team Analysis:
4.3.1: Based on meetings with the program, college, and institution staff, the review form and decision-making process for non-WPI applicants into the graduate program is still being developed. Undergraduate admission occurs only at the university level and not at the program level. While the admission and review process for AREN students wishing to apply to the M.Arch. program is defined (including faculty review of student portfolio and application) – admissions criteria and review for non-WPI applicants to evaluate students relative to the NAAB PC/SC is not yet defined. The program notes they do not expect to admit non-WPI students for at least a few years, but this process needs to be determined before they do.

4.3.2: Not Applicable - the program does not consider preparatory education experience against NAAB accreditation conditions based on their APR response.

4.3.3: Based on meetings with the program, college, and institution staff, the review form and decision-making process for non-WPI applicants into the graduate program is still being developed.

5—Resources

5.1 Structure and Governance (*Guidelines*, p. 18)
The program must describe the administrative and governance processes that provide for organizational continuity, clarity, and fairness and allow for improvement and change.

5.1.1 **Administrative Structure**: Describe the administrative structure and identify key personnel in the program and school, college, and institution.

5.1.2 **Governance**: Describe the role of faculty, staff, and students in both program and institutional governance structures and how these structures relate to the governance structures of the academic unit and the institution.

Team Findings: Met

2024 Team Analysis:
5.1.1: Administrative structure is clearly defined in the APR and was evident during the site visit. WPI is governed by a Board of Trustees, currently comprised of 37 trustees and 43 non-voting emeriti members. The president of the university serves as the chief executive officer responsible for all WPI's affairs. The president ensures that operational standards and procedures at WPI conform to Board established policies and standards of sound academic practice.

The provost of the university serves as chief academic officer, working in consultation with the deans, departments heads, and members of the faculty to propose plans and take actions in academic matters. All administrative positions of leadership noted here (president, provost, deans) are members of the faculty. WPI consists of the following schools:

- The School of Arts and Sciences
- The School of Engineering (home to AREN & M.Arch. programs)
- The Business School
- The Global School

5.1.2: The APR defines multiple governance opportunities for faculty at the Department, College, and Institutional levels. Faculty shared with the team during the site visit that they are engaged in governance and committee work while maintaining balance in their overall workload. There is also leadership engagement at the student level through the Architectural Engineering Institute and Class Representative roles. There seems to be an interest from both students and program leadership to find additional avenues for student leadership and engagement in governance as the program continues to grow.

5.2 Planning and Assessment (*Guidelines*, p. 18)
The program must demonstrate that it has a planning process for continuous improvement that identifies:

5.2.1 The program's multiyear strategic objectives, including the requirement to meet the NAAB Conditions, as part of the larger institutional strategic planning and assessment efforts.
5.2.2 Key performance indicators used by the unit and the institution.
5.2.3 How well the program is progressing toward its mission and stated multiyear objectives.
5.2.4 Strengths, challenges, and opportunities faced by the program as it strives to continuously improve learning outcomes and opportunities.
5.2.5 Ongoing outside input from others, including practitioners.

The program must also demonstrate that it regularly uses the results of self-assessments to advise and encourage changes and adjustments that promote student and faculty success.

Team Findings: Not Yet Met

2024 Team Analysis: WPI is clear on their mission: "A purpose driven education that is project based embedded with research that provides students with a professional education that is accessible and affordable while also supporting an inclusive community and student well being." However, specific performance goals and benchmarks need to be identified and tracked for all elements of the 2020 NAAB Conditions.

5.2.1: Multi-year Strategy: Goal three under the Purpose-Driven Education and Research area in the *Lead With Purpose* strategic plan speaks directly to the need and support for demand-driven graduate programs. The M.Arch. program fits nicely into this goal. While multiyear strategic

objectives seem well thought out and clear at the institutional and college levels, it is not clear how the NAAB Conditions inform this process at the Department level, beyond the stated objective of obtaining initial accreditation.

5.2.2: The performance indicators provided in the APR appeared to be ABET-centric and not yet fully responsive to NAAB language. Similarly, the assessment tools and outcomes provided to the team show mostly student/alumni survey results; qualitative data; and proposed action, but lack any description of how student achievement reviews or project reviews from the faculty inform assessment. Discussions during the team visit made it clear that student achievement review occurs, but the program needs to provide better evidence of this process. Additionally, quantitative data in the form of Faculty Course Assessments were not provided, nor was there a clear process on actions for improvement taken after review.

5.2.3: WPI, the college, department, and program appear to be consistently moving towards meeting all mission goals. WPI faculty and staff described revisions to requirements for a First Year (Design) Studio that incorporates the Great Problem Seminar, and for the requirements included in ARCH500 Thesis Research Seminar and ARCH501 Design Thesis.

5.2.4: The strength of WPI's M.Arch. program is its heavy reliance on AREN for foundational education. A large percentage of M.Arch. requirements are met within the AREN program. Likewise, current and yet-to-be-taught graduate course descriptions have been created and approved by faculty. The M.Arch. program's choices for specialization/electives support the program goals.

A challenge for the M.Arch. program is the incomplete process of applicant review (for transfer students or students coming from non-architecture bachelor's degree program) and admissions for international applicants, and non-WPI applicants. Also, demonstrating the assessment cycle including review and improvement (based on data) of courses/activities is necessary to close the loop.

5.2.5: The primary outside source referenced was "active advisory boards." Although this board is not M.Arch. specific, it is apparent that the interactions, feedback, input, and relationship with the department is very impactful and positive. The past meeting agenda provided as evidence supports the work of the board, however, given the number and complexity of programs under advisement may limit attention to the M.Arch. program.

5.3 Curricular Development (*Guidelines*, p. 19)
The program must demonstrate a well-reasoned process for assessing its curriculum and making adjustments based on the outcome of the assessment. The program must identify:

5.3.1 The relationship between course assessment and curricular development, including NAAB program and student criteria.
5.3.2 The roles and responsibilities of the personnel and committees involved in setting curricular agendas and initiatives, including the curriculum committee, program coordinators, and department chairs or directors.

Team Findings: Not Yet Met

2024 Team Analysis:
5.3.1: In the APR the program noted that NAAB conditions led to recent course revisions but did not provide additional information how the curricular development ties back to mission, vision, or shared goals. A thorough process for course assessment, review, and action is diagrammed in the APR - currently the program uses nine tools with varying intervals and differing performance

criteria to inform assessment and curricular development. Site visit discussion with faculty and staff suggested there were regular project reviews and student achievement reviews that took place, but the team was not provided evidence regarding those reviews and specifically how NAAB program and student criteria are matched back to courses to inform the curricular development process.

5.3.2: The APR describes how faculty are engaged in curricular agendas and initiatives both within the College of Engineering and more broadly within WPI. This description is consistent with what the team learned on the site visit through discussions with faculty and staff. The program notes that evaluation of curricular development occurs through Program Assessment and their Continuous Improvement Process with clear roles and responsibilities of those involved, however it was not clear to the team that the process has been implemented at a level to identify potential adjustments or the basis for making them, other than meeting NAAB language.

5.4 Human Resources and Human Resource Development (*Guidelines*, p. 19)
The program must demonstrate that it has appropriate and adequately funded human resources to support student learning and achievement. Human resources include full- and part-time instructional faculty, administrative leadership, and technical, administrative, and other support staff. The program must:

5.4.1 Demonstrate that it balances the workloads of all faculty in a way that promotes student and faculty achievement.
5.4.2 Demonstrate that it has an Architect Licensing Advisor who is actively performing the duties defined in the NCARB position description. These duties include attending the biannual NCARB Licensing Advisor Summit and/or other training opportunities to stay up-to-date on the requirements for licensure and ensure that students have resources to make informed decisions on their path to licensure.
5.4.3 Demonstrate that faculty and staff have opportunities to pursue professional development that contributes to program improvement.
5.4.4 Describe the support services available to students in the program, including but not limited to academic and personal advising, mental well-being, career guidance, internship, and job placement.

Team Findings: Met

2024 Team Analysis:
5.4.1: The APR describes a faculty that are actively engaged in research in addition to their classroom instruction. Faculty engaged in research typically teach 9 course credits per academic year in addition to student advising (both for capstone type project advising and academic advising) and engagement in faculty committee work and governance. The program cites small class sizes that benefit the students allowing for more accessible faculty. All full-time tenure and tenure track faculty are also eligible for sabbatical after 6 years of full-time service, and in 6-year intervals. Sabbaticals are offered with full pay for 6-month duration and half-pay for 1-year duration. Conversations with faculty during the site visit only seem to confirm that staff are generally happy and feel their workloads are balanced.

5.4.2: The program notes that Peter Caruso serves as an Architect Licensing Advisor (ALA) to the students and that he fulfills the required duties of the position. As Peter is not a faculty member, but a local practitioner, the team was unable to meet him during the visit but has no concern regarding his ability to serve the role and that the students have access to him as a resource.

5.4.3: The program APR cites the WPI Morgan Teaching and Learning Center as an Institution wide resource for the professional growth of faculty. The center offers faculty development

programming, support of teaching innovation, and knowledge and skills growth opportunities. Additionally, WPI offers a recently founded Women's Leadership Program and benefits from membership in the National Center for Faculty Development & Diversity (NCFDD). The CEAE Department provides funding for faculty to attend conferences and participate in workshops.

5.4.4: The APR cites a wealth of support services available to students in the program and broadly at WPI. Services include a comprehensive four-day new student orientation program, academic advising, Accessibility support services, student health, wellness, and counseling services, a career development center, physical education, recreation, and athletic services, student housing/dining services, and more. It is evident to the visiting team that WPI students enjoy a full range of services to support them in their academic studies.

5.5 Social Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (*Guidelines*, p. 20)

The program must demonstrate its commitment to diversity and inclusion among current and prospective faculty, staff, and students. The program must:

- 5.5.1 Describe how this commitment is reflected in the distribution of its human, physical, and financial resources.
- 5.5.2 Describe its plan for maintaining or increasing the diversity of its faculty and staff since the last accreditation cycle, how it has implemented the plan, and what it intends to do during the next accreditation cycle. Also, compare the program's faculty and staff demographics with that of the program's students and other benchmarks the program deems relevant.
- 5.5.3 Describe its plan for maintaining or increasing the diversity of its students since the last accreditation cycle, how it has implemented the plan, and what it intends to do during the next accreditation cycle. Also, compare the program's student demographics with that of the institution and other benchmarks the program deems relevant.
- 5.5.4 Document what institutional, college, or program policies are in place to further Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action (EEO/AA), as well as any other social equity, diversity, and inclusion initiatives at the program, college, or institutional level.
- 5.5.5 Describe the resources and procedures in place to provide adaptive environments and effective strategies to support faculty, staff, and students with different physical and/or mental abilities.

Team Findings: Met

2024 Team Analysis: WPI includes a student population that is 13% minority and 43% female, and a faculty that is 37% female and representative of diverse geographic/cultural backgrounds and diverse university backgrounds both culturally and academically.

5.5.1: Distribution of human, physical and financial resources: The program APR cites the campus-wide initiative 'Project Inclusion' informed by the NERCHE to guide DEI priorities. Site visit discussions seemed to confirm that distribution of resources seems balanced and generally in support of the WPI's social equity, diversity, and inclusion goals.

5.5.2: Faculty and Staff Diversity: The current faculty is from a diverse array of countries including Belgium, Iran, China, Australia, and Spain to name a few. Faculty and staff also come from a broad spectrum of locations within the United States. The faculty is equally diverse in their resumes, representing numerous institutions and specialties. The program aspires to continue to expand the diversity of their faculty and staff as they grow.

5.5.3: Student Diversity: The AREN program at WPI has a student population that is 60% female – a positive outlier within the context of the broader institution. The undergraduate class of the

AREN program welcomes approximately 25 students per year, with foreign and underrepresented minority numbers mirroring university trends (3-5 students annually in the AREN program).

5.5.4: Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Programs: The program APR gives example of at least ten initiatives related to EEO/AA, social equity, diversity and inclusion. The site visit only seemed to confirm that both the Institution and the program are committed to furthering broader social equity, diversity, and inclusion.

5.5.5: Adaptive Environments: As noted in the APR, WPI provides comprehensive resources related to student, faculty, and staff accommodations. During the site visit the team observed one class that made note of available student accommodation in the course overview (it was the first day of the term during the visit) - the dialogue concerning faculty and student support for success was genuine.

5.6 Physical Resources (*Guidelines*, p. 21)

The program must describe its physical resources and demonstrate how they safely and equitably support the program's pedagogical approach and student and faculty achievement. Physical resources include but are not limited to the following:

- 5.6.1 Space to support and encourage studio-based learning.
- 5.6.2 Space to support and encourage didactic and interactive learning, including lecture halls, seminar spaces, small group study rooms, labs, shops, and equipment.
- 5.6.3 Space to support and encourage the full range of faculty roles and responsibilities, including preparation for teaching, research, mentoring, and student advising.
- 5.6.4 Resources to support all learning formats and pedagogies in use by the program.

If the program's pedagogy does not require some or all of the above physical resources, the program must describe the effect (if any) that online, off-site, or hybrid formats have on digital

Team Findings: Met

2024 Team Analysis: The campus tour provided by the program included a walkthrough of Kaven Hall and Unity Hall. Kaven Hall (recently renovated during the pandemic) is home to the Department of Civil, Environmental, and Architectural Engineering. Unity Hall (completed in 2021) houses different programs including Data Science, Learning Science, Robotics, Interactive Media and Game Design, and Architectural Engineering. These two buildings house spaces for architecture studios, classrooms, computer labs, fabrication lab, faculty offices, research laboratories, and other spaces to support studio-based education.

5.6.1: Upon review of two studios, it is evident there is adequate space to support and encourage studio-based learning.

5.6.2: Upon review of academic buildings (Kaven Hall, Unity Hall, and Salisbury Labs) it is evident there is adequate space to support and encourage didactic and interactive learning, including lecture halls, seminar spaces, small group study rooms, labs, shops, and equipment.

5.6.3: As noted in the APR, all full-time faculty members in the program have dedicated private offices in Kaven Hall. Private office space is also provided in Kaven Hall for part-time and adjunct faculty. From the team's time spent in both Kaven and Unity Halls during the visit, it is evident there is adequate space to support and encourage the full range of faculty roles and responsibilities, including preparation for teaching, research, mentoring, and student advising.

5.6.4: Upon review of the two academic buildings (Kaven and Unity Halls) it is evident there are adequate resources to support all learning formats and pedagogies in use by the program.

5.7 Financial Resources (*Guidelines*, p. 21)
The program must demonstrate that it has the appropriate institutional support and financial resources to support student learning and achievement during the next term of accreditation.

Team Findings: Met

2024 Team Analysis: The program APR cites how the program has grown from the existing undergraduate program and how it is supported by existing faculty from various departments. Provided in the APR is a draft financial resource plan for the M.Arch. program for planning resource allocations as the program grows. During the visit the team was provided with a copy of the budget for the AREN and M.Arch. programs. It also seemed evident from meetings with the provost, dean, and department head that the program would continue to receive the financial support it needs as it grows.

5.8 Information Resources (*Guidelines*, p. 22)
The program must demonstrate that all students, faculty, and staff have convenient and equitable access to architecture literature and information, as well as appropriate visual and digital resources that support professional education in architecture.

Further, the program must demonstrate that all students, faculty, and staff have access to architecture librarians and visual resource professionals who provide discipline-relevant information services that support teaching and research.

Team Findings: Met

2024 Team Analysis: Students at WPI have access to the central George C. Gordon Library. The physical collection includes over 200,000 print volumes. Digital collections for the Institution include 250 databases, 1.3 million digital books, 225,000 digital media works, and over 240,000 digital journals. Specific to architecture, there are over 800 journals, 7,400 e-books, 2,500 conference proceedings, and 9,000 print items. The library staff graciously made their time available to the team during the staff meeting and confirmed the students within the AREN and M.Arch. programs have access to architectural related and other volumes as described above. It was noted that post-COVID, the library has increased in overall usage by 24%.

Additionally, the program notes in their APR that recently filled positions in the library's Research & Instruction team have allowed the assignment of responsibilities related to support of architecture faculty and students to one of the librarians. At the time of the visit Avery Index and ARTSTOR access were already being provided ahead of the timeline noted in the APR.

6—Public Information
The NAAB expects accredited degree programs to provide information to the public about accreditation activities and the relationship between the program and the NAAB, admissions and advising, and career information, as well as accurate public information about accredited and non-accredited architecture programs. The NAAB expects programs to be transparent and accountable in the information provided to students, faculty, and the public. As a result, all NAAB-accredited programs are required to ensure that the following information is posted online and is easily available to the public.

6.1 Statement on NAAB-Accredited Degrees (*Guidelines*, p. 23)

All institutions offering a NAAB-accredited degree program or any candidacy program must include the *exact language* found in the NAAB *Conditions for Accreditation, 2020 Edition*, Appendix 2, in catalogs and promotional media, including the program's website.

Team Findings: Not Yet Met

2024 Team Analysis: The required language from Appendix 2 of the NAAB Conditions for Accreditation is not yet provided on the program's website or in the promotional media. The program notes in their APR that upon candidacy the required statement will be added to their website and promotional media.

6.2 Access to NAAB Conditions and Procedures (*Guidelines*, p. 23)
The program must make the following documents available to all students, faculty, and the public, via the program's website:

a) *Conditions for Accreditation, 2020 Edition*
b) *Conditions for Accreditation* in effect at the time of the last visit (2009 or 2014, depending on the date of the last visit)
c) *Procedures for Accreditation, 2020 Edition*
d) *Procedures for Accreditation* in effect at the time of the last visit (2012 or 2015, depending on the date of the last visit)

Team Findings: Not Yet Met

2024 Team Analysis: At the time of the visit NAAB Conditions and Procedures have not yet been made available on the program's website. The program recognizes this and notes in their APR that these documents will be posted to their website upon candidacy.

6.3 Access to Career Development Information (*Guidelines*, p. 23)
The program must demonstrate that students and graduates have access to career development and placement services that help them develop, evaluate, and implement career, education, and employment plans.

Team Findings: Met

2024 Team Analysis: The APR notes that all WPI students have access to multiple career development resources, including a University Career Development Center. Within the program students have access to the CEAE annual networking event, the program's industry advisory board, and the 'Day-in-Practice' program which gives students exposure to local practices and a lead on internship and career opportunities. Students confirmed their access to these career development resources during the student meeting of the site visit.

6.4 Public Access to Accreditation Reports and Related Documents (*Guidelines*, p. 23)
To promote transparency in the process of accreditation in architecture education, the program must make the following documents available to all students, faculty, and the public, via the program's website:

a) All Interim Progress Reports and narratives of Program Annual Reports submitted since the last team visit
b) All NAAB responses to any Plan to Correct and any NAAB responses to the Program Annual Reports since the last team visit
c) The most recent decision letter from the NAAB
d) The Architecture Program Report submitted for the last visit

e) The final edition of the most recent Visiting Team Report, including attachments and addenda
f) The program's optional response to the Visiting Team Report
g) Plan to Correct (if applicable)
h) NCARB ARE pass rates
i) Statements and/or policies on learning and teaching culture
j) Statements and/or policies on diversity, equity, and inclusion

Team Findings: Not Yet Met

2024 Team Analysis: At the time of the visit these reports and related documents have not yet been made available on the program's website. The program recognizes this and notes in their APR that these documents will be posted to their website upon candidacy.

6.5 Admissions and Advising (*Guidelines*, p. 24)
The program must publicly document all policies and procedures that govern the evaluation of applicants for admission to the accredited program. These procedures must include first-time, first-year students as well as transfers from within and outside the institution. This documentation must include the following:

a) Application forms and instructions
b) Admissions requirements; admissions-decisions procedures, including policies and processes for evaluation of transcripts and portfolios (when required); and decisions regarding remediation and advanced standing
c) Forms and a description of the process for evaluating the content of a non-accredited degrees
d) Requirements and forms for applying for financial aid and scholarships
e) Explanation of how student diversity goals affect admission procedures

Team Findings: Not Yet Met

2024 Team Analysis: The program has provided the required information for some of the sub-criteria; at the time of the visit, two of the five items have not been provided publicly.

a. Applications forms and instructions: https://www.wpi.edu/admissions/graduate
b. Admissions Requirements, ...: *Not provided*
c. Process for Evaluating Non-Accredited Degrees: *Not provided*
d. Financial Aid and Scholarships: https://wpi.cleancatalog.net/financial-aid
e. Student Diversity: https://www.wpi.edu/about/diversity-equity-inclusion

6.6 Student Financial Information (*Guidelines*, p. 24)

6.6.1 The program must demonstrate that students have access to current resources and advice for making decisions about financial aid.
6.6.2 The program must demonstrate that students have access to an initial estimate for all tuition, fees, books, general supplies, and specialized materials that may be required during the full course of study for completing the NAAB-accredited degree program.

Team Findings: Not Yet Met

2024 Team Analysis:
6.6.1: The program APR provides three web links (below) as resources available to students regarding financial aid decision making. However, with little further description in the APR it was not clear prior to the visit how this information is shared with students.

https://wpi.cleancatalog.net/financial-aid
https://www.wpi.edu/admissions/tuition-aid/types-of-aid/scholarships-grants
https://www.wpi.edu/student-experience/resources/academic-advising/fellowships-scholarships/graduate

6.6.2: The program has provided a link to a general university webpage for all students regarding cost of attendance, but no further narrative or description of how this information is shared with students, and specifically no cost information specific to the architecture degree program.

E. The Visiting Team

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F. Report Signatures

Respectfully Submitted,

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