March 14, 2014

Bernadette Gray-Little, Ph.D.
Chancellor
Office of the Chancellor
University of Kansas
Strong Hall
1450 Jayhawk Boulevard, Room 230
Lawrence, KS 66045

Dear Chancellor Gray-Little:

After reviewing the Focused Evaluation Program Report submitted by University of Kansas as part of the focused evaluation of its Master of Architecture program, in conjunction with the Focused Evaluation Team Report, the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB) has found that the changes made or planned by the program to remove the identified deficiencies are satisfactory.

The term of accreditation stands. The next visit will be in 2016. The program is released from further reporting on the items that formed the scope of the focused evaluation.

The program report and the team report must be appended to the next Architecture Program Report, which is due in September 2015. The visit in 2016 will be conducted under the terms of the 2014 NAAB Conditions for Accreditation and the NAAB Procedures for Accreditation, 2015 Edition.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact the NAAB office.

Very truly yours,

Shannon B. Kraus, FAIA, NCARB, MBA, FACHA
President-elect

cc: Paola Sanguinetti, Chair
    Nathaniel Belcher, AIA, Lead Reviewer
    Linda Kiisk, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP Secondary Reviewer

Enc.
University of Kansas
School of Architecture and Urban Design

Focus Evaluation Team Report

Master of Architecture
Track I: (142 undergraduate credit hours plus 38 graduate credit hours)
Track II: (Baccalaureate degree plus 118 graduate credit hours)

The National Architectural Accrediting Board
January 2014

The National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB), established in 1940, is the sole agency authorized to accredit U.S. professional degree programs in architecture. Because most state registration boards in the United States require any applicant for licensure to have graduated from an NAAB-accredited program, obtaining such a degree is an essential aspect of preparing for the professional practice of architecture.
Summary of Team Findings

1. Team Comments

This focused evaluation primarily concentrated on three conditions that were identified as not met by the most recent VTR for the University of Kansas:

6. Human Resources
8. Physical Resources
10. Financial Resources

In addition, several causes of concern were identified involving leadership, faculty, teaching assignments and faculty development, as well as physical resource management as a hindrance to unit cohesion. These causes of concern were included in the program report and have been subsequently added to the scope of this focused evaluation.

The focused evaluation team met in January and February of 2014 via conference calls to discuss the program report and other documentation submitted for review. In addition, the team lead held a brief conference call with the current Chair of the Architecture Department, Dr. Paola Sanguinetti, and past Interim Department Chair, Nils Gore to seek clarification given the scope outlined above as well as the recent leadership change. (Specifically that Interim Chair Gore wrote the report on the eve of the arrival of the current chair.) After reviewing the materials and the conversation outlined above the team determined that a site visit would not be necessary.

The program is to be commended for making significant progress in the conditions not met. The recent retirement of five faculty members and subsequent hiring of six additional faculty members has largely changed the human resource and faculty load picture. The current construction of a building addition as well as the merger with the design department and its additive physical resources has addressed much of the physical resource commentary. The financial obligation adjustments with the central administration, development successes and the impact/use flexibility of the roll out of a differential tuition program has alleviated some of the financial resource pressures.

That said, we feel the program needs to remain vigilant about issues raised from the 2010 VTR. We also feel compelled to comment that with six new hires it seems that the program might have found opportunities to address social equity among its faculty in ways that impact a demographic imbalance concerning gender and under-represented populations in its human resource portfolio. We also want to advise the program to keep on-going conversation with its upper administration to clarify whether the beneficial financial adjustments—such as the university's assumption of financial responsibility for utilities and maintenance of remote facilities, are stop-gap as they appear or whether the financial responsibility is structured for the long term. If not, it will be important for the program to clarify and communicate broadly within the institution a need for significant financial structure adjustment in future.

We would like to thank Chair Sanguinetti and past Interim Chair Gore for their prompt, diligent and open dialogue in this effort.
10. Financial Resources

An accredited degree program must have access to sufficient institutional support and financial resources to meet its needs and be comparable in scope to those available to meet the needs of other professional programs within the institution.

Met [X]    Not Met [ ]

This condition is now met. Since the 2009 visit, the university has been working closely with the professional Architecture program to provide relief of financial responsibility of some remote locations by providing funds to cover the cost of utilities. In addition, the program is benefitting from a 6% increase in ‘Differential Tuition’ (only begun in 2003). This increase can now be applied to personnel needs. There is a near 10% aggregate annual budget increase since FY2010 which illustrates how the professional program currently has access to sufficient institutional support and financial resources. The program is also a priority in the pending university major capitol campaign.
IV. Report Signatures

Respectfully submitted,

Nathaniel Quincy Belcher, AIA
Lead Reviewer

Representing the Academy

Linda Kiisk, AIA, NCARB, LEED®AP
Secondary Reviewer

Representing the Profession