

## Accreditation Review Conference (ARC) – Proposed NAAB Accreditation Model (2009-2015)

### Title: “FUSION MODEL”

#### Objectives:

- 1) Recognize the strengths of the existing NAAB Accreditation System, and build upon the successful elements of that foundation. Eliminate or replace less successful characteristics and ambiguity.
- 2) Redefine and reorganize the Conditions and Procedures based upon:
  - the insights of the ARC Task Force investigatory task groups’ reports;
  - the contributions of the collateral organizations;
  - the concepts developed by the Emerging Accreditation Model Task Group;
  - the evaluation criteria and observations originating in the First Crit;
  - the experience of international initiatives and partners;
  - the individual inspirations of many, and
  - the guidance and direction of the NAAB Board of Directors

In order to create a new model that integrates the best of current thinking and knowledge.

#### Summary:

##### The Fusion Model:

- Is a new paradigm for the comprehensive and holistic evaluation of professional degree programs in architecture. At the core are two Measures of Success; each is described by a unique set of expectations and each has its own set of outcomes.
  - Measure 1 – Educational Outcomes and Curriculum: The program must document their current performance relative to student learning and those program and institutional characteristics that directly affect the curriculum.
    - Programs must demonstrate that graduates are learning at the level of achievement defined for each of the performance criteria listed in the Measure. Compliance will be evaluated through the review of student work.
    - Programs must also demonstrate their compliance with elements of the current Conditions on public information and professional degrees and curriculum that address the curricular framework for NAAB accredited degrees.
  - Measure 2 – Institutional Support and Investment in Continuous Improvement: The program and the institution must demonstrate commitment to the growth and development of the program over time.
    - This commitment is expected to be multi-lateral: not only will evaluations include a review of resources, mission and history, and self-assessment, but also the contributions of the faculty, staff, and students to the program and the institution, as well as the program’s response’s to the “Five Perspectives”(based on the report of the Trends in the Professions task group and current literature in higher education policy).
    - Programs must also demonstrate their current performance relative to programmatic characteristics through quantifiable measures. Programs will be expected to provide similar quantifiable information for the institution in general and to compare program characteristics to those of the institution (e.g., percentage of program faculty promoted over a certain period of time compared to the percentage of faculty promoted at the institution during the same period) (Based on the report of the Trends in Accreditation task group.)

## Accreditation Review Conference (ARC) – Proposed NAAB Accreditation Model (2009-2015)

- Recognizes several key elements relative to an architect’s education:
  - It is made up of multiple segments that begin before and continue after a professional degree program;
  - The interrelationship of these parts must be considered in the accreditation of professional degree programs;
  - There must be a clearly defined relationship between the accredited programs and incoming and transfer students and
  - The line between education and internship in the professional architectural career path remains permeable. Although it is likely to be different for each program, it must be identified.
- Recognizes that each program must define – within the terms of its unique history and mission – the relationship between architecture education and:
  - The profession
  - Students; current and future
  - The academy, as the steward of the discipline
  - The regulatory environment and,
  - The public good (including environmental stewardship, the social and global context and, aspirations for the future) (From the *AIA White Paper for NAAB Accreditation Review Conference* and the *AIAS Issue Brief*.)

These are currently referred to as “The Five Perspectives.” Defining these relationships is central to a program’s long-range or strategic planning and self-assessment (from the *ACSA Report*).
- Recognizes that the NAAB must establish practices for assessment and evaluation of its own effectiveness. Therefore, two new assessment mechanisms have been added (based on elements of the “International Model” and additional recommendations from ACSA).
  - an internal self assessment process that replaces periodic assessment events with a continuous improvement process still leading to periodic changes in conditions at controlled intervals; and
  - an external assessment process incorporating the best practices and guidelines from organizations such as the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) and other agencies that view the NAAB as a quality control agency within a global context.

### Key Modifications:

- The current 13 Conditions have been reduced to 2 Measures of Success.
  - Measure 1 – Educational Outcomes and Curriculum – addresses the following:
    - Student performance and will include many of the existing Student Performance Criteria (SPC), along with new or revised criteria based on recommendations from a variety of sources (*AIA White Paper*, *NCARB Position Paper for the Accreditation Review Conference*, *AIAS Issue Brief*, *ACSA Report for the Accreditation Review Conference*, and *ARC Task Group Reports*).
    - Program and institutional characteristics currently now in Conditions 3, 11, and 12 relative to regional accreditation, degree nomenclature, credit hour requirements, general education and access to elective study as well as accurate

## Accreditation Review Conference (ARC) – Proposed NAAB Accreditation Model (2009-2015)

- public information concerning the accredited and non-accredited architecture programs.
- Measure 2 – Institutional Support and Investment in Continuous Improvement – addresses the commitment of the institution, its faculty, staff, and students to the ability of the program to grow and develop over time. (Conceptually derived from “Parts to Whole”).
    - Compliance will be evaluated through documentary evidence (e.g., multi-year budgets, long-range planning processes, self-assessment outcomes, and policies), as well as interviews and observations conducted during the visit (from “Less is More” and “Parts to Whole”)
    - This section will also include many of the quantifiable elements of what used to be addressed in Conditions 1-12 (e.g., student body demographics, graduation rates, IDP registration rates, annual expenditures, facilities expansions or renovations, and faculty promotion rates.)
  - Under the terms of Measure 1 – Educational Outcomes and Curriculum – the NAAB would continue to be a model of educational outcomes assessment using evidence-based evaluation of student work and program characteristics.
    - Content from the existing SPC included in Measure 1 has been revised and refined to eliminate ambiguity, duplication and redundancy. (Incorporating the efforts of the “Renovation Model” and others)
    - All SPC are organized into thematic groupings or “clusters.” Clusters will be consistent over time and limited in number. Changes that come from NAAB’s self-assessment processes may alter the content of each cluster over time; however the cluster as a whole will remain consistent. (Incorporates elements of “Core Values,” “Less is More,” “Renovation Model,” the *ACSA Report*, and several individual suggestions for categorizing the SPC.)
    - Criteria have been added (e.g., criteria related to sustainable design and professionalism); others have been melded into broader criteria definitions (e.g., Construction Cost Control)
    - Programs will be expected to demonstrate that certain clusters are integrated across the curriculum, while others may be addressed in specific courses or learning experiences. (From “Less is More”) All student performance criteria will have to be met in required courses.
    - Levels of student achievement will still be defined as either understanding or ability.
    - Definitions of evidence of student achievement will be expanded and the types of artifacts to be included in team rooms are likely to increase and be more flexible as a result.
    -
  - Under the terms of Measure 2, the NAAB expects institutions to demonstrate a long-term commitment to the growth and development of the program.
    - As in Measure 1, the critical elements of institutional commitment have been organized into clusters.
    - The contents of each cluster are now, to a great extent, found in Conditions 1-12. Although, where Conditions 1-12 also included an implied expectation for student learning, those expectations have been moved to Measure 1 (e.g., ability of students to use information resources).

## Accreditation Review Conference (ARC) – Proposed NAAB Accreditation Model (2009-2015)

- The remaining Conditions have been rewritten and consolidated. (Incorporates elements of “Parts to Whole,” and “Less Is More”).
- The requirements within Measure 2 are clustered into three categories: Resources, Identity, and Curricular Framework. These three clusters include a review of human resources and human resource development, financial resources, physical resources, information resources, institutional mission and history, the institution’s unique relationship between architecture education and the five perspectives listed above, long-range planning, self-assessment, and the policy environment of the institution, among other items. (Incorporates elements from “Parts to Whole”).
- Elements of Conditions 1-12 that called for quantifiable data or information will also be included in this Measure. These will form a single cluster, “Program and Institutional Characteristics.” It will be extremely important that programs provide information not only for the program itself, but also in comparison to the administrative unit within which the program is located (e.g., school or college) and to the institution as a whole. (From “Parts to Whole,” and recommendations of the NAAB Board).
- Programs are still required to demonstrate their compliance with all clusters in Measure 2 through evidence and artifacts that will be reviewed and evaluated by the visiting team, as well as through interviews and observations conducted during the visit.
- As in Measure 1, definitions of evidence are likely to change as a result of these revisions.
- The relationship between students entering a program, and the program and graduates entering internship continues to be refined.
  - Transfer/Newly-Admitted – students entering an accredited program from a pre-professional program and students entering an accredited program from a non-pre-professional degree program have different needs and aptitudes. Programs will be required to demonstrate how students are evaluated and to document whether SPCs expected to have been met in educational experiences in non-accredited programs have indeed been met.
  - Internship – (Incorporates suggestions from “Less is More,” the NCARB White Paper). Programs will be expected to demonstrate the extent to which they incorporate elements of internship and preparation for professional experience into professional education.
- The NAAB will develop an internal self-assessment system that establishes procedures for continuous improvement of NAAB’s Conditions and Procedures (C&P). The system incorporates evidence-based methodologies for determining the effectiveness of particular accreditation requirements in improving student outcomes.
- Revisions to Conditions would still be at five-year intervals to allow smooth transitions into educational institutions internal plans. (Based on current ARC efforts, the recommendations from participants in the 2003 Validation Conference, “International Model,” and the *ACSA Report*).
- Revisions to Procedures will still be at one-year intervals to address procedural issues or changes that may have to be made to ensure the smooth functioning of the system overall.
- An external assessment system will be incorporated with NAAB’s efforts for continuous improvement. This external evaluation will compares NAAB to benchmarks established by
  - accreditation systems outside of architecture and
  - to accreditation systems in architecture but outside the US.(Incorporating recommendations from the “International Model”)

**Implications for Implementation**

- Changes to Team Member and Team Chair Training (greater rigor, higher expectations for consistency)
- Changes to requirements & instructions for APRs.
- Changes to templates for APRs and VTRs.
- Expectations for training and preparation for programs to be visited in 2011, and 2012.
- Revisions to procedures/definitions/expectations for the content of team rooms
- Revisions to procedures for candidacy (will be addressed separately).
- NOTE: This list is likely to grow; the items listed here will be added to over time.

**Forthcoming Actions in Refining the Fusion Model – Next Steps:**

- This document with its enhanced graphic diagram will be posted on the NAAB website for review
- An email invitation will be sent out to the NAAB Board of Directors, ARC TF task groups, collaterals and interested stakeholders requesting their input and reactions
- Detail will be added to the model during the next six weeks. This will be focused on developing approaches to clustering within conditions and articulation of performance criteria
- A further refined model will be distributed to participants in the October ARC by September 30
- At the ARC in October, participants will be asked to:
  - Review and comment on the model itself
  - Contribute to the development/choice/naming of the performance clusters
  - Contribute to the development/list/grouping of the content for each performance cluster
  - Consider implications for implementation
  - Develop a broader list of the issues that will continue to be addressed in the NAAB self-assessment process.
- At the November meeting, the NAAB Board will approve the clusters and their content, accept (or reject) additional recommendations from the ARC participants and assign a final writing team.

# FUSION MODEL

