

THE FIELD

The architecture profession is all about designing spaces and places for people to live, work, and play. Architects not only design buildings (such as homes, schools, hospitals, museums, and offices), they also coordinate the planning and construction of those buildings with community representatives, historians, interior and landscape designers, and engineers. This is a growing, interdisciplinary field that appeals to students with an interest in art, science, and sustainability.

The architecture major is an interdisciplinary pre-professional program that integrates architecture and design and leads to a bachelor of science degree. The program, housed in the Department of Architecture, has an interdepartmental curriculum including coursework in studio art, art history, environmental design, landscape architecture and regional planning, engineering, and building materials. Students gain broad exposure to aspects of building and material science, as well as a variety of cultural, environmental, and historic perspectives, preparing them to make innovative and integrated contributions as architects and designers.

In the United States, most state registration boards require a degree from an accredited professional degree program as a prerequisite for licensure. The pre-professional degree is not, by itself, recognized as an accredited degree. However, UMass Amherst offers a master of architecture program accredited by the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB). The architectural studies concentration serves as a four-year component of the 4+2 professional master of architecture. Students graduating from the architectural studies concentration who are accepted into the master of architecture program will be able to complete their master's degree requirements in a minimum of two years.

THE MAJOR

The architecture major offers concentrations in both architectural studies and design studies. All majors take courses in math and physics, art foundations, design and graphics, history and theory, building technologies, and the Junior Year Writing requirement. The Architectural Studies subplan is a pre-professional program intended for students who plan to pursue a professional graduate degree in architecture. It requires more courses in architecture design studios, architectural history, and technology and more directed electives relevant to design. The Design Studies subplan is a more general program intended for students with a broader interest in the design fields, including interior design. It has more flexibility in requirements for studio, history, technology, and electives related to design. Because it has fewer requirements, it allows students to double-major.

Students are required to provide their own laptop computer and software, to specifications provided by the program, for all architecture, design, and graphics classes.

ADMISSION TO THE MAJOR

There are three options for admission to the architecture major. High school seniors with exceptional visual arts backgrounds can apply directly to the major when they apply for admission to the university. UMass Amherst students in other majors (or exploratory track) can apply directly to the major while taking foundation-level studios and art history surveys. Transfer students with strong visual arts backgrounds can also apply directly to the major when applying to UMass Amherst. In all cases, admission to the major will require a successful portfolio review.

HONORS

Contact the departmental honors coordinator for information on how to pursue honors opportunities within the major.

STUDY ABROAD

Majors may choose to study abroad in their junior or senior year if it supports their academic and career goals. Students should contact the International Programs Office (413-545-2710, umass.edu/ipo) and work closely with their academic advisor to choose the appropriate courses in preparation.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

After graduation, students may enter directly into architecture or interior-design work. Well-respected design firms in Boston, New York, and other major cities consistently hire graduates. Those who continue their studies make excellent candidates for graduate programs in architecture, interior design, historic preservation, and regional planning.

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND FINE ARTS

The humanities focus on human creativity, endeavor, and culture. The imaginative and creative arts—literary and performing—derive from life and teach about human behavior and constructs of social reality. The history of social, political, and economic systems illuminates and shapes the present and future. Students in the College of Humanities and Fine Arts are expected to broaden their perspectives on individual and cultural expression within their own and other societies, to understand the development and evolution of the discipline of study in relation to the culture from which it emanates, and to learn the methods by which knowledge in the discipline is gained.

Office: 210 Design Building

Phone: 413-577-0943

Website: umass.edu/architecture