architecture program preparation

Architecture students traditionally work many long hours in the studio on architectural projects. Design is a time-consuming process, so there is often little time for part-time employment or collegiate athletics. Although long in hours, the design production is enjoyable, and those with discipline find little difficulty in their new regimen. For students who perform poorly in architecture, an unwillingness to spend sufficient time in design studio is often more critical than actual individual design ability.

A summer job in building construction is a very useful experience to the architectural student, and is usually easier to find than a job in a professional office. If this or other opportunities in related building trades are not available, highly motivated students should avail themselves to books and magazines on architecture from a public or university library. Ideally, a student enters Architecture because it is both an academic and professional area of interest.

The advantages of studying architecture are many, not the least of which is developing close relationships with other students and faculty members. In the UB Department of Architecture, the faculty to student ratio is 1 to 15.5. The satisfaction that comes from creating a tangible design is a major benefit of architectural studies, and of the profession, as well.

Based on widespread interest in environmental issues and designing for the built environment, the number of admission applications to most architecture programs has increased significantly in recent years. **Consequently, admission to most architecture programs, *including the UB Department of Architecture*, is highly competitive, and only highly qualified applicants are assured of acceptance.** Architecture is a highly diversified, multi-faceted, dynamic, and ever-evolving profession.

architecture program preparation

adapted from:

- **2007-2008 UB Undergraduate Catalogue**
  http://undergrad-catalog.buffalo.edu/
- **Assoc. of Collegiate Schools of Architecture**
  Information for Students Web site
  http://www.acsa-arch.org/infostud.html

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school of architecture + planning

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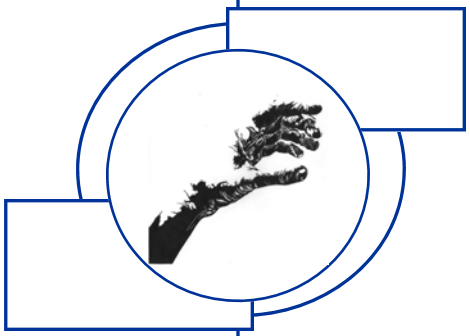

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Architecture is the art and science of designing and building structures. Architects are professionals with specialized knowledge about the design of urban and natural environments, and architecture has been called by Louis Kahn **'the handwriting of humankind.'** Architects encourage a critical understanding of the historical, societal, material, technological, and cultural forces that form the designed environment.

Ideally, the beginning Architecture student will have a solid background in areas including freehand drawing, manual drafting, figure drawing, sculpting, technical drawing, and 2-D and 3-D design. Many of the building technology and design courses required in Architecture depend upon prior knowledge of basic physics and basic calculus, as physics and calculus are often prerequisites for the structures/construction courses within Architecture. Students may fulfill these prerequisites with completion of Advanced Placement high school calculus and physics, or completion of college calculus and college physics.

An Architecture program often is interested in a student's class rank, academic test scores, and aptitude in specific courses such as precalculus, physics, studio art, freehand drawing, manual drafting, and 2-D and 3-D design. Courses in model building, sculpting, ceramics production, and even metal working will prove extremely valuable. Two semesters of manual drafting is often highly adequate. A plus for prospective Architecture students include skills that demonstrate a high level of creative ability or unique perspectives. **Urban studies**, **world history**, and **art** courses are strongly recommended for those interested in Architecture. Architects design the shape of our environment.

Drawing and design are developed and acquired skills; with calculus and physics causing possible difficulty for beginning Architecture students. Computing skills, including word processing, Web-based research techniques, and desktop publishing programs are required for many Architecture degree programs.

An industrial arts and mechanical drawing course is often helpful. Speech or public speaking classes are very useful, as architects (and architecture students) must often express or explain complex design concepts orally, sometimes within intense circumstances.

While "design" is the primary emphasis in most programs, Architecture faculty do not expect students to be designers when beginning Architecture studies, but will upon graduation. Architecture faculty expect design students to be interested in learning, self-motivated, possessing broad interests, and capable of imposing strong self-discipline while being creative.

Most entering students have considerable misconceptions regarding the study and practice of Architecture. For some, the truth is exciting; for others, somewhat disappointing. Architecture is not solely technical drawing or computer-aided drafting, but the art and science of designing and building structures.