NAAB

National
Architectural
Accrediting
Board, Inc.

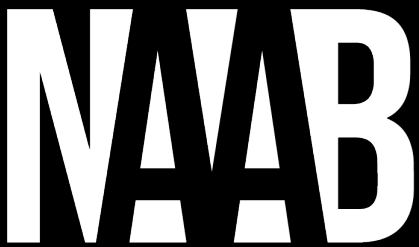*2023 Visiting Team Report*

Belmont University
Department of Architecture

B.Arch.

Continuation of Candidacy Visit
October 23-24, 2023

Contents

I. Summary of Visit

a. Acknowledgments and Observations

The visiting team would like to thank Provost David Gregory, Dean Jhennifer Amundson, and the Belmont architecture program's faculty and students for their time, their courtesy, and their clear commitment to the principles of accreditation. We extend special thanks to Program Chair Thomas Lowing for his patience and generosity in providing us with information and access to your academic community. His efforts enabled the team to gain a thorough understanding of the program before and during the visit.

Starting a new program requires extraordinary commitment on the part of administrators, faculty, and staff. The vision is only the beginning; the reality extends across years in which the faith of the students inspires the continuous effort to produce the next steps. The demonstrated enthusiasm of every administrator and faculty member is essential to the long-range plan they are working to fulfill.

The team preceded the visit with a thorough exploration of the curriculum of the Bachelor of Architecture degree program, with particular attention to the courses that have already been initiated to serve the first four cohorts. The team followed a rigorous process of review and consensus to produce a report that will inform the NAAB board of your progress towards meeting the Conditions for Accreditation. The virtual visit meetings were necessary to verify and clarify the team's understanding of the information in the materials reviewed prior to the visit.

At the time of this visit, the first cohort was engaged in fourth year coursework. Program growth has proceeded at a faster rate than initially projected, producing a current total of approximately 120 students. Students expressed a strong sense of trust and value in their relationship with faculty. They also enjoy a strong sense of community within their cohorts. They are, overall, pleased with their choice to pursue their degree at Belmont; and it was impressive to see that 100% of the students that attended the meeting with the NAAB visiting team plan to pursue licensure. There are, nevertheless, a number of issues of concern. Some are simply the realities of building a program from scratch, but not all. Students are not included in governance in a routine manner, either through representation on committees or a form of student council. The majority of students do not have assigned studio desks, and students do not have the ability to work in the buildings past 11:00pm. This especially impacts students that have work obligations or that may not have space at home to work.

The faculty expressed strong appreciation for the unique qualities of the institution, its potential as a site for architectural education, and their culture of service to make it all work. They appreciate the interdisciplinary possibilities of O'More College of Architecture and Design and are already engaging in interdisciplinary studios. Given the small number of current faculty, it is not surprising that each one is stretched to meet the teaching and administrative service requirements, but they are nevertheless committed to the program's potential and success. Faculty are fully informed on matters of promotion and tenure, and they feel that they understand institutional expectations for their development. At present, there is no formal structure for governance because most matters are handled by a committee of the whole. Individuals have easy access to the chair and dean and feel that their voice is heard.

This program has strong tailwinds from the offices of the dean and provost. They appreciate the asset that the program represents to the university, fitting well within a traditional focus on creative arts, and providing the first and only architectural program in middle Tennessee. The initial growth has exceeded expectations, and they readily acknowledge the need for more space, additional faculty, and administrative support to meet accreditation requirements for self-assessment. However, new desks and a new building are not yet on any adopted plan.

At the time of this visit, the program was on track with providing the courses required by the curriculum plan. There has been a great deal of work invested in self-assessment; however, so far it is dependent on qualitative judgements rather than quantitative data, and it is only suggestive of improvement at the course level. There is attention to course connections through curricular "streams," but evaluation and adjustment is still focused largely on individual courses. There is no *aggregation* of findings.

Furthermore, the complexity of different systems for university reporting, accreditation reporting, and curricular structure is confusing the question of specific objectives required by NAAB. While at this time the NAAB Program and Student Criteria remain "not yet met," it is not a reflection of the quality of the coursework developed thus far; it is due to incomplete assessment processes—often described as 'closing the loop'—along with the fact that key courses have not yet been taught. With two faculty searches underway and additional assessment reporting tools now available, the program should be better positioned to fulfill the conditions for NAAB accreditation. The next scheduled visit is currently slated for Fall of 2025.

        b. Conditions with a Team Recommendation to the Board as Not Achieved

Conditions with a Team Recommendation to the Board as **Not Yet Met**:

PC.1 Career paths
PC.2 Design
PC.3 Ecological knowledge and responsibility
PC.4 History and theory
PC.5 Research and innovation
PC.6 Leadership and collaboration
PC.7 Learning and teaching culture
PC.8 Social equity and inclusion

SC.1 Health, safety, and welfare in the built environment
SC.2 Professional practice
SC.3 Regulatory context
SC.4 Technical knowledge
SC.5 Design synthesis
SC.6 Design integration

6.1 Statement on NAAB-Accredited Degrees
6.6 Student Financial Information

Conditions with a Team Recommendation to the Board as **In Progress**:

5.2 Planning and assessment
5.7 Financial resources
5.8 Information resources

II. Progress Since the Previous Site Visit

2020 Conditions Not Met/ Demonstrated

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.

Previous Team Report (2021): The criterion is Not Met. The program APR and matrix cite that this criterion is addressed not in specific courses, but with the CAD student manual and ePortfolio. The program provided a copy of their Student Manual which defines their learning and teaching culture. It is located under the title "Cultural Practices" on page 6. The program APR states that this criterion "must infuse each and every course," however the team did not find evidence of this in the supplemental course material provided. The program also did not provide evidence of recurring assessment and modifications of this criteria to the curricula based on the assessment findings.

2023 Team Analysis:
Although some progress has been made, this criterion is Not Yet Met. The APR continues to claim that this is met through statements in the College of Art and Design student manual and the ePortfolio, and to cite all courses as the curricular contribution. The statement in the manual is important to the culture, but is not a point of possible assessment for student outcomes. The ePortfolio is a cross-curricular element that will be assessed at three points in the program. An attitude towards learning and teaching culture is inherent in the idea and purpose of a portfolio, but it is not explicit in the rubric that is being developed for its assessment. During the visit, students indicated that they did not look at the manual after their freshman year and had mixed interest in the portfolio.

The program's commitment to a positive learning and teaching culture would be strengthened by adding PC.7 to the rubric for the ePortfolio and identifying one or two courses in which PC.7 outcomes are made explicit in a manner that can be assessed. From the current course evidence, ARC 3024 Architecture Design 4 and ARC 4025 Architectural Design 5 would be good candidates as they already have strong statements in their syllabi.

5.3 Curricular Development 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.

Previous Team Report (2021): This condition is Not Demonstrated. While the program notes that evaluation of curricular development will happen annually and has clearly identified the roles and responsibilities of those involved, the process is not outlined nor does it identify potential adjustments or the basis for making them. There were no documents identified that outline the process for curricular development assessment and adjustments. In the APR the program noted NAAB conditions lead their curricular development, but did not provide additional information, or how the development ties back to mission, vision, or shared goals.

2023 Team Analysis:
This condition is In Progress. As a program that is still in its Candidacy, it has not yet completed a full roll-out of its initial curricular plan. There is clear attention to development of assessment in terms of individual courses within five curricular streams, or topic areas. However only the stream report for History and Theory was available to be included in the APR. The stream report includes a final column of "current year results'" which appear to be the instructor's own reflections on how things went and what else might be tried next year. There is no evidence of "data aggregation" or analysis that moves beyond the course level.

The APR states that the faculty of each topical curriculum stream meet at the end of spring to review evidence from courses and prepare proposals for refinement or revision of courses. The chair reviews and confirms that NAAB criteria are "included in the assessments as identified in course syllabi and the curriculum matrix" (from the program chair's supplemental narrative for Appendix I of the APR). All documentation on assessment provided in the APR and digital team room remains at the level of individual courses. The program chair produced a record of the end-of-year meetings when it was requested during the visit.

The ePortfolio is an element of the curriculum that transcends the course levels. The APR (pp. 90-92) includes a rubric to be used at years one, three, and five. According to the Lowing memo of October 9, 2023, the dean and chair are still collaborating on efforts to "build" the ePortfolio assessment plan. It currently cites only three NAAB criteria explicitly but has the potential to reference more.

III.   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.

2023 Team Analysis: Not Applicable

IV.   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).

☒ **Described**

Program Summary Statement of 1 – Context and Mission [from the APR]
Situated in a College that also offers Interior Design and Fashion Design and Merchandising, Belmont's architecture program is part of a community dedicated to design disciplines, within a mid-sized, private, faith-based university that offers generous academic exploration and multi- disciplinary integration, diverse student services, and extra-curricular activities. Less than two miles from downtown Nashville, the program participates in a vibrant design community and enjoys connections with several professional and creative organizations and nonprofits.

Shaped by the University's mission, Belmont's architecture program aims to prepare future citizen architects to improve the world through the process and medium of building, with special emphasis on environmental sustainability and social equity.

Representing a distinct approach to architectural education that emphasizes vocational discernment and student choice, the architecture program provides rigorous coursework that addresses the many needs required of professional practice. In addition to the traditional requirements of architectural education, the program

- Integrates general studies and professional education to prepare graduates to successfully enter this inherently interdisciplinary profession,
- Emphasizes metacognition and reflection as a means of vocational discernment
- Nurtures students' understanding of professional fulfillment through service-mindedness,
- Benefits from a faculty of professing Christians who integrate their faith and teaching, emphasizing traditions of service and values supported by the faith in all aspects of curricular, co-, and extra-curricular planning.

Belmont graduates will have a distinct focus on serving people by imagining, designing, and realizing a better, more beautiful, and more just world.

2023 Team Analysis:
The program is located within a small private university in the city of Nashville, TN. The program has a Christian-centered culture that encourages students to view their architectural education as part of a broader moral development and foundation for following a holistic vocation. The university is a Christian institution, and it provides the required general education courses (with emphasis on religion and philosophy) and the elements of the architecture program that focus on vocational development, or "discernment."

The program is one of three units in the O'More College of Architecture and Design; the others are Interior Design and Fashion Design and Merchandising. The program is still in its early stages of development, so the relationships to its college and university context is mainly a function of fit, taking advantage of shared resources as appropriate. Potential partnerships with Interior Design will benefit both programs in time. The program is fostering relationships in the community through professional firms, the non-profit community design center, Civic Design Center, its local professional organizations, Middle Tennessee AIA, and NOMAnash.

The program encourages students to routinely reflect on their educational experiences in order to derive broader lessons, making connections and assessing progress over time through a required ePortfolio. There is a vibrant chapter of AIAS that is sponsoring numerous events that include visits to firms, hard-hat tours, and portfolio reviews. Many of the studio projects take faculty and students outside the institution and into communities. Faculty members are building a network of relationships with local practitioners whose involvement will be key to a successful program over time.

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.

☒ **Described**

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.

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.

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.

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.

2023 Team Analysis:
Design: Design thinking permeates the curriculum. The program chair describes the creativity and storytelling aspects of the design process as one of the main values the school offers to the university. One element of the program pedagogy, described as Folio Thinking, requires every student to reflect on their lives as design professionals who have a lifelong commitment to responsible design for sustainability and community health. The program chair, faculty, and students described the value of their community involvement with the non-profit community design center, Civic Design Center. The program will continue to center the importance of design through its prominence in the curriculum and will assess those that provide integrated experiences.

Environmental Stewardship and Professional Responsibility: In the APR, the program defines this value as professional responsibility and care for social, environmental, and economic issues. Throughout the curriculum, the college interweaves their commitment to environmental stewardship and professional ethics in design, history and building science courses. Student projects are embedded in the fabric of the city from planning sustainable neighborhoods to the proposal of refugee housing for Nashville. They are engaged with the Civic Design Center and use the center for community resources, connections to community groups, Nashville planning resources, and internships.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: The college considers a commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion foundational to its mission. They demonstrate this commitment through community service and consider equity foundational as a key performance indicator for strategic planning. Their financial contract with Nashville's Civic Design Center is an important part of this commitment. The Center's mission is to "engage communities to shape space for all." The syllabi of design courses reflect how the program interweaves the work of this center throughout its curriculum. Students are actively engaged as leaders in AIAS and are in the process of forming a new NOMA chapter. The department has a strong relationship with Middle Tennessee AIA and one of the faculty is the member of their J.E.D.I. committee. The program actively supports NOMA's project pipeline, the mentoring program and provides financial resources for students, including minorities and non-traditional students.

Knowledge and Innovation: Architecture students at Belmont are encouraged "to discover new knowledge" and embrace innovation through critical studies, re-evaluation of tradition, and new understandings of accepted facts. Innovation is seen as a means to be more responsive to cultural needs and to improve upon traditions of the built environment. In several courses, students are shown how new situations and problems have resulted in important innovations in the past. Special programs developed for the opening of the Digital Fabrication Fab in October 2022 included guest speakers and panel discussions on current technologies in office practice and the metaverse.

Leadership, Collaboration, and Community Engagement: The program defines leadership at Belmont as the ability to influence change through collaboration (APR p. 20). Leadership is encouraged at the college through participation in off-campus volunteering, such as with Habitat for Humanity, and through curricular initiatives with the Nashville Civic Design Center such as the Park(ing) Day initiative. The university requires an introduction to service learning and community engagement as part of the first-year orientation. Design studios provide opportunities to examine underserved communities and client engagement. Students are actively engaged as leaders in AIAS and NOMAS.

Lifelong Learning: The program promotes the value of lifelong learning through a faculty that demonstrates the practice of new research and further development of their areas of expertise through professional development programs and by frequently drawing local practitioners into conversation with students in studio desk crits and reviews. This value is most fully reflected in the habit of consistent documentation and reflection in the required ePortfolio. Lifelong learning will be assessed in two professional practice courses and through ePortfolio assessments. The role of the ePortfolio will remain an important part of long-range planning.

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)

☒ **Not Yet Met**

2023 Team Analysis:
Narrative: This criterion is addressed through course content and academic advising. The significance of a license and the path to licensure is explained to students in their first semester's required course ARC 1015 Craft, Profession, Vocation. The course includes information about the history of these regulations and diverse ways that individuals can pursue a career in architecture and related professions. Eventually, two additional professional practice courses will also repeat and update this information, but they have not yet been taught. Other occasional events provide optional opportunities to engage in the topic, and professional mentors will reinforce it. The program has an experienced Licensing Advisor, Prof. Thomas Lowing, who gives routine presentations as appropriate on the licensure process. Lastly, the ePortfolio will provide a record of student awareness and attitude toward career planning, and the ARC 4015 Senior Capstone will complement the portfolio development.

Assessment / confirmation: This will primarily be assessed in the three professional practice courses. Though this stream has not yet been assessed, the importance of career/vocational discernment was highlighted in numerous conversations. Student leaders of AIAS are already building networks to the broader local building industry, not only within architecture.

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)

☒ **Not Yet Met**

2023 Team Analysis:

Narrative: The program describes an advanced integrated design sequence from first to final years that includes design studios and an ePortfolio assessment on a recurring basis. These classes will demonstrate the integration of fabrication, design, history, drawing, modeling, structural design, environmental design and civic engagement. As of the time of the visit, the program had only completed the first four design studios: ARC 2021 Architectural Design 1, ARC 2022 Architectural Design 2, ARC 3023 Architectural Design 3, and ARC 3024 Architectural Design 4. The projects in these studios are designed to build toward increasing complexity but do not yet aim at the integration of "multiple factors, in different settings and scales of development, from buildings to cities," which will be expected in the advanced studios of years four and five.

Assessment / confirmation: Some examples of learning objectives that apply to this criterion are provided in the curriculum for ARC 4025 Architectural Design 5, which was being taught at the time of the visit. This condition cannot be met without the completion and assessment of the advanced courses and the final assessment of ePortfolios. The available assessments provided for those classes which have been taught did not provide evident benchmarks, although they did provide verbal notations of the state of the course. There is little evidence thus far as to how the assessment stream leads to any changes to course curriculum.

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)

☒ **Not Yet Met**

2023 Team Analysis:

Narrative: Evidence of coursework addressing this criterion was found in ARC 3041 Structures 1, ARC 4043 Environmental Systems 1, and ARC 4034 Theories of Architecture. While other coursework supports a holistic understanding of architecture's place in the broad context of ecological systems, only these courses address specific topics pertinent to building performance and energy conservation—the technical knowledge for achieving advanced building performance in projects. Theories of Architecture addresses the architect's responsibility to the current and future condition of the planet.

Assessment / confirmation: After review of the folders in the team room, and although the following classes have been taught, ARC 1015, ARC 2031, ARC 2031, and ARC 3041 do not have sufficient evidence to describe how the program demonstrates this criterion. The program anticipates that mastery of this criterion will be assessed in the ePortfolio as completed in ARC 4015 Senior Capstone for Architecture. This course has not yet been taught, so there is no assessment thus far. Other coursework provided as evidence in the team room did not provide demonstration of specific learning content in the provided course schedules, quizzes and tests, or additional course materials that directly applies to this criterion. Conversations during the visit indicated that the architect's responsibility is conveyed, but students do not yet have the knowledge to leverage ecological, advanced building performance, adaptations, and resilience principles in their 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)

☒ **Not Yet Met**

2023 Team Analysis:

Narrative: The program matrix cites four courses in which this criterion is addressed: ARC 2031 History of Architecture 1, ARC 2032 History of Architecture 2, ARC 3033 History of Architecture in the United States, and ARC 4034 Theory of Architecture and the Environment after 1400. Mastery in PC.4 is

achieved and assessed in the last course of the sequence, ARC 4034. So far, the first three have been taught at least once, but not the fourth. The program demonstrated this PC by providing the syllabus, assignments, an assessment rubric for ARC 2031, ARC 2032, as well as an incomplete assessment rubric for ARC 3033. For ARC 4024, a syllabus and incomplete rubric were provided; assignments are not yet available.

Based on a review of the syllabus and assignments for all, the previous courses provide a robust knowledge base for the critical engagement that is expected in the final course—identified as the point of mastery.

Assessment / confirmation: The History/Theory assessment stream for 2022-2023 is a comprehensive document demonstrating rigor in the approach to a coordinated curriculum that aims at highly intentional and sequential learning goals. Qualitative benchmarks for meeting various conditions, including PC.4, are identified. However, the current year results for ARC 4034 or ARC 3033 are not yet available. For ARC 2032, identified as reinforcing knowledge, the assessment instrument is a writing assignment reflecting on the roles of history based on the first module of the course with awareness of the evolving interpretations of the past. The benchmark/goal established is qualitative, not quantitative--that students advance their understanding of historical knowledge as evolving over time. The finding was that students had shown this understanding in their essays. This would indicate that no modification of the course is needed at this time.

There is a grade rubric provided in the syllabus for ARC 2032, but no information on the grades achieved by students. However, this has the potential to provide the kind of data that would be useful in analysis and aggregation. Since this is not a course in which mastery of the histories and theories of architecture and urbanism is achieved, and since the assessment offered is not meaningful for comparisons over time, this condition is not yet met.

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)

☒ **Not Yet Met**

2023 Team Analysis:
Narrative: The APR states that students are "introduced to methods of research" at several points in the curriculum but does not specify any particular methods (p. 28). Care is taken to address research in different subject areas, and course material are provided for ARC 3042 Structures 2, ARC 4026 Architectural Design 6, and ARC 4518 Comprehensive Design Seminar. However, no syllabus was provided in the course folder for ARC 3042 and no direct reference to research or to PC.5 appears in the syllabi of the other two courses. Students in ARC 4518 will be expected to be reflective on the "place and nature of innovation," but that is not the same as "testing and evaluating innovations in the field (from the syllabus template in the course folder.)

Assessment / confirmation: Evidence of the mastery of this criterion is expected in ARC 4518 which has not yet been taught, so there is no assessment thus far. During the visit, faculty members indicated that methods so far have included investigations and analysis of past precedents and experimentation with digital representational tools. They anticipate introducing research methods in advanced courses that have not yet been offered.

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)

☒ **Not Yet Met**

2023 Team Analysis:
Narrative: The architect's leadership role is highlighted in the professional practice courses and encouraged through student organization opportunities. Collaboration is practiced in studios with team projects. The primary courses are ARC 2021 Architectural Design 1, ARC 4025 Architectural Design 5, and ARC 4508 Pro Practice 2. Documentation is provided for ARC Architectural Design 5 and ARC 4527 Architectural Design 7. The syllabus and project briefs for Design 5 all incorporate leadership and collaboration; ARC 4527 is represented only by a syllabus template so far, and Pro Practice 2 has not yet been taught.

The Architectural Design 5 studio is taught in collaboration with an interior design studio. The architecture learning objectives include "collaboration among and leadership within multidisciplinary teams." This is clearly a strong focus of instruction, however the grading rubric in the syllabus does not mention collaboration or leadership in the "Design Process" evaluation spectrum.

Assessment / confirmation: There is not yet any clear evidence of assessment for PC.6, but significant courses for this condition have not yet been taught. The student leaders of AIAS demonstrated admirable leadership and collaboration skills during the visit.

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)

☒ **Not Yet Met**

2023 Team Analysis:
Narrative: The program states in the APR that the values inherent to this criterion are infused throughout their curriculum through their strong focus on Christian values. They placed, as proof, folders from the entire curriculum. Some faculty in early architectural classes use pass- fail for half of the semester with an emphasis on developing an equity in grading that focuses on the process of student development. Throughout the curriculum, students develop an ePortfoliio that builds respect, sharing, engagement and innovation documenting student reflections on achievements and professional growth. This commitment is also described in the CAD Student Manual and Architecture Program Learning & Teaching Culture Statement which is available to both faculty and students. The program has started a template for all courses, and at this time, there are only a few that include a statement about studio culture in the syllabi. The curriculum is strongly focused on service learning projects in Nashville, these include the analysis of underserved neighborhoods, the design of a refugee center among other collaborative projects with the Nashville Design Center and the local AIA chapter.

Assessment / confirmation: The program provided materials from the entire curriculum, however, there did not appear to be any specific examples of PC.7 as a learning objective that is assessed throughout the curriculum. There will be recurring annual assessments of the ePortfolio in the 1st, 3rd and 5th years that can provide clarity through assessment data, and the ability to adjust the courses as needed.

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)

☒ **Not Yet Met**

2023 Team Analysis:
Narrative: The college states that social equity and inclusion are fundamental to their entire program. Course materials in ARC 1015 Craft, Profession, Vocation and ARC 3024 Architectural Design 4 indicate studio and classroom experiences that reflect these values and provide students to work in underserved

and diverse communities. They demonstrate this commitment through invited lectures, service-learning projects, and community service. Students are often engaged with Nashville's Civic Design Center, whose mission in part is to advocate for actionable change and to improve the quality of life for all. As central to the university's mission, a required orientation process for first-year students provides a first introduction to service learning and community engagement. Design studios provide opportunities to examine underserved communities. Students are actively engaged as leaders in AIAS and NOMAS. The department has a strong relationship with Middle Tennessee AIA and one of the adjunct faculty is the member of their J.E.D.I. committee.

Assessment / confirmation: The team found no examples of PC.8 as a direct learning objective in ARC 1015, ARC 3024, and the advanced design classes have not been taught yet. There will also be recurring annual assessments of the ePortfolio in the first, third, and fifth years. Although the commitment to PC.8. was described, there was little or no evidence in the assessment stream that PC.8 measured or assessed in the curriculum on a recurring basis and modifications to the curricula based on the assessment findings.

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)

☒ **Not Yet Met**

2023 Team Analysis:
Narrative: The responsibility of architects for health, safety, and welfare is emphasized most clearly in the fifth-year coursework, where the final two studios, ARC 4527 Architectural Design 7 and ARC 4528 Architectural Design 8 are linked with Professional Practice 1 and 2 (ARC 4507 and ARC 4508). Learning in coursework is complemented by firm visits and guest lectures. The syllabus templates for ARC 4507 and ARC 4527 explicitly cite this criterion as a course objective.

Assessment / confirmation: Evidence of the mastery of this criterion is expected in ARC 4507 and ARC 4527; these have not yet been taught, so there is no assessment or confirmation thus far.

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)

☒ **Not Yet Met**

2023 Team Analysis:
Narrative: Professional practice is addressed in a series of three courses: ARC 1015 Craft, Profession, Vocation; ARC 4507 Pro Practice 1; and ARC 4508 Pro Practice 2. No syllabus was provided for the introductory course, but the schedule of topics and the quizzes indicate relevant content to the architect's place in society. Pro Practice 1, not yet taught, will include career paths and regulatory standards, as well as HSW. Pro Practice 2 will continue to focus on regulatory standards and HSW. There is no mention of business processes or practice management.

Assessment / confirmation: The primary courses have not yet been offered, and rubrics have not been developed. The program plans to assess these courses as well as the effectiveness of its Advisory Board Mentorship Program in reinforcing the understanding of professional 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)

☒ **Not Yet Met**

2023 Team Analysis:
Narrative: The program plans to address the role of laws, codes, and regulations in safeguarding life safety as well as land use and the process for complying in the design of a building and its site in the two required professional practice that will be taken by students in their fifth year: ARC 4507 Professional Practice 1 and ARC 4508 Professional Practice 2. In addition, students will be expected to demonstrate the ability to meet applicable codes and regulations in the comprehensive design of a project in ARC 4527 Architectural Design 7.

Assessment / confirmation: Evidence of the mastery of this criterion is expected in ARC 4507 and ARC 4527. As these have not yet been taught, there is no assessment or confirmation thus far.

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)

☒ **Not Yet Met**

2023 Team Analysis:
Narrative: Learning objectives for some elements of SC.4 were evident in the design assignments in ARC 3023 Architectural Design 3. The program supplied syllabi for the advanced design courses 4044, 4527, and 4528 which will be taught in the fourth and fifth years, thus providing for these courses a template which broadly lists the criterion for SC.4.

Assessment / confirmation: Listed in the matrix, ARC 3023 is currently being taught and has been assessed in an assessment stream which does not identify how benchmarks are obtained or how the results of this assessment will lead to improvements in response to this assessment. The APR describes how students will obtain mastery through Structures and Environmental Systems. The folder provided for ARC 3042 Structures 2 does not contain evidence that material is assessed according to SC.4. Since ARC 4043 and 4044 Environmental Systems 1 and 2 have not yet been taught, there are only incomplete assessment templates available. The program is focused on integrating these technologies of architecture into the design sequence and will assess the NAAB criterion through recurring ePortfolio assessments.

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)

☒ **Not Yet Met**

2023 Team Analysis:
The program matrix cites two courses in which this criterion will be most fully addressed – ARC 4528 Architectural Design 8 and ARC 4518 Comprehensive Design Seminar. At the time of the visit, the first cohort was in year four, while these courses are part of year five, and therefore have not yet been taught.

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)

☒ **Not Yet Met**

2023 Team Analysis:
The program matrix cites two courses in which this criterion will be most fully addressed – ARC 4528 Architectural Design 8 and ARC 4518 Comprehensive Design Seminar. At the time of the visit, the first cohort was in year four, while these courses are part of year five, and therefore have not yet been taught.

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)

☒ **Met**

2023 Team Analysis:
The January 12, 2023, letter from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges reaffirming accreditation with no further report required was included as Appendix N in the APR (p. 100).

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

15

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.

⊠ **Met**

2023 Team Analysis:
4.2.1 Professional studies: The program requires 91 semester hours of professional studies. This was confirmed through a link to the Belmont University General Catalog listing for "Architecture, B.Arch."

4.2.2 General studies: The program requires 46 semester hours of general studies in conformance with the Belmont University requirements. This exceeds the minimum number of hours (30) required by the institutional regional accreditor, verified on their website.

4.2.3 Optional studies: The B.Arch. curriculum includes 18 semester hours of free electives. This was confirmed through a link to the Belmont University General Catalog listing for "Architecture, B.Arch."

4.2.4 Bachelor of Architecture: The Belmont University B.Arch. degree requirements consist of 155 credit hours which exceeds the 150-credit hour requirement.

All confirmed in the general catalog:
https://catalog.belmont.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=16&poid=4482&hl=architecture&returnto=search

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.

☒ **Met**

2023 Team Analysis:

4.3.1 The program described the process in the APR (p. 43) for evaluation of a student's prior academic coursework by the program chair and the admissions counselor. Undergraduates transfer students are served by an admissions counselor and adult/second degree students are assisted by the Adult Degree Program staff. The program's transfer credit policy is available in the APR and includes the statement that the student must demonstrate achievement of applicable NAAB-defined program or student criteria. However, the chair stated that no transfer credits of core architecture courses are admitted beyond the second year, so there is no reliance on previously met NAAB criteria.

4.3.2 As stated in the APR and confirmed by the chair in pre-visit meetings, students who enroll in the B.Arch. programs are not subject to any additional evaluation above and beyond the criteria for admittance to the university.

4.3.3 The admissions process, including the length of the professional degree program, is clearly explained on the website: https://www.belmont.edu/academics/majors-programs/barch-architecture/ During the visit, students reported that they had no trouble with understanding admissions or program requirements.

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.

☒ **Described**

2023 Team Analysis: .
5.1.1 Administrative structure: The B.Arch. program is the main endeavor of the Department of Architecture, one of three units in the O'More College of Architecture and Design; the others are Fashion Design and Merchandising, and Interior Design. Each unit is run by a faculty chair. The college is led by a dean and an associate dean. (APR p. 45)

At the university level, the provost serves as the chief academic officer, with oversight of the deans. The president and the board of trustees are the top executives of the university.

5.1.2 Governance: Program governance is also described in the APR, which details the CAD faculty and staff recurring meetings, participation in university-wide committees, and curricular development. Departmental faculty meetings alternate between general faculty business and curriculum-focused meetings. All full-time faculty participate; part-time faculty are welcome but are not required to attend.

Student participation in governance was reported to take the form of a Student Advisory Council (SAC) for the college, which includes student representation from each of the three departments including architecture. However, there was a suspension of the SAC at the time of the writing of the APR and the NAAB visiting team confirmed in meetings that it had not been reinstated.

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.

☒ **In Progress**

2023 Team Analysis:
5.2.1 The program describes its multi-year objectives in the APR (p.48) that are integrated with the University, "Strategic Trajectory to 2030" planning process. The APR also provides an outline and calendar based on NAAB criteria, the cohort's progression through the program, and assessment timelines over a yearly and multi-yearly process in Appendix I.

5.2.2 Key performance indicators as articulated in the "Strategic Trajectory to 2030" a university initiative. Community Engagement, Vocational Discernment (described as learning how your whole life and passions are integrated into your careers and architecture as an ethical profession), and Belonging (described as part of equity and inclusion.)

5.2.3 The program provided a calendar of their plan for accreditation in the APR Appendix I. The calendar identifies a three-year assessment cycle at the institutional level which will be organized by the chair and the University's Director of Academic Assessment. Annually, from February through mid-

April, the department chair, with input from the Architecture Curriculum committee, conducts a series of meetings to review assessment process and e-portfolios. The program has developed a curricular template which identifies NAAB objectives and learning outcomes in each syllabi which has not yet been fully implemented. This effort is ongoing and only partially adapted into the curriculum.

5.2.4 The strengths of this program include a dedicated faculty, a commitment to service learning, connections to the Nashville Civic Center, and a new renovation of the building with state-of-the-art fabrication equipment.

Challenges include a small faculty size, lack of space for permanent desks, limited times to work in the woodshop and computer labs.

Opportunities for this program include the future addition of new staff and increased collaborations with Nashville's community through the Civic Design Center.

5.2.5 The college advisory board includes local practitioners, and they are included throughout the curriculum as guests, critics and mentors. Meetings with faculty and templates for the advanced classes demonstrate that progress towards this condition is underway. The most recent end of year review provided evidence of the use of course reflections to encourage ongoing changes to promote student and faculty success.

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.

☒ **Demonstrated**

2023 Team Analysis:
5.3.1 The program addresses the relationship between course assessment and curricular development in annual meetings at the end of each spring semester. The program has implemented a spreadsheet documenting course level assessment streams. Future templates for some advanced courses articulate the NAAB criteria, and student general learning objectives for each class.

5.3.2 The Architecture Curriculum Committee conducts annual assessments of courses, coordinates course blocks, and prepares proposals to refine/revise course descriptions. The department chair coordinates annual assessments. The licensing advisor coordinates internship opportunities. The assistant to the dean organizes materials including evidence used in annual reviews, and assists with the NAAB visit.

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.

☒ **Demonstrated**

2023 Team Analysis:
5.4.1: The program follows a clear workload formula with respect to teaching responsibilities. The transparency of this system allows individuals to see that their assignments align with others in the department. The faculty is still quite small, so there is no formal committee structure to address the many administrative and service functions. The team confirmed in the site visit that faculty are content with teaching and service loads.

5.4.2: The Architect Licensing Advisor is Prof. Thomas Lowing. Lowing makes presentations in appropriate courses on the path to licensure. He has been a licensing advisor at a previous institution and has attended the annual Summit regularly.

5.4.3 The dean provides funding for attendance at appropriate conferences for faculty expertise. She also provides programs aimed at improving pedagogies; these supplement teaching resources available university wide. Faculty feel comfortable about asking for support for other initiatives as needed.

5.4.4 The university maintains a robust set of resources for students seeking help with academics, mental health and physical health issues, career advising, and jobs and internships. Students expressed satisfaction with the availability of these resources during the visit.

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.

☒ **Demonstrated**

2023 Team Analysis:
5.5.1 The program provides a rich list of avenues to support diversity in hiring, student outreach, and guidance. These include its deep connection to NOMA and NOMAS and financial support for the 2020

national conference. The university provides scholarships for students, including minorities, and provides resources for those in need as necessary.

5.5.2 The university describes initiatives for increasing diversity on campus that includes outreach to community colleges. A two-year postgraduate fellowship in Design & Equity has been established and is currently being advertised. The chair of a college committee on Equity is chaired by an architecture faculty and is undertaking an operational emphasis to "cultivate a more welcoming, equitable and inclusive environment where diverse viewpoints shape the University's future." Furthermore, the program chair's request to increase pay for adjunct faculty, already approved by the dean and provost, is to help recruitment of potential new adjunct faculty representing minority groups.

5.5.3 The program described a robust plan to increase the diversity of students that includes partnering with university admissions programs to boost underrepresented populations. Additionally, the program has enhanced its work with NOMA-Nash, providing financial, facilities, equipment, and personnel space for Project Pipeline. The program is also in the process of establishing connections with the ACE program as well as setting up articulation agreements with local Community Colleges. The dean is actively searching for funding for scholarships for minority students. Finally, the Adult Degree Program attracts non-traditional students to the program; this is expected to diversify the student body over time.

5.5.4 As well as program initiatives such as the university "Diversity Week," the following policies and programs are in place to further Equal Opportunity at the college level:

Affirmative Action Plan: https://www.belmont.edu/hr/pdf/frequentlyaskedquestionsaboutaap2008-2009.pdf

Belmont University Initiative for Diversity & Inclusion: https://www.belmont.edu/diversity/

Welcome Home Diversity Council: https://www.belmont.edu/diversity/welcome-home/index.html

Office of Hope, Unity and Belonging (led by a VP-level administrator): https://news.belmont.edu/belmont-university-establishes-office-of-hope-unity-and-belonging/

University Response to Racism, Diversity, and Inclusive Excellence: this is the HUB and has numerous initiatives for hiring.
https://www.belmont.edu/mle/response/index.html

5.5.5 The University policy for faculty and staff is included as Section W of the Employee Handbook. Anyone covered by the policy seeking accommodation for the performance of their work must contact the Office of Human Resources. Students seeking accommodations are managed by the Office of Accessibility Services (https://www.belmont.edu/accessibility/) for assessment of the requests and determination of the applicable and appropriate accommodations. The program is also pro-actively obtaining adaptable studio furniture to accommodate differing abilities.

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 and physical resources.

☒ **Demonstrated**

2023 Team Analysis:
5.6.1 The program has the use of eight 12-person studios distributed into three A-frames that are clustered on both sides of Belmont Boulevard. The studios are open with demonstration movable walls and computer screens on the wall for digital instruction. Although most students do not have assigned desks yet, the program has demonstrated that the space is sufficient for interaction and learning by using a hot desk system. However, students are not allowed 24-hour access to the program's facilities. This is meant to facilitate student wellness and safety.

The fast growth of the program has forced the college to incorporate future space needs into their long-range strategic planning and expansion. The dean and provost both acknowledged the need for additional space in meetings during the visit.

5.6.2 There are small classrooms, a fabrication lab, and a computer lab in Hitch Hall, and an additional computer lab in the Annex. There is a lecture hall available in LCVA, as well as a gallery and a woodshop. Some of the program's courses are assigned to classrooms in other campus buildings. The program can also make use of several different large meeting spaces in Nashville for events.

5.6.3 The department's administrative suite is in newly renovated space in Hitch Hall along with some faculty offices. Other faculty offices are available in Gabhart Hall. All full-time faculty are assigned an individual office near their teaching spaces (APR p. 61).

5.6.4 The amount of space allocated to the department is currently manageable. Their studio space, computer labs, classrooms, fabrication lab, and woodshop meet the current pedagogical needs. Insufficient open hours in the woodshop, shared with other arts programs, was noted as a problem during the visit.

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.

☒ **In Progress**

2023 Team Analysis:
The program provided the evidence within the APR by including a proforma in Appendix W from 2020 that laid out the initial ten-year commitment of funds by the university for the program. However, that plan anticipated three full-time faculty plus a program chair, and a student body of 30 for AY 23-24. In reality, the condition for this year is five full-time faculty, four part-time faculty, and a student body of about 120. Clearly revenues have increased along with expenses, but the program would benefit from an up-to-date accounting and a balanced forecast for continued growth and its limits.

The program provided additional comments in the Oct. 9, 2023, clarification memo that the increased enrollment has already put the program into a positive revenue position much sooner than anticipated. Some of the funds have been able to be used in meeting the program's expanding facilities needs. This is a very positive picture, but it seems prudent to produce a new multi-year budget plan that reflects these facts.

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.

☒ **In Progress**

2023 Team Analysis:
The main library for the university, the Lila D. Bunch Library, is located just one block from Hitch Hall. There is no space identified in the library website for art and architecture; it is merely noted that "N" call numbers can be found on the first floor. There is no information regarding the extent of architecture holdings, and no mention of any plan for expanding the architecture stacks. In a site meeting the team confirmed an annual renewal program that is responsive to faculty input, but the focus is on digital information resources.

This condition is In Progress: the APR identifies Nicole Fox as a librarian that has been helpful to architecture faculty, but she is not identified as an "architecture librarian" or "a visual resource professional" on the staff page of the library website. Rather, she is identified as an "Online Learning Librarian." (https://www.belmont.edu/library/about/)

During the visit, Fox described processes for annual purchasing to keep up with program needs. She also described her involvement in visiting courses and explaining the resources that are available to students. Furthermore, though the physical collection is quite small, she informs students about availability through interlibrary loan. Students and faculty are encouraged to make suggestions and requests as part of architecture and design collection acquisition even though this practice has not been formalized by the CAD and the University and there was no assigned budget for this activity.

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.

☒ **Not Yet Met**

2023 Team Analysis:
The text published on the program website substantially conforms to the text of the *2020 Conditions* (p.12), but is incomplete. It was found here:
https://www.belmont.edu/academics/majors-programs/barch-architecture/

Further, there is no accreditation statement in the BU general catalog listing of the B.Arch. program:
https://catalog.belmont.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=13&poid=3695&hl=Architecture%252

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)

☒ **Met**

2023 Team Analysis:
Conditions for Accreditation, 2020 (a) and *Procedures for Accreditation, 2020* (c) are available through a link on the University website: https://www.belmont.edu/omore/accreditation.html#architecture
It is recommended that the program provide a more direct link from the Architecture landing page, which notes that it is currently in candidacy for accreditation but does not provide a link.

Previous *Conditions* and *Procedures* (b) and (d): not applicable

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.

☒ **Met**

2023 Team Analysis:
There are related themes woven into the curriculum that challenge students to be reflective and to plan well past graduation. The university's Office of Career and Professional Development has numerous resources for students and graduates, as well as Growth & Purpose for Students (GPS), which is a useful tool for students. The department now has an Architect Licensing Advisor available to counsel students on job placement and career planning. The APR indicates the availability of portfolio and resume workshops specific to the discipline, as well as a career fair. The full implementation of the planned Professional Advisory Board Mentorship Committee seems to be an important element to complete. However, with the program growth exceeding the planned enrollment, additional means to focus on career development may be needed.

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

☒ **Met**

2023 Team Analysis:
Belmont University list of academic majors includes Architecture - Architecture - Adult Degree, BArch; BArch; and BSAS. https://www.belmont.edu/academics/majors-programs/index.html Following that link for both of these majors is a link to Accreditation Info. https://www.belmont.edu/academics/majors-programs/barch-architecture/index.html

A drop-down menu provides information on NAAB and the following links:

a. N/A
b. N/A
c. https://www.belmont.edu/omore/accreditation.html
d. https://www.belmont.edu/omore/accreditation.html
e. https://www.belmont.edu/omore/accreditation.html
f. N/A
g. N/A
h. N/A
i. https://www.belmont.edu/omore/accreditation.html
j. A non-discrimination statement is provided on the website through this link, which is only found by searching for Legal Notices, or keywords such as equity. https://www.belmont.edu/notices/nondiscrimination.html An (additional link and contact phone number provides information to all students who have questions about diversity, equity and inclusion, including LGBT students: https://www.belmont.edu/askbu/categories/diversity-inclusion/lbgt-resources.html

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

☒ **Met**

2023 Team Analysis:
The APR provided links for application, admission, and financial aid through numerous links. These were verified by the team:

https://www.belmont.edu/admissions/first-year/apply.html

https://www.belmont.edu/academics/majors-programs/?search=&degree=Adult+Degree

https://www.belmont.edu/registrar/transfer/index.html

https://www.belmont.edu/omore/about/accreditation.html#architecture

https://www.belmont.edu/sfs/index.html

https://www.belmont.edu/omore/scholarships.html

Belmont does not accept any applicants with non-accredited degrees and does not have a policy on diversity goals that are specific to admissions (APR p. 67).

6.6 Student Financial Information <small>(*Guidelines*, p. 24)</small>

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.

☒ **Not Yet Met**

2023 Team Analysis:

6.6.1 The program response in the APR provides links to university websites on financial information, financial aid, and scholarships. The team verified that these university resources were clear.

Student Financial Services: https://www.belmont.edu/sfs/index.html

Financial Information: https://www.belmont.edu/sfs/cost/financial-info-booklet.html

Student Consumer Information: https://www.belmont.edu/sfs/cost/consumerinfo.html

Financial Aid: https://www.belmont.edu/sfs/aid/undergrad.html

Financial Aid Application: https://www.belmont.edu/sfs/aid/apply.html

Financial Aid Checklist: https://www.belmont.edu/sfs/aid/faqs.html

Student Loan Information: https://www.belmont.edu/sfs/loans/index.html

In meetings during the visit, it was acknowledged that financial aid and scholarships are major challenges ahead for the growing program to fulfill its mission.

6.6.2 Students reported that they understood quite clearly the cost of tuition and any other university fees but lacked clarity about scholarship opportunities. While there is an application for scholarships, there are extremely few awarded, and no information given on the process or the decision. One student reported applying for a scholarship available at the time and never heard back and therefore felt misled.

The APR stated that information on required supplies and materials specific to the architecture program is provided to prospect students verbally through information sessions and in orientation programs. The major expense is a computer and software, but there are also model materials and other supplies. The verbal communication previously described does not appear to be fully effective; some students reported being surprised by unanticipated costs. The program is currently providing free printing services, and funds are available for supplies needed for group work.

V. Appendices

Appendix 1. Conditions Met with Distinction

Not applicable

Appendix 2. Team SPC Matrix

As of the date of this visit, no course content has been formally assessed as part of the program's assessment plan. As a result, the team did not find evidence that demonstrates the program's compliance with Part II, Section 1.

Appendix 3. The Visiting Team

Team Chair, Educator Representative
Ann Marie Borys, Ph.D., AIA
Professor
University of Washington
Seattle, WA
amborys@uw.edu

Practitioner Representative
Samuel Mathau, AIA, APA
Principal
Mathau/Roche Design Group
San Francisco, CA
sam@mathauroche.com

Past NAAB Board Member Representative
Celeste Novak, FAIA, LEED AP
Principal
Celeste Allen Novak Design Consulting
Manassas, VA
734.846.3903
1066celeste@gmail.com

VI.   Report Signatures

Respectfully Submitted,

Ann Marie Borys
_____
Ann Marie Borys, Ph.D., AIA
Team Chair

Samuel Mathau
_____
Samuel Mathau, AIA, APA
Team Member

Celeste Novak
_____
Celeste Novak, FAIA, LEED AP
Team Member