

Frequently Asked Questions about Graduate Program Applications **- Master of Architecture and Master of Science in Architecture**

The Architecture faculty members are pleased to offer opportunities to learn and to develop skills for careers in one of the architecture graduate programs within The School of Architecture and Planning. Please review the frequently asked questions and answers below while you prepare your application.

What are the application evaluation criteria?

When we evaluate your application, we attempt to identify future students who:

- 1) have demonstrated the ability to succeed in their prior academic programs.
- 2) will excel in the academic program to which they seek admission.
- 3) possess qualities that will contribute to a community dedicated to, design and creativity, research and scholarship, teaching and learning.
- 4) have the capabilities needed to complete the program requirements in a timely manner.
- 5) show promise to make significant contributions in their future discipline or profession.

Each part of the application is an opportunity to demonstrate your qualification.

What should I consider when writing a Letter of Intent (Statement of Purpose)?

The **Letter of Intent** (or Statement of Purpose) is an opportunity to explain what you find important about your chosen field, to discuss what you hope to learn in the program, and to foresee the contribution that you will make with the knowledge and skills obtained in the graduate program.

For applicants to Master of Science in Architecture program, the Letter of Intent should describe the proposed topic of research for the applicant, why it is important, and why s/he wants to pursue it. Master of Science in Architecture program has two different options: Thesis option and Research/Practice (Non-thesis) option. For applicants who apply to M.S.Arch Research/Practice option, the option selection **MUST** be clearly indicated in the letter of intent.

How should I prepare Letters of Recommendation?

Requesting **Letters of Recommendation** is an opportunity to highlight your achievements under the direction or tutelage of professors, mentors, professional supervisors, etc. At least

one of the letters should come from a professor who taught you during your undergraduate course of study (and requesting both letters from former professors is perfectly acceptable).

Is there a minimum GPA (Grade Point Average) requirement?

We look for an undergraduate GPA of 3.0 or higher. Applications with a minimum GPA of no less than 3.0 in the applicant's last 60 semester credit hours of coursework (including all graduate and postgraduate coursework taken) will be reviewed for admission. Only in exceptional cases will we consider the applications of those with GPAs lower than 3.0.

Is GRE score required?

~~Yes, GRE score is required for all graduate programs (M.Arch2, M.Arch3, M.S.Arch) in the Department of Architecture.~~ We look for a cumulative score of 297. The requirement for GRE exam scores has been suspended for applications to spring, summer, fall 2022.

I am an applicant to the Master of Architecture programs. What should I consider when developing a Portfolio?

A **Portfolio** is required and extremely important part of all M.Arch2 and M.Arch3 applications. It should include evidence of recent creative work: personal, academic or professional. It is a means whereby the candidates can communicate the full range of their past experiences and future direction. Choose what you care about, what demonstrates your best achievements, and what is expressive of you.

We expect that the portfolio will be created solely by the applicant. The members of the admission committee are interested in the quality of the work submitted. We suggest that you select a limited number of examples that demonstrate your qualifications and capabilities in the strongest way possible. We assume that the images represent the actual quality of the original work with regards to line character, color, value, finish and other visual characteristics. The portfolio -- like all other parts of the application -- must be submitted digitally, via the application portal. While there is no strict requirement with regards to the format or the program that you use to create the portfolio, we recommend highly that you save it as a pdf file, and submit the pdf. Web-based portfolios will only be evaluated if their content is saved as a pdf file and submitted via the application portal.

For applicants to the Master of Architecture 2 program, the portfolio is an opportunity to demonstrate the quality of your analytical investigations or your architectural designs, including your graphic and model-making skills, your ability to integrate the technical requirements of a building in to a design, and your capability to produce presentations that successfully communicate an integrated design. If you have worked on a group project, or in a professional office, you might include work accomplished in those settings (but please

indicate clearly what *your personal* contribution was to the material included). Written descriptive text should accompany the images, but ought to be kept to a minimum.

For applicants to the Master of Architecture 3 program, we understand that you do not have previous education and training in architecture. However, the portfolio is an opportunity for you to demonstrate your creativity and skills, knowledge, aptitude and experience. In the past, successful applicants have included images of their drawings, paintings and sculptures, interior designs, graphic designs, furniture (including initial sketches, in-process photos, and photos of the final product), ceramics, jewelry, and photography. If what you include is the product of a group effort, please indicate clearly what *your personal* contribution was. Written descriptive text should accompany the images, but ought to be kept to a minimum.

I am an applicant to Master of Science in Architecture program. What should I consider when writing my Writing Sample?

The **Writing Sample** is an opportunity to demonstrate your ability to write an academic paper. As the Master of Science program is aimed at preparing students for careers in academic research, post-professional research, teaching, and consulting, the program stresses critical

writing and research methods. Your application, therefore, needs to reflect your abilities to successfully complete the degree. The writing sample may take the form of reports, essays, book reports, and research papers which you may have completed in previous coursework, on the job, or independently. You may prefer to select (or prepare) writing samples which apply and/or inform the subject you wish to study through the Master of Science program. All samples should display a command of accepted rules for written English grammar and punctuation. At least one of them should demonstrate the applicant's ability to: 1) propose a thesis and create a well-structured argument in support of that thesis, 2) select appropriate sources and use information to create that argument, and 3) cite sources appropriately, following academic standards for citations; APA (American Psychological Association) or CMS (Chicago Manual Style) format

Please limit your submission to no more than 3 writing samples and provide an introductory context for each (i.e., "This paper was written to...." or "This paper was written in response to...."). In some exceptional cases, the writing sample may communicate new knowledge from an applicant's research.

We look forward to receipt and review of your application.