Studio Culture (I.1.2) [Previously Condition #5]:

Over the past several years, CUArch has made a concerted effort to heighten the awareness of the Policy on Studio Culture with the School of Architecture and Planning. These efforts were undertaken to:

1- Disseminate the current policy
2- Review the policy for effectiveness
3- Determine what (if any) revisions are necessary

Several forums for discussion and presentation of the policy were planned and carried out with various members of the CUArch community, including CUArch faculty, administration, staff and students since the last NAAB Accreditation visit. The following describes these efforts in more detail.

In the Fall Semester of 2009, the policy was e-mailed to all students, faculty and staff, and was discussed at our school wide ‘Town Hall Meeting’ (a meeting where all studio students are brought together in the auditorium for school-wide discussions or announcements). This was repeated in Spring Semester 2010. In the Fall 2010, we increased our efforts, not only again e-mailing the policy but instituting a process whereby the policy was required to be discussed with students in all studio sections by each studio faculty member and/or year-level studio coordinator.

A student Studio Culture Committee was created following the NAAB visit; the committee works with faculty to further incorporate the policy into the studio setting. During the Summer of 2011, we expanded this to become the ‘Committee on Student Life,’ whose mission is to serve as a liaison between the School of Architecture faculty, administration and student to discuss and work towards ensuring the welfare of student life within the school of architecture. The committee is comprised of a senior faculty member chair, 2 additional faculty members, 2 student representatives, as well as a counselor from the University Counseling Center. The committee is currently chaired by Professor Julius Levine. The committee worked over several semesters to compile information and to prepare some draft revisions of the policy. That committee met with the administration at several points during the Fall 2010 semester. It was ultimately decided that the issue was not so much that any changes were necessary to the policy itself, but rather that awareness had been lax. For the Spring Semester 2011 we asked that the policy be included in all course syllabi and that the policy be discussed again at start of all studios by instructors and students. Work by the Committee on Student Life continued. The Studio Culture Policy was the sole subject of a Fall 2011 ‘Town Hall Meeting’ on August 31, 2011. In order to introduce the policy to new students, faculty and staff and to reiterate it to those continuing, we presented the entire policy to those in attendance and encouraged discussion for one hour. We also stated that
subsequent discussions will be conducted within the each studio section with the studio critics. In order to allow for a more focused conversation between students and faculty, we mandated that following the Town Hall presentation, each studio coordinator select a day in which the policy will be discussed with each studio section. It was requested that a discussion ensue so that students have the opportunity to share what they feel is working or not working with respect to the policy. Studio Coordinators were asked to summarize the conversation and then forward it to the administrative team. A meeting occurred on those results on October 6th. We continued the process whereby the policy was discussed with students in all studio sections by each studio faculty member and/or year-level studio coordinator. For Spring 2012 the policy was again included in all course syllabi. The administrative team measured compliance of this, and found conformance.

On Wednesday, December 7, 2011, “Studio Culture / Student Participation” was the primary agenda item in our monthly faculty meeting. The discussion was framed as a follow up to feedback received in the studio section discussions. Faculty contributed their own thoughts and suggestions for improving student participation and the studio culture of the school. Some of the items discussed were: Can we develop a “grievance” protocol in the Policy on Studio Culture, and are there any ways we could go even further in disseminating awareness of Studio Culture? The idea of a Studio Culture installation (discussed below) came out of that meeting. Further, we discussed how AIAS could be rejuvenated and reinforced, how can we more effectively foster student participation, leadership and sense of community within the school, and how we can develop orientation activities upon entry to the CUArch program (or every year) that helps engender a sense of community.

During the Fall and Spring semesters of the 2011-2012 academic year, individual class-wide advising sessions were held. These sessions were a forum where students provided feedback to the Assistant Dean for Student and Academic Affairs. These sessions were implemented as the administration felt students may feel more comfortable talking in a smaller group than in the school-wide town halls. It was also believed that students might raise issues specific to their class they may not mention in larger school-wide forums. The findings were then presented to the Associate Deans for follow-up and continued discussion.

We feel these various steps indicate that we have indeed instituted, as requested by NAAB, “a more interactive practice for educating the students about the positive aspects of the policy.”

During the Spring 2012 semester, CUArch faculty, administration, staff and students (led by AIAS) conceived of, designed, fabricated and installed a temporary installation in an effort to heighten the awareness of the Policy on Studio Culture with the School of Architecture and Planning. The team consisted of Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies Luis Boza, Assistant Professor Hollee Becker (AIAS Faculty Representative), Bethan Llewellyn-Yen (Visiting Assistant Professor and Exhibits Committee Chair), Ryan Nugent (AIAS President), Ryan McKibbin (Shop Coordinator) and several architecture students.

The installation is located in the main circulatory corridor / gallery in the Crough Center for Architectural Studies. The corridor is 80’-0” long and 8’-0” wide (see attached diagram and photo at the end of this report). The installation displays the four main points of the Policy on Studio Culture on the floor surface using laser cut, adhesive backed vinyl letters. Each letter is approximately 1’-6” high. The four main points span the length of the corridor and can be read in each direction of travel of the corridors as well as from the mezzanine above.

To accompany the vinyl letters, 18 posters were prepared to adorn the walls along the main corridor. Each poster features the image of a professional architect or architectural educator with
a quote pertaining to the role of the architect in the community or society (these are visible on the walls in the photo). The posters were intended to reinforce a connection between the roles of each person and their community – be it in the community of your peers within the school or as a professional in service to the larger society. Initially planned as temporary installation to be on display for two weeks, the installation has remained in place for the entire spring semester. Its unexpectedly high physical durability leads us to believe it can become a permanent display in the school. Comment on the installation has been considerable. It generated much discussion and provoked almost all students to consider the messages of studio culture. It also generated widespread commentary amongst faculty, staff, visiting jurors, alumni, visiting lecturers, etc. All in all, the reach and impact of this installation has been huge, and for very little actual cost.

Future Steps: The Associate Deans for Undergraduate and Graduate Studies, the Committee on Student Life, the AIAS and faculty have been working together to discuss, propose and implement suggests to strengthen student participation and leadership. These discussions are planned to occur over the summer and Fall of 2012 are intended to develop a specific set of action items to be implement over the next couple of academic years (2012-13, 2013-14).

NAAB also noted that the “high number of required hours and the limitations of the facilities” were impacting studio culture. Those, too, have been addressed, and will be reported on in following sections.

**Human Resources (I.2.1) [Previously Condition #6]:**

NAAB noted the need for greater or clearer administrative structure, for more staff, for better advising, and for better course evaluation timeliness.

The school has undergone an increase in size and complexity over the past decade. Between 2003 and 2012 the count of ‘regular’ employees – including both faculty and staff – has increased from 21 to 38. Multidisciplinary activity commenced (new programs in planning and sustainability), new graduate concentrations were introduced into the professional program in architecture, and new initiatives like our CUAdc community outreach group (Catholic University of America Design Collaborative) were begun. It was indeed time to address issues of greater or clearer administrative structure.

In May of 2009, just after NAAB’s visit, the school held a ‘mini-retreat’ on the issues of organizational structure and lines of communication. To lead the day-long mini-retreat, the school engaged a recognized organizational expert in the metropolitan region – Jacqueline Johnson of Jacqueline Johnson & Associates, LLC (JJ & A). Ms. Johnson not only ran the retreat, but had a prior series of meetings with several key groups of faculty, several groups of staff, a group of students, and the administrative team. The external review of our structure and procedures was very effective. A number of issues of concern (several of them regarding the specific performance of employees) were identified; the Dean and this consultant met a number of times confidentially.

The major outcome of that mini-retreat was the start of work on the creation of a series of chart options for a reorganization of the school’s lines of reporting, options that would better reflect the school’s new complexity and size. Ultimately, over the summer and the subsequent fall semester, 25 draft versions of organizational chart options were prepared and discussed by the strategic planning committee and the faculty & staff at large. All major variants for how a school of our type could be organized were researched, and examples of charts from other schools on campus
and peer programs in design nationally were discussed. These 25 draft versions definitively tracked the status of the existing organization and proposed substantive changes toward new organizational strategies.

The final version was accepted and implemented at the start of the Spring 2010 semester. It was entered as a motion containing several discrete steps, which could have been achieved at once or sequentially over time. The first proposed step reorganized aspects of our staff reporting, the Summer Institute, foreign programs, faculty coordination, advising, development efforts, CUAdc, and our Experiences high school program. It also established a new Center for Sustainable Design and a new position of ‘Associate Dean for Research’ – outgrowths of prior strategic planning efforts that had yet to be implemented. The second step proposed that the school’s faculty could ‘departmentalize’ in light of the new programs in planning and sustainability. Ultimately, the faculty and staff elected to implement the first phase of this reorganization, and leave departmentalization for future discussions. It was felt that the new programs were still establishing themselves and that departmentalization could be premature. It was decided that the faculty would continue to operate as a ‘faculty of the whole’ for the time being. (See attached organizational chart.) Overall, this reorganizational effort answered the questions and concerns about structure emerging from the NAAB visit. We have now have had two years to operate under this new chart, and it has changed many aspects of how the school communicates and functions.

Initially in the revision, staff members were asked to report as two working groups to the two Assistant Deans (one of these Assistant Dean positions has been created since the NAAB visit, and the chart clarified the tasks handled by each Assistant Dean). Prior to the revision, all staff had reported directly to the dean—a method that the growth of the school had made problematic. The change allowed greater cohesion between staff, greater sharing of tasks, and more operational efficiency. Weekly staff meetings of these two working groups of staff were instituted. The chart also established the possibility that professional staff could directly supervise other staff – a necessary development given the increasing size of the school.

After a year under that new structure regarding the Assistant Deans, one of them resigned from full-time activity at the school in order to give greater time to an enlarging professional practice (that person remains with us in a part-time capacity, still teaching and also overseeing our Experiences Program for high school students). In light of that resignation, we opened a search for a replacement Assistant Dean, but rearranged the two positions to make one of those positions function more as an ‘Office Manager/Chief of Staff’ who would supervise all staff. That title was determined to be “Assistant Dean for Administration.” The other Assistant Dean would handle predominantly student and academic affairs, and would not supervise staff actively. The rationales were several: we felt even better staff integration of duties would occur if only one person was responsible for staff supervision; and we felt it would further clarify who faculty and students turn to when having a staff-related question. A search was launched for this new Assistant Dean under those parameters. Numerous staff members as well as the existing Assistant Dean participated in the interview process. A hire was completed. The new Assistant Dean held a similar position in program management at Georgetown University, here in Washington DC, where they had supervised many staff and coordinated finances. All office staff and laboratory staff now report to that person. This change has been highly effective, verging on transformative on the level of day-to-day management. We are operating much more smoothly.

The reorganization also clarified the roles of the two Associate Deans – one directing the graduate programs and one directing the undergraduate programs. It was definitively made clear that the Associate Deans will handle faculty evaluations. Previously this had been done by the dean alone. This change allows those who are most familiar with the faculty work in courses to
conduct the faculty evaluations. The reorganization further clarified which committees and/or coordinating studio groups reported to which Associate Dean. The two Associate Deans also now handle all course scheduling and course assignments. Previously the dean had often been called upon to participate directly in aspects of those decisions. The Summer Institute and foreign programs had been overseen by independent directors, reporting to the Dean. Due to the reorganization, these tasks are now supervised in a dual reporting manner by the two Associate Deans. We had had many problems over the past few years with coordination of these functions, as they obviously impact academic decisions but also include many organizational/logistical aspects. This new reporting structure has greatly assisted in better integrating these functions into the academic programs. The Summer Institute is now being supervised by Julie Kim, a new tenure-track hire with extensive experience in academic administration (she had previously served as the Director of the Graduate Program at the University of Detroit-Mercy). CUAdc and our Experiences Program also now report to the Associate Deans.

Further, development efforts were consolidated and made to report directly to the dean. All facility concerns and issues are directed to the Assistant Dean for Administration. All financial, travel, and other administrative concerns are also directed to the Assistant Dean for Administration. Our ability to turn around reimbursements quickly has greatly increased.

In aggregate, these changes in structure have helped to distribute responsibility more equally amongst the school’s administrative team and have clarified our structure. Questions related to those issues have largely ended.

Another administrative assistant was added to the school’s staff in July of 2011. This position was funded by growth in the new MCRP and MSSD programs. This new person spends approximately ½ of their time in assisting the directors of those programs, and the other ½ on general administrative tasks for the entire school. Our ability to serve faculty and students of the programs has increased. Between this hire and the recently created new position of Assistant for Administration, we have augmented our staff by 2 FTE. We feel this addresses NAAB’s concern about our number of staff. Our staff has grown by 25% since the time of the NAAB visit (from 8 staff members to 10).

Advising has been a concern at the school for many years. Prior to the reorganization, faculty members were directly participating in the routine advising process, with mixed results. Consistency of advising became a major issue at the school, particularly given the increasing complexity of the programs and the new potential for joint degrees. The graduate concentrations in the M.Arch also had added considerable advising complexity to the program. The chart established definitively that core advising for undergraduates would be done by the Assistant Dean for Student and Academic Affairs. This person has broad experience in the area and with architectural curricula nationally, and has recently completed a Doctorate in Education. The Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies also participates in some upper-level advising, particularly when issues of considerable complexity or professional specificity emerge. Graduate advising is now done by the graduate Associate Dean directly, in concert with the concentration and program directors. Faculty members still participate with students as ‘career mentors’, but no longer do routine advising. These changes have been particularly successful. Complaints or concerns about advising have stopped completely. The reorganization also resulted in the upgrade of our registration function. One staff person (identified as an area of concern by our organizational consultant and surrounding which there had always been some performance-related issues) was separated from CUA, and a new job description was created for a ‘Student Records Manager.’ For this position, a person with professional credentials and experience in the area of student registration was hired, and now works closely with the Assistant Dean for Student
and Academic Affairs on all aspects of advising and registration. Again, complaints have decreased greatly.

Course evaluations are now processed exclusively by the two Associate Deans. Previously, these came by campus custom to the dean’s office directly, and that extra step always caused delays in getting this information back to the faculty in a timely manner. Now, the Associate Deans handle it directly, and communication with the faculty about course evaluations has improved. The Dean and the Associate Deans meet each semester to go over the results of the course evaluations, in order to examine how those results should be addressed with faculty during their performance reviews. Previously, that had been done largely by the dean alone as the school had been smaller and more manageable. We have not actively sought, beyond what faculty request normally, to change the actual questions being asked. The faculty have discussed this issue several times, but have decided that the questions cover the essential issues and provide effective feedback. The questionnaire gives students the chance to write at great length, and some students indeed provide very long commentaries.

The consolidation of all development activities under the dean has progressed acceptably, though the effort of late has been hampered somewhat by upper level administrative changes (the university’s VP of Development left CUA and a search was undertaken to fill that position; this has caused some delays in responding to donor’s gifts, etc.; a hire was made and the situation now is improving a great deal).

Overall this reorganization process has greatly assisted the school in handling its new complexity and size. Central administration officials at the university (such as in registration, student life, and the Provost’s Office) report that the school is now operating much more efficiently from a campus perspective.

Looking forward, the school is still interested in exploring further steps regarding its organization structure, and departmentalization remains on the agenda. At the regular Fall Faculty Retreat in August of 2010, David W. Hinson, FAIA, Head of the School of Architecture at Auburn University, was brought to our school to make a presentation on departmentalization nationally at various architecture schools that are moving – like us – toward greater multidisciplinary work. He was selected for this presentation as Auburn has an overall complexity in architecture similar to our school, and has recently launched a planning program. Auburn’s structure was discussed at some length at that faculty retreat. Subsequently, more research was conducted with Hinson’s help and disseminated to our faculty on the architectural organization of the University of New Mexico, Syracuse, North Carolina at Charlotte, the University of Miami, Tulane, and others. Whether to departmentalize or not is still under active discussion. Likely this will take several additional years to fully resolve. We are in no rush, and the school could remain as now currently configured for the foreseeable future.

Physical Resources (I.2.3) [Previously Condition #8]:

Since NAAB visited in February, 2009, three significant initiatives have been undertaken to address the crowding in our facility: 1) a competition to select an architect for a renovation/expansion of the Crough Center, 2) direct reduction in student headcount, and 3) curricular revisions to the accredited program. These three steps interact, at times reinforcing and at times mitigating one another. For example, the drive to do an expansion of the Crough Center will likely now face considerable delay due simply to an overall decline in enrollment coupled with a reduction in the number of studios required. In short, the school has become much, much
less crowded since February, 2009. We feel the program now is comfortably accommodated in
the current Crough Center, and that the best approach, at this point, to handling the school’s
longer term space needs will be to spend several years in a targeted fundraising effort related to
an addition, even as we simultaneously watch carefully to see if there are further changes in
enrollment trends. Certainly our physical needs are substantively different, and the trends are
substantively different, than the last time NAAB visited. We will address each of the three major
initiatives we have undertaken in some detail. We will also report on a number of other unrelated
improvements in our facilities.

1. University-Wide Discussions about the Renovation/Expansion of the Crough Center

The school was asked to initiate a process for hiring an architect to plan an addition to our Crough
Center facility. This was first real step toward what we hope will be a substantive upgrade in the
way our school is housed. This initiative came out of several years of discussion with the central
administration subsequent to NAAB’s last visit to campus. As recently as three years ago, the
school had a long history of uninterrupted growth, which made it a strong candidate for a
facilities upgrade.

Even prior to the NAAB’s 2009 Site Visit, the school and university had held many discussions
about the need to expand and partially renovate the Crough Center. The addition of our new
multidisciplinary programs, changes in teaching pedagogy (particularly regarding the computer),
new lab needs (such as CAD-CAM), greater storage needs, and continued faculty growth made
the step advisable – even beyond the issue of literal crowding of desks. Various air quality issues
(as duly noted by NAAB) and pervasive roof leaks affected the existing structure. Coupled with
the upsurge in enrollment in architecture, it became increasingly clear to everyone that major
facility investments would be required.

The idea of an addition has a long history. A 10,000 to 20,000 sq. ft. expansion to Crough on its
east side has been shown in campus master planning documents for quite some time – at least
since 2002. After receiving the VTR following the February 2009 visit, the Provost, University
Treasurer and Dean Ott met in the spring of 2010 to discuss how this proposal could be energized
and moved forward. While such an effort is unavoidably a long process, there was broad support
at the level of the central administration for dealing seriously with the facilities concerns
prevalent at Crough. Following that meeting, the facilities department began discussions with the
school and began drafting a series of schematic designs exploring additions in various
configurations. As a first step toward establishing a more defined program for an addition, the
school’s Assistant Dean conducted a comprehensive review of the existing programmatic spaces
in the Crough Center. The school’s Executive Development Board (our professional fundraising
and advisory group) discussed our facilities issues at both its Fall 2008 and Spring 2009
meetings, and a subcommittee of the board was established to begin working with the school’s
faculty ‘Facilities Committee’ on programming issues. Those groups met together several times
in 2009 and 2010. At the Fall 2010 board meeting, the subcommittee reported on that work as
well as various pricing scenarios and scheduling issues. The result was an informal timeline of
tasks for trying to move an addition project forward. Fundraising needs were also discussed
extensively. Prior to this, in the fall of 2009, the school held a major celebration related to the
20th-year anniversary of the original renovation of the Crough Center for use as an architecture
school (before becoming the architecture school in 1989, it had been the campus gym). All
groups of donors who originally participated in the creation of the Crough Center were invited
back to campus for a reception attended by several hundred students and alumni. Most of the
original donors attended and offered reflections. The anniversary event was also attended by the
President, Provost, Treasurer, and other university vice presidents. For the event, a 64-page
booklet was published by the school on the history, development, and future of the Crough
Center. It included articles on how the building was originally renovated, how it has changed and
been upgraded over the past 8 to 10 years, and how students in our Comprehensive Building
Design Studio in the spring of 2008 used an expansion of Crough as a studio program. One
thousand of these booklets were produced. They were distributed at the anniversary event and
sent to other alumni and donors.

Offsetting and slowing all of these steps, however, were two considerations: the massive national
recession began to occur and University President Father O’Connell made known his decision to
step down. The recession eventually necessitated a freeze on capital expenditures. As the
university began a search for a new president, any steps toward future-oriented major facilities
upgrades were naturally put on hold as well. Also, it became clear that any sort of fundraising
effort directed at the school’s alumni during a period of widespread unemployment in the design
disciplines would take additional time.

A new president, John Garvey, joined CUA in July of 2010. Discussions and actions related to
Crough continued. In November of 2010, Dean Ott and the new president met for a
comprehensive briefing on the needs of the school; facilities concerns were a major item. As a
result of that meeting, the school had strong support at the level of the central administration for
moving forward as soon as conditions could allow. As evidence of that commitment, the
university applied approximately $500,000 of bond funding to move forward with a full
replacement of the Crough Center’s roof. That replacement is now complete, and the school has
since been tight and dry. The building has had pervasive leaks for years, and this reroofing was a
critical step toward making the existing building fully weather-tight and ready for further
renovation/expansion work. This fundamental repair is the most major facilities step with Crough
since the addition of an elevator in 2005.

Numerous further meetings with the Provost and Treasurer occurred. On Friday, April 29th, 2011,
an important meeting was held between the President Garvey and four members of the school’s
Executive Development Board. Dean Ott also attended. The needs of the school regarding
facilities were discussed in great detail. Over the next few months more meetings occurred
between the school’s administration and the Provost and Treasurer. In the summer of 2011, it
was definitively determined that the school would explore the option of an addition, with
financial support for the planning process from the central administration, and studies of how to
proceed were undertaken. The subject was extensively discussed at the school’s Fall Faculty
Retreat of August 22nd, 2011.

Moving in parallel to these activities, the campus has been in process on a master planning
exercise (required periodically by the District of Columbia), and the school was asked to have
several of its faculty and the dean involved in the effort. The needs of the school regarding space
were discussed in that context as well. The master plan included, in generic form, several
surrounding options for expansion of various schools’ facilities near the Crough Center, showing
possible locations for space that could accommodate, for example, architecture, engineering or
nursing. The Engineering school, particularly, has developed a critical need for more space.
Various ways to move in concert were discussed, given the very close proximity of the two
schools on campus and their shared history (architecture was a department of Engineering for the
first 75 years of its existence).

Given that the master plan would not be granted approval until late Spring of 2012 and that it
would include no actual designations of specific schools for the various projected new academic
buildings on campus, our school was asked to undertake the search for an architect but to do so in
a quiet phase without public announcements of the results.
The faculty and the Executive Development Board developed a list of 100 possible firms. In October, 2011, and RFQ (request for qualifications) letter was sent by our school for an addition to the Crough Center to 26 architectural firms, both regionally and nationally, asking them to submit information on their ability to handle such an addition. The potential scope of the addition was stated to be approximately 20,000 sq. ft. (we have about 40,000 sq. ft. in our facility currently) – a sizable amount of new space that would fully transform how our programs could be offered. A committee was established composed of three members of the school’s administration, three members of the faculty, and four members of our Executive Development Board. 19 firms responded to the RFQ letter. The committee met and cut the list to 7, based on a review of the materials provided by the firms. Those 7 firms visited campus for interviews. The 7 were cut to 3, and those three firms were given compensation ($20,000 per firm, for a total expenditure of $60,000) to prepare a schematic design for an addition. Significantly, the central administration provided these substantial funds for the competition, indicating its full support of the effort. The 3 firms were ARO of New York City (Architecture Research Office), LTL Architects of New York City (Lewis, Tsurumaki, Lewis), and Gray/Organschi of New Haven Connecticut.

The competition began in December of 2011 and the results were presented on January 18th, 2012, with the first deliberations by the committee occurring immediately thereafter. While most aspects of the process to date were kept confidential, the school did announce on its website that it was having the presentations and that the event would be open to the entire school and other interested groups such as alumni. Several hundred people were in attendance. An electronic drop-box was established so the committee could obtain feedback from anyone in attendance. Dozens of commentaries were received and reviewed. Material related to the schemes was placed on the school’s website, to solicit further alumni commentary.

While the following information remains confidential and has not yet been announced publicly, we are providing it to NAAB at this time: *LTL Architects was selected.* The school was asked to hold this information confidential until such time as the District of Columbia approved the campus master plan. That approval was recently received. However, given enrollment issues to be detailed in the next section, we are still holding this information confidential. At this point, any chance for an addition will have to rely more heavily than ever upon fundraising efforts. It is highly unlikely that increases in tuition yield alone can justify such an addition at any point in the near future. The projected costs of the addition, again confidential at this point, are in the range of $5,000,000 to $7,000,000 with an unknown additional amount necessary to retrofit the current Crough Center.

Still, these are the most promising steps in facilities for the school since the original renovation of the Crough Center over 20 years ago. These steps have been the result of a massive effort on the part of the school to press its case.

As mentioned above, the school produced a 64-page booklet on the history, development, and future of the Crough Center. It included articles on how the building was originally renovated, how it has changed and been upgraded over the past 6 to 8 years, and how students in our Comprehensive Building Design Studio in the spring of 2008 used an expansion of Crough as a studio program. Given the new seriousness of the discussions for a new addition, we produced a companion volume to that booklet one year ago which detailed the curricular initiatives at the school over the past several years. It was our expectation once the competition was completed to produce yet a third volume detailing the results. That volume, in concert with the prior two, was intended to be the first step in the launching of a fundraising campaign toward moving forward with the addition. The school contracted with several major figures in architectural criticism to write essays discussing the results of the competition for use in that volume. We are also in
possession of ample documentation of the schemes from the three architects. It is still our hope to produce that third book—page galleys are essentially ready as of this writing. However, given the very recent discussions about enrollment, we are still waiting, in order to have further conversations with the central administration and advancement office. Aspects of the book may have to be recast. The two volumes already produced are too large to be appended to this report, but we would be happy to send the NAAB personnel reviewing this report a hard copy of each upon request.

Our Executive Development Board is aware of how recent enrollment issues are impacting the drive to an addition; the subject was a major issue of discussion at the Board’s spring meeting and will be again at the upcoming fall meeting.

The most recent discussions with the central administration have indicated that the incoming freshmen class in architecture would need to rise again into the range of 80 students and become stabilized at that point for a couple years in order to justify the addition.

2. Direct Reduction in Studio Student Headcount within the Crough Center

As an additional way of handling our spatial crowding, we began immediately and intentionally after the last NAAB visit to put in place better limits for admission to the program, resulting in a direct reduction in the number of studio students in the Crough Center. An unintentional impact of an even greater scale, however, has now appeared: enrollment decreases due to the ongoing recession. The two of these together have largely eliminated the sense of crowding in the building, greatly impacting the urgency of the drive toward doing an addition.

In cooperation with CUA’s Enrollment Management office and with the Provost’s office, we reduced the number of new freshmen and transfer students being admitted to the architecture program in fall 2009 and fall 2010. While this was fundamentally a step toward limiting overcrowding, it also had the side benefit of making our school somewhat more selective. A parallel effort was made in 2009 with the graduate program, with the sole intent of improving selectivity. At the time, these seemed like sensible steps, destined to raise the school’s academic profile.

While the school grew considerably in the first year or two of the recession, the length of this contraction has seen application trends reverse in an unanticipated way—something that few schools have been prepared for. Anecdotally, the school has heard from many of its peers in private architectural education of similar enrollment dips—some as severe as 50% or more (the trend is less clear at public institutions). Those we have the closest links with—private schools from Boston to Chicago—have mentioned such figures. It is a real, national trend that has unknown but likely substantive long-term implications. Since Catholic University is a private institution, with high tuition costs, it was likely that we would feel the effects of the slow economy at some point. The drop-off in enrollment initially was in our graduate program. Early in the recession, numbers in the graduate program increased dramatically, as B.S. Arch interns who were laid off returned to school to do something productive during that down time. Now that we are in the fourth year of this recession, it seems we have largely worked through that population, and now are seeing the opposite trend—students avoiding graduate training simply due to its added costs, particularly in terms of student loan load. Application rates to the school remain strong, but converting those applications into actual enrollees is now proving more challenging, particularly given the modest financial aid we have available. New during the past two years, however, is that now undergraduate enrolment is also clearly declining.
Below is a table showing the total headcount in the architecture program from the three years prior to the 2009 visit, from the subsequent three years, and a projection for next year:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Total Headcount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AY 2006 – 2007</td>
<td>441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 2007 – 2008</td>
<td>469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 2008 – 2009</td>
<td>520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(the time of the Spring 2009 NAAB visit)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 2009 – 2010</td>
<td>502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 2010 – 2011</td>
<td>469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 2011 – 2012</td>
<td>431</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(current total: 298 undergraduate and 133 graduate)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 2012 – 2013</td>
<td>402*</td>
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<td>(*projection: 265 undergraduate and 137 graduate)</td>
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Our headcount number of 431 in the academic year just ended is even lower than our total headcount in AY 2006 – 2007, which stood at 441. As the semester ended, we had approximately 90 fewer students on site than when NAAB last visited in AY 2008 – 2009 and cited the school for overcrowded facilities. Our projection for AY 2012 – 2013 is based on application numbers, deposits already received, and anticipated ‘melt’ that will occur within those deposits over the summer based on past years’ experience. We feel this projection is quite firm. However, if deviation does occur, we would expect it to be downward even further, given current and rapidly evolving stress in the financial aid market for students. CUA’s students are heavily dependent on loan availability. It is possible that we could see headcount drop below 400 in this coming academic year. Upon seeing this enrollment trend accelerate downward over the past couple years, the school began doing much greater graduate level recruitment. Our primary concern has to be with the graduate program’s size and stability, as it is our accredited degree. Given those recruitment efforts, the school saw its graduate applications rise noticeably this year, allowing us to project a modest increase in graduate enrollment that could slightly offset some of the undergraduate decline. For freshmen, we anticipate about 50 headcount for the Fall 2012 (we had 65 in Fall 2011). Despite the ‘bump’ that occurred at the start of the recession, we typically sought only to enroll about 80 freshmen. The highest number ever recorded in our school was 115 in AY 2008 – 2009, the very year that NAAB visited. The increase in enrollment seen at the start of the AY 2008 – 2009 was partially an artifact of a very large increase in freshmen applications and a very high rate of attendance amongst the accepted students. So, following national trends, we are indeed down by over 50% in freshmen from that high, but only by about 35% from where we would normally want to be given the size of our faculty, the diversification of our programs, and the historical heft of the school in the metropolitan region. The number of freshmen is, of course, a key figure in assessing headcount for future years; a dip of this sort in even one year has a tail that extends for four future years and possibly even for six years given the extent to which we use the undergraduate program as a feeder into our graduate program. A second consecutive year of enrolling only 50 freshmen could leave the school with a headcount of about 380 in AY 2013 – 2014. At that point, there would be no concerns remaining about crowding in Crough. It is incredibly hard to predict in this climate what future numbers might look like.

The results of this enrollment drop upon our perceptions of crowding have been immediate. Demand on critique spaces has lessened; there are no studios where students share desks (as had been the case in the freshman studio during the NAAB visit); most students now have a working desk and a lay-out desk available to them; all thesis students now have dedicated space; the auditorium more than effectively seats all of our students for our largest all-school lectures; all-school ‘town hall’ meetings have occurred in the auditorium without students needed to stand in back; seminars have their choice of small rooms in which to be held; and we were able to mount a major travelling exhibition on Tokyo’s architecture in our Miller Exhibition Space throughout much of the 2012 Spring semester without compromising jurying (during our time of highest
enrollment, our exhibit space had become, de facto, a constant jurying space). We were also able to hold two major symposia at the school over the past academic year that attracted large external audiences; both symposia were easily accommodated without interrupting the flow of the academic program. The drop in enrollment has had other spatial effects: intentionally the school has decided not to fill two of six possible faculty positions that were announced at the beginning of the fall (one of them a full-time visitor and the other a professor of practice). This decision was made in close consultation with the central administration. The school itself suggested this, as the number of students at this point just does not support the level of hiring we were proposing even nine months ago. We feel this is the prudent step to take. Funds were available in the school to make those hires had we chosen to do so. The ‘lines’ of these ‘non-hires’ were not removed from the school’s roster; they are simply being held vacant. So, the space crunch relating to faculty offices has been eased somewhat. In addition, the school was given three additional remote offices in Gibbons Hall, several hundred feet from the Crough Center. A number of visiting faculty, as well as our CUAdc outreach arm, are being housed there. At this point, we feel our faculty office situation has become acceptable. Space for office administrative staff remains very tight, though. We added one administrative assistant this year, and had to simply double the person up with one of our current staff.

The most pressing space issue at the school is that of the need for more diversified spaces (technology labs, specialized materials storage, general storage, growth of CAD-CAM equipment needs, specialized spaces for the MCRP and sustainability programs, dedicated office space for our new Sustainability Center, etc.). We also continue to have hopes to begin to offer an interiors program, a landscape architecture program, and a possible program in industrial design. The drive to realize an addition to Crough is still viable and will likely emerge from initiatives such as those. At this point, it would not be driven by a perception of crowding in the architecture program alone.

One important concern due to our changes to headcount is the potential loss of tuition revenue. Fewer students means lessened tuition intake, which could deleteriously impact the school’s budget. To date, these somewhat lower enrollment numbers have not impacted our budget. Our recent steps toward multidisciplinary activity in the school have partially protected us and the university from drops in architecture enrollment. In commencing a graduate planning program (MCRP) and a graduate sustainability program (MSSD) in 2007/2008, we strategically selected programs that did not include a studio component (the MCRP program does have one studio that enrolls a minimal number of students). Thus our drop in headcount in the architecture program was offset by a rise between these two new programs. While this addition of graduate students in planning and sustainability has not offset the loss of architecture students, it has helped. The school’s budget has not in fact declined over the past several years, but has risen instead.

3. Curricular Revisions in the Architecture Program

As a further method of reducing crowding in Crough, the architecture program has implemented curricular changes that have reduced the number of studio desks required. NAAB in the 2009 VTR noted the high number of design studios required in our curriculum, each of which consumes space within our building. As part of our curricular reform implemented in the Fall of 2010, we clarified our foundations sequence as one lecture course followed by two three-credit skills and analysis courses. We also eliminated one six-credit design studio from the sophomore year’s requirements (see section on curriculum under ‘Condition 12’). Prior to this change, students in the freshman year of the 4+2 architecture program required dedicated studio space in both the fall and spring semesters. With the curricular change, freshmen only have dedicated space in the spring. This change of requirements eliminates the need for approximately 80 studio
desks in the fall semester. Thus, the total studio desks effectively required by the architecture program curriculum has been reduced.

The impacts of this reduction in the number of desks required are visibly apparent in the program. Students and design faculty complaints about the cramped conditions have been much reduced. Another small effect related to this change is simply a reduction in the number of adjunct instructor faulty needed to be accommodated in the building (sophomore design coursework had a high proportion of part-time studio critics). Our ability to offer ‘hot-desk’ office space to instructors is much better now. That situation is not optimal, but it has become tolerable. A similar reduction in our roster of adjuncts teaching seminars has also occurred, due to enrollment decreases.

**Summary**

Joining together the impacts of reduced headcount and curricular change, the need for an addition has been momentarily mitigated to a large degree. Taking the headcount projection for AY 2012 – 2013 of 402 students and deducting 32 more (the decrease each semester from the curricular change discussed above) we get a comparative desk need of just 370 for the fall of 2012, compared to the figure of 520 at the time of NAAB’s last visit. In other words, the demand for studio desks has dropped by nearly 30%. Interestingly, this lessening of crowding roughly compares to what would have been achieved by building the addition. The addition would have represented an increase of gross area for the school of about 50%. Since a larger proportion of that addition would have been devoted to quite specialized spaces, the rough increase in generic studio space from the addition would have been about 30%, giving each studio student in a 520 person program approximately what we now have for each of our students in our smaller program needing seating equivalent to 370 students.

**Further General Facilities Comments & Changes:**

The school briefly explored how it could rent remote space in downtown Washington as one way of easing our space crunch. The school’s Executive Development Board discussed this at great length, and a board committee was formed to prepare data. A comprehensive list of over a dozen potential sites for such a center was prepared and priced, using the expertise of several members of the board who work in the real estate industry. Given the recession, space is indeed available in various appropriate – and even attractive – locations. The school explored this option not just due to our space crunch, but also as a pedagogical step. Six years ago we launched our CUAdc (Catholic University of America Design Collaborative) outreach arm, which has had great success in the community and could use more space. We also use many consultants from downtown for our Comprehensive Building Studio, and a downtown location for that studio effort was quite feasible. Our new planning program also had a great interest in a presence downtown. This option, however, was put on hold by the outgoing university president, who had understandable misgivings about remote locations – particularly given the duplications of services and security and the 24-hour-a-day character of architectural education. Given the recent possibility of an addition to Crough and reduced headcount, any further discussion of this option has now ended.

As mentioned above, the entire roof of Crough was replaced. This has largely ended leaks. All the tarps that had been hanging in various areas of the studio room are now gone. The new roof also improved the energy performance of the building: the prior roof was completely uninsulated; the new roof includes insulation.
A project to achieve better air quality and full functionality in our spray booth area was engineered, bid, and is now complete and functional. This has largely resolved much of the air quality issues within the building, especially on our lower level. The dust concerns in the woodshop have lessened, too. All ductwork has been entirely cleaned and properly refitted. Unfortunately, the low ceiling in this lower level space makes more advanced dust collection systems with larger ducts impractical. Given the fact that the overall situation has shown improvement, we are waiting at this point to see what additional impact the spray booth renovations have on air quality in the lower level and throughout the building generally.

Portable air conditioning units have now been installed in the computer lab area, and the issue of temperature control in that space is now effectively resolved. To accomplish this, we underwent a complete electrical upgrade of the space.

In the summer of 2009, the school was able to construct two new administrative offices for its Assistant Deans, using space that had previously been a rather underused faculty lounge. This was viewed as a critical step as the school wished to consolidate all advising functions in the offices of the Assistant Deans to create a ‘one-stop-advising’ area for students, with appropriate seating for students/guests (see further comments under Human Resources). Also, as part of that renovation, a new faculty Xerox area was constructed utilizing and reconfiguring space that had previously been wasted as a disused hallway. Also, two existing but underused ‘crit-cube’ areas were entirely reconfigured and expanded in size. New lighting, pin-up surfaces, furniture, and other upgrades were also made in these areas. These crit-cubes now function much more effectively and have substantially improved our critique/jury situation. These summer of 2009 upgrades required special approval from the central administration, given the existence of a capital freeze.

A mid-size storage room was converted to become a high-end computer lab, where GIS and other complex software can be accessed. This new computer lab has been a great addition to our facility. Access to the room is controlled by key-card reader, restricting its use to students in specific coursework and other specific projects.

Our 3D Printer Room was reconfigured to better utilize its space, allowing the purchase of yet another, larger, next-generation 3D printer.

Professional Degrees and Curriculum (II.2.2) [Previously Condition #12]:

NAAB noted the relatively heavy credit hour load of 198 credits necessary for the school’s 4+2 track in architecture, and also some confusion over whether or not the school truly ‘required’ 45 credits outside of architectural studies. Addressing these issues was straightforward, and this concern has now been eliminated.

A revised curriculum was prepared by the program’s curriculum committee and approved by the faculty. It was implemented in the Fall of 2010. (See attached Curricular Charts showing the prior and new curricula.) These changes reduced the number of required credits for the 4+2 track from 198 to 186 – a reduction of twelve credits.

One six-credit-hour sophomore year-level design studio was eliminated, an architectural concentration seminar in the graduate track was eliminated, and outside elective requirements were changed. As the chart shows, the program now definitively requires that 45 credits be
completed outside of architectural studies. Every student in the 4+2 track is now required to do the amount of non-architecture credits as mandated by NAAB.

Various other changes were also made. An introductory lecture course in general topics in architecture for freshmen was developed. A new site planning course was placed in the 5th year of the 6-year track. Consolidations were made in the number of structures courses offered at the undergraduate level. An additional course in Construction methods was developed. Several of these changes were made in response to some of the specific performance criterion issues raised by NAAB.

Overall, we feel these changes have opened up greater flexibility in our program. Undergraduates now can consider minors outside of architecture. Students are currently pursuing minors in math, psychology, art, philosophy, and theology, to name a few. The less credit-hour-intensive curriculum gives our students a greater proportion of their time for exploration of the various other disciplines taught on campus.
ENGAGE & BE ACTIVE CITIZENS WITH THE SCHOOL, THE UNIVERSITY AND THE COMMUNITY
ENHANCE & MAINTAIN THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL MEMBERS OF THE CUARCH COMMUNITY
UNDERSTAND THE IMPACTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF YOUR BEHAVIORS AND ACTIONS
WORK TO UPHOLD AN ETHICAL & PROFESSIONAL ENVIRONMENT FOR THE CUARCH COMMUNITY

ENGAGED LEANING TEXT
Letters are to be cut from adhesive backing using CNC vinyl cutter. Installation of letters will require precise dimensioning to ensure proper placement and alignment.

STUDIO CULTURE INSTALLATION
CROSSCENTRE FOR ARCHITECTURAL STUDIES