

CONFIDENTIAL

## **Canberra Accord on Architectural Education**

Type of Report: **Periodic Review**

Name of Accreditation/Validation/Recognition System Reviewed:

**NATIONAL ARCHITECTURAL ACCREDITING BOARD, USA (NAAB)**

---

Dates of Review Visit(s):

**02 – 08 March 2013**

Date of Review Report:

**15 April 2013**

Status/Edition: (draft/final/confirmed)

**Review Team Draft**

## **B. 1. Introduction**

### **a) Summary**

The periodic review of the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB) of the United States of America was scheduled for 2013 as a result of decisions made by the Canberra Accord signatories. Following due notice by the Canberra Accord Secretariat, it was agreed that the accreditation visit to Judson University, Elgin, 01 – 06 March 2013, would serve as a sample visit to an educational institution, followed by meetings with NAAB directors and staff in Washington DC, 07 – 09 March 2013.

Team members for the periodic review were selected by the Canberra Accord Secretariat and approved by the NAAB in early November 2012. Nominated by the Australian Institute of Architects and representing architectural education was Prof Stephen Loo, Professor of Architecture at the University of Tasmania and Chair of the National Education Committee of the Australian Institute of Architects, and nominated by the Commonwealth Association of Architects (CAA) and representing architectural practice was Dr. Jaco Wasserfall, practicing architect from Windhoek, Namibia.

Having met in Elgin on Friday evening, 01 March 2013, the Review Team morning joined the NAAB Visiting Team Chair and Members at the Department of Architecture, Judson University, for part of the five-day review for continuing accreditation of its NAAB-accredited Master of Architecture program. A report of the visit is included in this report in section B.4 Commentary, item d.

The Review Team left for Washington DC on Wednesday morning, 06 March 2013. Consultations were held with the NAAB Executive Director and staff the next morning, whereafter meetings of the NAAB Executive Committee and Accreditation Review Conference Task Force were observed.

On the last day of the review, the Team observed a NAAB Directors Meeting and concluded with a debriefing and Q/A session with the Directors at the Willard InterContinental Hotel.

The Canberra Accord Review Team wishes to record its sincere appreciation to the Dean, Faculty, Staff, and Students of the Judson University's Department of Architecture whose hospitality and response to enquiries was exemplary in all respects. We also would like to thank the NAAB Executive Director, Ms. Andrea Rutledge, CAE, the NAAB Executive Committee and Board, staff and other representatives for their courtesy, helpfulness, cooperation, openness to discussion, and willingness to provide additional information.

Finally, the Review Team wishes in particular to commend Douglas L Steidl, FAIA for the enthusiasm, goodwill, diligence and overall consideration with which he fulfilled his role as NAAB visit facilitator.

**b) Reviewers**

**Prof Stephen Loo**

*Educator Member*

School of Architecture & Design  
University of Tasmania  
Locked Bag 1323  
Launceston 7250  
Tasmania, AUSTRALIA  
Tel: +61-3 6324 4475  
Fax: +61-3 6324 4477  
Mobile: +61-418 179 259  
Email: [Stephen.Loo@utas.edu.au](mailto:Stephen.Loo@utas.edu.au)

**Dr Jaco Wasserfall**

*Practitioner Member*

Wasserfall Munting Architects  
43 Schanzen Road  
PO Box 24369  
Windhoek 9000  
NAMIBIA  
Tel: +264-61 230271  
Fax: +264-61 230272  
Mobile: +264-81 1247601  
Email: [jaco@wasserfallmunting.com](mailto:jaco@wasserfallmunting.com)

**B. 2. Compliance**

**a) Recommendation to Canberra Accord signatory systems:**

*CONFIDENTIAL RECOMMENDATION on a separate page.*

**b) Operational and educational output standards:**

*CONFIDENTIAL RECOMMENDATION on a separate page.*

**c) Compliance with criteria for substantial equivalence:**

*CONFIDENTIAL RECOMMENDATION on a separate page.*

### **B. 3. Characteristics, Principles and Criteria for Assessing Substantial Equivalency**

#### **I. General Characteristics**

Organizations running accreditation/validation/recognition systems covered by the Accord are expected to have the following general characteristics:

- a) be named organizations (authorities, agencies, or institutions) that are representative of the architecture profession and which have statutory powers or recognized professional authority for accrediting/validating/recognizing program/mes designed to satisfy the academic requirements for admission to the profession in the locality where accreditation/validation/recognition takes place, subject to additional requirements imposed by local regulations and practice requirements;**

#### ***MET***

The Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (ACSA), the American Institute of Architects (AIA), and the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) established the NAAB in 1940 and gave it authority to accredit schools of architecture nationally.

The NAAB was independently incorporated in 1967 in the District of Columbia as a non-profit organization.

It is the only agency in the United States recognized by NCARB and its member boards as having the authority to accredit professional degree programs in architecture.

- b) be independent of the academic institutions, professional organizations, and government agencies delivering accredited/validated/recognized program/mes within their jurisdiction;**

#### ***MET***

The NAAB is an independently incorporated, non-profit organization with tax-exempt status under 26 USC § 501(c)(3).

- c) have an active, robust accreditation/validation/recognition system in place, with established processes, procedures, and practices that are well-documented;**

#### ***MET***

Responsible for accreditation of professional degree programs in architecture since 1945, the NAAB has reviewed its conditions and procedures for accreditation regularly since 1975.

The most recent revision of The NAAB Conditions for Accreditation was completed in 2009.

The most recent revision of The NAAB Procedures for Accreditation was completed in 2012.

- d) have a record of accomplishment in accreditation/validation/recognition with sufficient experience and magnitude of operation (normally a minimum of five programs over at least seven years).**

***MET***

The NAAB has been accrediting programs in architecture for more than 65 years. There are 151 NAAB-accredited programs at 120 institutions as of December 31, 2012.

## **II. Common Agreed Principles**

*NOTE: Evidence cited as the basis for recommendations in this section is found in the NAAB Rules of the Board, 2009 Conditions, 2012 Procedures, Restructuring the NAAB – These documents can be found on [www.naab.org](http://www.naab.org).*

Systems for the accreditation/validation/recognition of architecture program/mes are expected to be underpinned by common agreed principles such as:

- a) the system must operate at all times in accordance with a high standard of professionalism, ethics, and objectivity;**

***MET***

Conflict of Interest disclosure forms have to be filed annually by all NAAB directors, officers, and staff. Directors and officers are furthermore required to sign forms annually that affirm their understanding of their fiduciary duties.

There are well-formulated conflict of interest policies integrated into the NAAB accreditation model, both in terms of definitions and the procedures required for disclosing and managing such conflicts.

**b) the process must be transparent and consistent;**

***MET***

The NAAB has formal policies and procedures enabling programs:

- to approve visiting team chairs and team members;
- to review the Visiting Team Report for corrections of fact;
- to review the Visiting Team Report and prepare an optional response, which is sent to the board as part of the final review;
- to request reconsideration of a decision on a term of accreditation;
- to request an appeal of a decision not to approve a reconsideration request.

Once final, all decisions are published in *The Annual Report on Accreditation in Architecture Education*. This document is available online.

All decisions of the NAAB are made in accordance with the published procedures in effect at the time of the visit. The NAAB has the discretion to waive the procedures if doing so would be to the benefit of the program/me and accreditation.

Revised Conditions and Procedures documents are made available for public comment for 120 days prior to final adoption.

**c) the activities must be conducted in relation to individual program/mes in confidence and with firmly established procedures and conditions for objective and consistent evaluation;**

***MET***

The NAAB's procedures are routinely benchmarked against best practices in accreditation.

**d) those involved in the accreditation/validation/recognition process must be knowledgeable and competent in matters related to architectural accreditation/validation/recognition, education, and practice;**

***MET***

Individuals to the visiting team member pool are nominated by all four organizations that serve the profession of architecture: AIA, AIAS, ACSA, and NCARB. Those nominated by AIA, ACSA, and NCARB are eligible to serve on visiting teams for a period of four years; those nominated by AIAS serve for only one year. The nominating agencies are expected to verify that these individuals are knowledgeable and competent in matters related to architecture accreditation, education, and practice.

All nominated team members are required to complete online and face-to-face training before being assigned to a visiting team.

Before leading a visit for the first time, all visiting team chairs are required to complete online and face-to-face training specifically designed for team chairs.

All team members and team chairs are required to complete annual training to learn about changes in procedures or practices.

All newly elected NAAB directors attend new director orientation prior to beginning their terms of service.

Additional training is provided to directors throughout the year during regularly scheduled board meetings

- e) accreditation/validation/recognition is of individual program/mes/academic awards/qualifications and not of institutions;**

***MET***

The NAAB has been accrediting individual programs in architecture since 1975.

- f) evaluations of specified academic program/mes are conducted by peer reviewers and must include review of the program/me's self-evaluation documents, a site visit, and inspection of student work;**

***MET***

Visiting teams for continuing accreditation are composed of at least four people representing the academy (ACSA), the profession (AIA), students (AIAS), and registration boards (NCARB).

The preparation and submission of a self-evaluation document, or Architecture Program Report (APR), initiates all visit sequences. The chair and all visiting team members review the APR prior to the visit. The team visit includes meetings with key program and institutional leaders, the review of policies and procedures, and the review of student work.

- g) the standard of students' work should be the main criterion in determining accreditation/validation/recognition;**

***MET***

The *NAAB Conditions for Accreditation* have emphasized self-assessment and student performance as central elements of the NAAB model since 1975. Review of student work to determine whether all graduates are achieving the defined learning outcomes is the principal criterion for NAAB accreditation.

- h) levels of physical, financial, human, and information resources should be appropriate to the context of the institution.**

***MET***

The NAAB standards include requirements for human, administrative, physical, financial, and information resources that are appropriate to the context of the institution. Fixed empirical standards were eliminated from the NAAB Conditions in 2009.

**III. Criteria for Accreditation/Validation/Recognition**

*NOTE: Evidence cited as the basis for recommendations in this section is found in the 2009 NAAB Conditions for Accreditation, and the 2012 NAAB Procedures for Accreditation – These documents can be found on [www.naab.org](http://www.naab.org).*

The criteria for accreditation/validation/recognition should address the following:

**a) a suitable environment to deliver the program/me;**

***MET***

2009 Conditions: I.2.1-I.2.5 – Resources

**b) adequate leadership for the program/me;**

***MET***

2009 Conditions: I.2.2 – Administrative Structure

**c) suitably qualified people teaching in the program/me;**

***MET***

2009 Conditions: I.2.3 – Human Resources and Human Resource Development

2009 Conditions: I.3.2 – Faculty Credentials Matrix

**d) a curriculum providing a broad preparation for architectural practice;**

***MET***

2009 Conditions: II.1 – Student Performance Criteria

2009 Conditions: II.2.1 – Professional Degrees and Curriculum

- e) **appropriate entry, progression, and exit standards;**

*MET*

2009 Conditions: II.2.1 – Professional Degrees and Curriculum

2009 Conditions: II.3 – Evaluation of Preparatory and Pre-professional Education

- f) **adequate human, physical, and financial resources to support the program/me;**

*MET*

2009 Conditions: I.2 – Resources

- g) **periodic re-evaluation to maintain accreditation/validation/recognition status;**

*MET*

2012 Procedures – Sections 2-5

- h) **a period of academic study at, or in association with, a university/tertiary-level institution sufficient to demonstrate skills, abilities, attitudes and knowledge at a defined standard adequate for initial entry to the architecture profession; in order to gain the balanced acquisition of subjects and capabilities, this period of academic study should be not less than the equivalent of five years full-time studies.**

*MET*

2009 Conditions: II.2.1 – Professional Degrees and Curriculum

#### **IV. International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) *Guidelines of Good Practice***

*NOTE: Evidence cited as the basis for recommendations in this section is found in the NAAB Mission, Vision, & Values Statements approved October 21, 2011, the NAAB Rules of the Board, the 2009 NAAB Conditions for Accreditation, the 2012 NAAB Procedures for Accreditation, and the 2010 NAAB Study of Accredited Architectural Education – see these documents at [www.naab.org](http://www.naab.org).*

As External Quality Assurance Agencies (EQAA), signatory systems should embrace the key principles of the *Guidelines of Good Practice* (2005 ed.).

The EQAA:

- a) has a written mission statement or set of objectives that takes into account its cultural and historical context.**

***MET***

Mission, Vision, & Values Statements approved October 21, 2011

- b) has adequate and accessible human and financial resources to conduct external evaluation effectively and efficiently in accordance with its mission statement and its methodological approach.**

***MET***

The NAAB has a staff complement of six, of which four are assigned to accreditation activities. Three are full-time and one is part-time. The fiscal year 2013 operating budget for accreditation activities is US\$1.377 million

- c) has a system of continuous quality assurance of its own activities that emphasizes flexibility in response to the changing nature of higher education, the effectiveness of its operations, and its contribution towards the achievement of its objectives.**

***MET***

The NAAB has a standing Assessment and Evaluation Committee, the membership and responsibilities of which are defined in *The Rules of the Board*, page 8.

Every five years, the NAAB hosts an Accreditation Review Conference to consider all proposed changes to the Conditions for Accreditation. The conference includes participants from the AIA, AIAS, ACSA, NCARB, the NAAB directors, members of the public, and representatives from related professional societies.

- d) informs and responds to the public in accordance with applicable legislation and the cultural context of the EQAA.**

***MET***

The NAAB upholds an active presence through its website, [www.naab.org](http://www.naab.org). The NAAB maintains a quarterly newsletter and a presence on Facebook and Twitter. In addition, the NAAB retains two general email accounts that are available to the public: [info@naab.org](mailto:info@naab.org) and [forum@naab.org](mailto:forum@naab.org).

- e) **recognizes that institutional and programmatic quality and quality assurance are primarily the responsibility of the higher education institutions themselves; respects the academic autonomy, identity and integrity of the institutions or programs; applies standards or criteria that have been subject to reasonable consultation with stakeholders; and aims to contribute to both quality improvement and accountability of the institution.**

**MET**

*The Study of Accredited Architectural Education* was commissioned in 2010 and completed by the NAAB in 2012. This study serves as the basis for review and evaluation of other proposals and recommendations for revisions and additions to *The Condition for Accreditation*.

The NAAB executive director contributes to *Design Intelligence*, a publication of The Design Futures Council.

- f) **has documents that indicate clearly what the EQAA expects of the institution.**

**MET**

The *2009 NAAB Conditions for Accreditation* and the *2012 NAAB Procedures for Accreditation* outline, respectively, the requirements that an accredited degree program must meet and procedures that they and the visiting teams must follow in order to demonstrate (a) the achievement of minimum standards and (b) a uniform accrediting process.

- g) **has documentation concerning self-evaluation which explains the purposes, procedures, process and expectations in the self-evaluation process. The documents also include the standards used, the decision criteria, the reporting format, and other information needed by the higher education institution.**

**MET**

The NAAB's Assessment and Evaluation Committee maintains a multi-year work plan that includes both internal and external assessment.

- h) **has clear documentation concerning the external evaluation that states the standards used, assessment methods and processes, decision criteria, and other information necessary for external review.**

***MET***

The NAAB's Assessment and Evaluation Committee maintains a multi-year work plan that includes both internal and external assessment.

- i) evaluations address both the higher education institution's own self-assessment and external reference points, such as judgments by knowledgeable peers or relevant legislation.**

***MET***

The NAAB routinely benchmarks its operations against best practices within the realm of specialized and professional accrediting agencies. This is done through membership in the Association of Professional and Specialized Accreditors (ASPA).

- j) has appropriate methods and policies for appeals.**

***MET***

2012 Procedures: Sections 13-14.

- k) collaborates with other EQAAs, if possible, in areas such as exchange of good practices, capacity building, review of decisions, provision of transnational education, joint projects, and staff exchanges.**

***MET***

The NAAB supports a mutual recognition agreement between NCARB and the Canadian Architectural Certification Board - *Conseil Canadien de Certification en Architecture (CACB-CCCA)*. Representatives from each agency regularly attend the meetings of the other. The NAAB trains CACB-CCCA visiting team chairs and, if asked, provides team members for visits to Canadian programs.

The NAAB is an original signatory member of the Canberra Accord and currently serves as the Secretariat for the Accord.

The NAAB has a memorandum of understanding with the *Agencia de Calidad Acreditacion y Prospectiva de las Universidades de Madrid (ACAP)* to exchange best practices and to provide technical assistance to ACAP.

The NAAB is an active member of ASPA and exchanges information and best practices with its fellow member agencies.

- l) has policies relating to both imported and exported higher education.**

N/A

## V. UNESCO-UIA *Charter for Architectural Education*

*NOTE: Evidence cited as the basis for recommendations in this section is found in the 2009 NAAB Conditions for Accreditation, Part II.1.1, and the NAAB Compliance Matrix – see these documents at [www.naab.org](http://www.naab.org).*

A balance between benchmarking appropriate international standards and encouraging a variety of approach are central to the principles of the Accord.

- In any system of accreditation/validation/recognition it is of prime importance to establish the standards of achievement to be attained and the means of assessment through peer group review.
- Of equal importance is the need to encourage diversity, innovation, and development.

Signatory systems should ensure the acquisition of generic student skills, knowledge, and competencies including the following, identified in the *Charter*:

### **a) An ability to create architectural designs that satisfy both aesthetic and technical requirements.**

*MET*

Evidence for this recommendation was found in NAAB Student Performance Criteria A.2 Design Thinking Skills, A.4 Technical Documentation, A.6 Fundamental Design Skills, and B.6 Comprehensive Design.

### **b) An adequate knowledge of the history and theories of architecture and the related arts, technologies, and human sciences.**

*MET*

Evidence for this recommendation was found in NAAB Student Performance Criteria A.7 Use of Precedents, A.8 Ordering Systems Skills, and A.9 Historical Traditions and Global Culture.

### **c) Knowledge of the fine arts as an influence on the quality of architectural design.**

*MET*

Evidence for this recommendation was found in NAAB Student Performance Criteria A.9 Historical Traditions and Global Culture.

- d) An adequate knowledge of urban design, planning, and the skills involved in the planning process.**

***MET***

Evidence for this recommendation was found in NAAB Student Performance Criteria C.7 Legal Responsibilities, and C.9 Community and Social Responsibility.

- e) An understanding of the relationship between people and buildings, and between buildings and their environment, and of the need to relate buildings and the spaces between them to human needs and scale.**

***MET***

Evidence for this recommendation was found in NAAB Student Performance Criteria A.10 Cultural Diversity, B.2 Accessibility, and C.2 Human Behavior.

- f) An understanding of the profession of architecture and the role of the architect in society, in particular in preparing briefs that take into account social factors.**

***MET***

Evidence for this recommendation was found in NAAB Student Performance Criteria B.1 Pre-Design, B.7 Financial Considerations, C.3 Client Role in Architecture, C.4 Project Management, C.5 Practice Management, C.7 Legal Responsibilities, and C.9 Community and Social Responsibility.

- g) An understanding of the methods of investigation and preparation of the brief for a design project.**

***MET***

Evidence for this recommendation was found in NAAB Student Performance Criteria A.5 Investigative Skills, A.7 Use of Precedents, A.8 Ordering Systems Skills, A.9 Historical Traditions and Global Culture, A.11 Applied Research, and B.1 Pre-Design.

- h) An understanding of the structural design, constructional, and engineering problems associated with building design.**

***MET***

Evidence for this recommendation was found in NAAB Student Performance Criteria B.9 Structural Systems, and B.12 Building Materials and Assemblies.

- i) An adequate knowledge of physical problems and technologies and of the function of buildings so as to provide them with internal conditions of comfort and protection against the climate.**

***MET***

Evidence for this recommendation was found in NAAB Student Performance Criteria B.5 Life Safety, B.8 Environmental Systems, B.10 Building Envelope Systems, B.11 Building Service Systems, and B.12 Building Materials and Assemblies.

- j) The design skills necessary to meet building users' requirements within the constraints imposed by cost factors and building regulations.**

***MET***

Evidence for this recommendation was found in NAAB Student Performance Criteria B.7 Financial Considerations.

- k) An adequate knowledge of the industries, organizations, regulations, and procedures involved in translating design concepts into buildings and integrating plans into overall planning.**

***MET***

Evidence for this recommendation was found in NAAB Student Performance Criteria B.2 Accessibility, B.3 Sustainability, B.4 Site Design, C.4 Project Management, C.5 Practice Management, C.7 Legal Responsibilities, and C.8 Ethics and Professional Judgment.

- l) Awareness of responsibilities toward human, social, cultural, urban, architectural, and environmental values, as well as architectural heritage.**

***MET***

Evidence for this recommendation was found in NAAB Student Performance Criteria A.7 Use of Precedents, A.9 Historical Traditions and Global Culture, A.10 Cultural Diversity, B.2 Accessibility, B.3 Sustainability, C.2 Human Behavior, and C.9 Community and Social Responsibility.

- m) Adequate knowledge of the means of achieving ecologically sustainable design and environmental conservation and rehabilitation.**

***MET***

Evidence for this recommendation was found in NAAB Student Performance Criteria B.3 Sustainability, B.10 Building Envelope Systems, B.11 Building Services Systems, and C.7 Legal Responsibilities.

- n) Development of a creative competence in building techniques, founded on a comprehensive understanding of the disciplines and construction methods related to architecture.**

***MET***

Evidence for this recommendation was found in NAAB Student Performance Criteria A.6 Fundamental Design Skills, B.4 Site Design, B.5 Life Safety, B.6 Comprehensive Design, B.8 Environmental Design, B.9 Structural Systems, B.10 Building Envelope Systems, B.11 Building Service Systems, and B.12 Building Materials and Assemblies.

- o) Adequate knowledge of project financing, project management, cost control, and methods of project delivery.**

***MET***

Evidence for this recommendation was found in NAAB Student Performance Criteria B.7 Financial Considerations, C.3 Client Role in Architecture, C.4 Project Management, and C.5 Practice Management.

- p) Training in research techniques as an inherent part of architectural learning, for both students and teachers.**

***MET***

Evidence for this recommendation was found in NAAB Student Performance Criteria A.11 Applied Research, and C.1 Collaboration.

#### **B. 4. Commentary**

- a) Self evaluation by signatory system**  
*[Brief comments on documents provided]*

There was extensive documentation provided to the CA Review Team before and during the signatory review visit. The Review Team received a self-evaluation document "*NAAB Demonstration of Compliance with the Characteristics, Principles and Criteria for Assessing Substantial Equivalency*" (22 January 2013), which is a comprehensive report that includes:

- Background to the NAAB, including 1940 Founding Agreement, Vision, Values, Composition, and Scope of Activity
- Compliance Matrix aligning Canberra Accord Rules and Procedures and Criteria/Conditions with the respective descriptions of NAAB Compliance, and References/Citations to NAAB Documents

The document also highlights the perceived challenges to the NAAB system and considerations for the future.

The self-evaluation provided by NAAB has clearly articulated where information pertaining to compliance to CA criteria can be found, greatly assisting the Review Team in their evaluation during the paper audit, as well as providing guidance in framing questions and discussions during the ~~validation~~ visit.

**b) Refer to any changes to system mapped against Accord compliance criteria (see section 1.0 of Rules and Procedures) and any recent challenges to system**

Since 1975, the NAAB has maintained an ongoing process of developing and updating their conditions and procedures for accreditation. A standing Assessment and Evaluation Committee spearheads a formal review process whereby procedures undergo continual review and are updated at least every two years while conditions are subject to a five-year review cycle. The latter is comprised of a concerted iterative process of assessment, research, analysis and review by the Board of Directors involving all four collateral partners, and concludes with an Accreditation Review Conference (ARC).

Recent challenges to the NAAB system are:

- Procedures applying to requests for reconsideration and appeals: An institution requesting reconsideration of a decision on the term of accreditation, and following that, appealing a decision on a request for reconsideration, are rare occurrences. Nevertheless, the process by which this occurs was revised in 2011 to prevent the scope of appeal to also include the original decision on the term of accreditation.
- Escalating costs of administering applications for candidacy: revisions to the current funding scenario are being investigated to cater for the increasing number of new programs and accreditation visits required.

**c) Other documentation by signatory system**

The NBAA provided all necessary documentation either prior to, or during, the periodic review visit, for the Review Team's assessment of the NBAA accreditation process. The Review Team did not lack information to undertake their ~~validation~~ evaluation.

#### **d) Accreditation/validation/recognition visit by signatory system**

The CA Review Team observed the NAAB accreditation visit to the Master of Architecture (including Pre-professional Bachelor of Arts in Architectural Studies) at the School of Art, Architecture and Design, Judson University in Elgin, Illinois. The accreditation visit occurred between 3 – 6 March 2013. The Review Team was met by the NAAB facilitator on 2 March and had the opportunity to informally discuss the tasks in the CA visit over a very cordial dinner. The Review Team was briefed by the executive director of NAAB in the morning of 3 March on the agenda for the CA visit, and the role and protocol of the Review Team. The Review Team, with the NAAB facilitator, observed the accreditation Visiting Team for two days (4 & 5 March), including attendance at the following:

- Meeting with the Dean of the School of Art, Architecture and Design
- Meeting with Provost, Judson University
- Meeting with faculty (academic staff) including lunch
- Consultation with the majority of the student body
- Tour of the 'Team Room' (exhibition of student work and Visiting Team work area)
- Tour of facilities including teaching spaces and library
- Observation of teaching sessions including critiques in design studios
- Observation of Visiting Team deliberations in the Team Room, including a working dinner on 3 March

The Review Team was given full access to all documents of the visit including the Architecture Program Report (APR), which included the program's self-evaluation. The APR was extensive and the Review Team was impressed by the method of mapping Student Performance Criteria (SPC) against courses, which showed clearly where the strengths of the program lay.

Overall, the Review Team is of the opinion that the Judson University accreditation visit was exemplary. There was a thorough and conscientious commitment to well-established protocols and procedures. The accreditation visit was conducted in a professional manner, led by a Chair with commendable leadership skills, who successfully maintained a balance of views throughout. There was clear evidence that the Visiting Team – each member representing one of the four collaterals (AIA, AIAS, ASCA and NCARB) plus a non-voting member who was an alumnus – were well trained in the process. The Visiting Team demonstrated a facility with the rules of engagement, and dealt with complex and sensitive matters in a highly professional manner even though it was the first accreditation visit experience for all Visiting Team members except the Chair.

The NAAB's choice for the Review Team to observe a small tuition-based regional architectural program with a distinctive (faith-based) mission, with a governance structure and financial status in a state of change, was productive as it was an opportunity to observe the robustness of the NAAB accreditation procedures in relation to program diversity. The Review Team observed intelligent and informed interpretation of terms and conditions of the procedures which are in general more easily applied to larger 'conventional' programs. The Review Team identified some shortcomings with the procedures when applied to an idiosyncratic program, but found ways to ensure the process remained useful to the program.

## **e) Meetings with representatives of signatory system**

The Review Team met with the following in the NAAB offices in Washington, DC:

- Executive Director, NAAB
  - Reviewed history of NAAB, organizational structure, Board of Directors, and accreditation procedures including management and review processes
- Manager of Accreditation, NAAB
  - Overview of accreditation procedures and discussed:
    - Selection of Team Members from each collateral organisation and Chairs, ratified by the NAAB Board of Directors, balancing team members from outside the state and region
    - Online training (video modules) of team members on standing list as well as face to face training
    - Architectural Program Report (APR) which is due on September 7 for visits scheduled for the following spring.
    - How causes of concern, and conditions met/not met are identified in accreditation procedure, and their consequences
- Manager, Research and Assessment and Communications Associate, NAAB
  - Discussed:
    - Annual Report between accreditation visits (online), flagging causes of concern to the executive director, and subsequent NAAB responses
    - narrative and statistical information collected (provides excellent data for tracking national demographics and trends in architectural education)
    - Education Evaluation Services for Architects (EESA), a fee-based service provided by NAAB to those without NAAB-accredited degrees seeking to meet the education requirement for an NCARB Certificate.

The Review Team observed the following NAAB meetings:

- NAAB Executive Committee meeting and NAAB Accreditation Review Conference (ARC) Task Force for 2013
  - The directors discussed issues arising from each collateral organization on accreditation processes, roles and protocols of team chairs and team members, visit list for the year, programs up for accreditation and accreditation decisions, MoUs with neighboring accreditation bodies including Latin and Central America on this occasion
- NAAB Directors Meeting (Winter meeting)
  - Observed decision making process for terms of accreditation and substantial equivalencies
  - An opportunity for CA Review Team to present preliminary findings and discuss topics including international comparisons of accreditation procedures, and the future of the profession and the role of accrediting bodies

## **f) Overview of criteria, policies, and procedures of the system** *[A brief executive summary]*

The NAAB currently accredits 151 degree programs at 120 institutions and is the only agency in the United States tasked with accrediting professional degree programs in architecture. Self-assessment and accreditation based on student performance criteria have been emphasized as the core tenets of the NAAB's criteria and procedures since 1975.

The NAAB accreditation system for professional degree programs within schools requires a self-assessment by the accredited degree program, an evaluation of that assessment by the NAAB, and a site visit by a NAAB team that concludes with a recommendation to the NAAB as to the term of accreditation. The decision regarding the term of accreditation is then made by – and rests solely with – the NAAB Board of Directors.

This Review Team conducted a thorough and comprehensive review of all the NAAB documents provided prior to and in the course of the CA periodic review visit. It also observed the normal processes and procedures of the system through being present at a continuing accreditation visit to an architecture program (Judson University) as well as all related meetings of the NAAB.

Forming the backbone of the NAAB system are the *2009 Conditions for Accreditation* and the *2012 Procedures for Accreditation*; the former defines the minimum standards that professional degree programs in architecture are expected to meet in order to achieve and maintain accreditation, while the latter outlines the sequence and procedures to be followed in order to ensure a uniform accrediting process.

Containing the all-important Architecture Program Report (APR) template, the 2009 Conditions for Accreditation is a two-part document dealing with the following aspects:

1. Institutional Support and Commitment to Continuous Improvement, concerned with issues of identity and self-assessment, resources, institutional and program characteristics, and policy review
2. Educational Outcomes and Curriculum, which assesses the three educational realms, through a set of Student Performance Criteria (SPC), evaluation of the preparatory/pre-professional education, and public information.

The *2012 Procedures for Accreditation* document deals mainly with procedures as applicable to the various categories of accreditation, i.e. candidacy, initial and continuing accreditation, but also covers issues such as nomenclature change requests, conflicts of interest, annual reports, reconsiderations, appeals and responsibilities.

The Review Team was impressed by the thoroughness of the NAAB documentation, both in terms of conditions and procedures, and found the robustness of the system most commendable, particularly when challenged by uniquely diverse circumstances such as those posed by the accreditation visit observed.

The robustness of the accreditation procedures is due in part to regular reviews of accreditation activities through the Assessment and Evaluation Committee. The accreditation procedure is also a strongly shared platform by its collateral organizations, namely AIA, AIAS, ASCA and NCARB, all of whom have good representation on the NAAB Board of Directors, who are the decision makers in the accreditation process. The Review Team observed that the accreditation procedures

and documentation (Visiting Team Report - VTR) provides significant detail for the NAAB Board of Directors. The VTR is advisory and non-binding and remain confidential in perpetuity.

The NAAB has evolved an admirable system of training, not only of Visiting Team chairs and members, but also of program administrators. The Review Team is confident that the NAAB criteria, policies, and procedures are well developed and comprehensive. They are formulated to reflect the issues that are important to the practice of architecture and all its collateral organizations within the United States of America as well as issues of international commonality, while recognizing differences in culture and diversity in program structure and organisation. As noted in this report, the NAAB is a strong proponent of self-evaluation and possesses a dynamic and inclusive process of ongoing review.

#### **g) Conclusion**

*[Identify critical issues for the system in the near future (1-5 years)]*

The Review Team identified several issues that may become critical in the near future, relating mostly to the changing student demographics and diversification of pedagogical approaches:

The system will need to deal with the growing diversity of academic pathways into the professional degree, especially with the increasing mobility of students internationally. Parity and standardization of credit transfer by different institutions will be also come more of an area of concern with increasing numbers of international students. The NAAB accreditation procedure may need to have programs declare academic pathways, credit transfer principles and the number of credit hours undertaken by students coming into the accredited degree. Canberra Accord will help in this regard by ratifying substantial equivalency through validation of systems assessed by student outputs and visits, and not curriculum structure alone.

While 'Comprehensive Design' in the SPC is a criteria that provides key evidence of the health of an architecture program, its definition and concomitant use in accreditation visits will need to move beyond a checklist towards an integration of competencies, as well as evidence of a consistent, but not necessarily comprehensive processes in student outcomes. This is an important issue when pedagogical models are diversifying with changing student demographics, financial vagaries and specializations by university programs.

A question that ought to be constantly asked is what is the wider mission of an accreditation body such as NAAB? Besides national benchmarking and quality assurance, should it be articulating future aspirations of the profession and the culture of architectural education beyond the conventional definition of professional education? NAAB processes demonstrate a capacity to future-proof the profession. For example, the Review Team observed intellectual and robust discussion of MOOCs (Massive Open Online Course) as a study pathway and a response to the marketplace, where MOOCs could be considered as similar to branch campuses or semesters abroad.

Architectural research: how does NAAB advocate for research in architectural academia and profession? The Review Team observed discussion of an idea for PhD

students to be paid a grant to research the connection between professional accreditation and effectiveness of new pedagogical methods (MOOCs, BIM, etc), whereby NAAB becomes an incentivizer of new knowledge.

The Review Team observed the approval of an 8-year term between accreditation visits approved at the NAAB Board of Directors meeting. Annual review processes will need to be strong and effective in picking up problems in a long period between accreditation visits. There are limitations with a purely online review submission with only the NAAB staff evaluating the reports. There may be need for an interim visit at a smaller scale, triggered perhaps by an adverse Annual Report, but this increases workload of NAAB staff, and costs, significantly.

In conclusion, the NAAB accreditation system is robust to handle diversity and does not risk flattening it, because of the commitment and engagement by all collateral organizations, as well as a deeply shared understanding of the process of accreditation, and the training available for Visiting Team members. The procedures continue to subscribe to the prime directive of NAAB: it does not have standards that lead to the standardization of architectural education, but accreditation as a public good in relation to quality assurance.

While the Canberra Accord is about validating substantial equivalency of accreditation/validation/recognition systems, it is also an opportunity for global engagement and conversation and sharing of knowledge between systems and to have a global philosophy that respects differences for the profession and education in architecture.

## **B. 5. Attachments**

### ***a) Documentation provided prior to the review visit [List only]***

*These documents can be found at [www.naab.org](http://www.naab.org)*

- The 2009 NAAB Conditions for Accreditation\*
- The NAAB Procedures for Accreditation, 2012 Edition
- The Rules of the NAAB Board and Policy Manual
- Report on Restructuring the NAAB, 1975
- The Bylaws of the National Architectural Accrediting Board
- Mission, Vision, Values (October 2011)
- Designation of tax-exempt status under 26 U.S.C. § 501(c)(3)

*These documents can be requested from NAAB*

- Schedule of Judson University accreditation visit, and detailed agenda of NAAB meetings, for the validation visit
- Architectural Program Report, Judson University

### ***b) Additional information supplied during the review visit [List only; full documentation will be posted electronically]***

N/A

**c) Review visit agenda and record of meetings**  
*[Synopsis only]*

See attached Agenda provided by NAAB

**B. 6. Report Signatures**



---

Accord Reviewer Representing Practice



---

Accord Reviewer Representing Education



---

Local Facilitator