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Interim Accreditation Report: Interior Design

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**Interim Report
University of Nebraska at Kearney
August 2018**

Summary of Accreditation Decision

At a meeting in Grand Rapids, Michigan, on August 3-4, 2018, the Accreditation Commission of the Council for Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA) voted to award continued accreditation for the remainder of a six-year term (dating from the initial decision on accreditation in March 2015) to the interior design program at University of Nebraska at Kearney. During the interim visit, the program demonstrated significant progress toward improving areas of weakness identified during the last accreditation review.

Award of CIDA accreditation provides assurance that students graduating from the interior design program are adequately prepared for entry-level interior design practice. Program quality is assessed primarily through the evaluation of student learning outcomes evidenced in student work. To determine accreditation status, the Accreditation Commission carefully considers information provided in the program self-study and information obtained by the site visitor during the on-site review of the program.

This Interim Report represents CIDA's evaluation of the interior design program leading to the Bachelor of Science in Comprehensive Interior Design degree using Professional Standards 2014. No other programs at University of Nebraska at Kearney are included in this evaluation.

Reader's Guide

The interim visit was conducted in order to monitor program progress toward improvement in areas found to be weak during the last CIDA accreditation review. The intent of the interim visit was to verify information presented in the program's Progress Report, which serves as an important reference for understanding the evaluation presented in this report. The PROGRAM NAME Progress Report accompanies this document.

The interim visit focused specifically on the improvement of the following CIDA Standards:

Standard 4, expectations b, c, e
Standard 6, expectation d
Standard 8 expectation d
Standard 9, expectations b, c
Standard 10, expectation d
Standard 12, expectation b
Standard 13, expectations e, f
Standard 14, expectation i
Standard 16, expectation c

Standards are in bold type, followed by expectations. For instance:

Standard **The interior design program has a mission statement that describes the scope and purpose of the program. Program goals are derived from the mission statement and the curriculum is structured to achieve these goals.**

Expectation a)The program mission statement clearly identifies intent and purpose of the interior design program.

Expectations not met during the last review:

The evaluation of each expectation is based on evidence presented in the program's Progress Report and during the on-site review. CIDA's evaluation of each expectation is signified by a check mark. Program expectations may be checked yes or no; student learning expectations may be checked insufficient evidence; awareness; understanding; or ability/application. The check mark options for the student learning expectations correspond with the expected learning levels within these expectations.

The Interim Report addresses program improvement evident during the interim visit related to program expectations that were marked "no" and student learning expectations that were marked below the required learning level in the last Accreditation Report.

Standard 4. Design Process

Entry-level interior designers need to apply all aspects of the design process to creative problem solving. Design process enables designers to identify and explore complex problems and generate creative solutions that optimize the human experience within the interior environment.

- 1) Describe steps the program has taken toward improvement since the last accreditation review and whether the evidence reviewed during the interim visit demonstrated improvement.

The addition of two foundation studios, Foundation Studio I and II (FSID 120, FSID 206), and the restructuring of content in the studio sequence from Design Studio I (FSID 210) through Design Studio IV (FSID 403) have expanded opportunities for students to engage in pre-design research and synthesis. The resultant design process seen in several of these courses allows for exploration and generation of multiple design responses. For example, in Foundation Studio I (FSID 120), students sketched multiple iterations of their 3-dimensional, full-scale furniture projects. This continued in upper-level studios where students included at least three adjacency diagrams on the plans and documented them in their final process books, such as in the WITT booklet from Design Studio IV (FSID 403). The new courses and the restructuring of course content has helped to ensure that students are experiencing a range of design problems from simple to complex.

The tiny house and concept research in Design Studio II (FSID 310), research for different populations in Design Studio III (FSID 318), and third-place research and case studies in Design Studio IV (FSID 403) all demonstrated students' ability to gather research and synthesize information in response to their designs. Design process sketches, bubble diagrams, adjacency diagrams, and multiple floor plan investigations (documented in their studio process books, on trace, or on final presentations) provided strong evidence that students were using the research to inform their design solutions. Research in Design Research Methods (FSID 405) and Senior Thesis Project (FSID 407) included framing a question and then completing a literature review and case and precedent studies to inform the concept and program for a small hotel. For example, the question posed for the co-work hotel project was, "How does the influence of co-working and collaborative activity affect place attachment in the work place?"

- 2) For expectation(s) that have remained a weakness or become a strength, provide an explanation of what was observed on-site in curriculum content, student work, interviews, etc. that led to this conclusion.

N/A

Standard 4. Design Process

The following expectations contributed to the overall assessment of the Standard:

Student Learning Expectations	Insufficient Evidence	Awareness	Understanding	Ability / Application
Students are <i>able</i> to:				
b) gather, evaluate, and apply appropriate and necessary information and research findings to solve the problem (pre-design investigation).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) synthesize information and generate multiple concepts and/or multiple design responses to programmatic requirements.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Program Expectations	No	Yes		
The interior design program includes:				
e) opportunities to solve simple to complex design problems.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

Standard 6. Communication

Entry-level interior designers are effective communicators.

- 1) Describe steps the program has taken toward improvement since the last accreditation review and whether the evidence reviewed during the interim visit demonstrated improvement.

Two new foundation courses, Foundation Studio I and II (FSID 120, FSID 206) teach students how to explore through ideation drawing and sketches. For example, in Foundation Studio I (FSID 120), students sketched multiple iterations of their 3-dimensional, full-scale furniture projects. The processes of sketching and drawing for ideation were reinforced in Design Studio I and II (FSID 210, FSID 310). Students documented their process through ideation sketches on their final posters. This was observed in the nanostructure small spaces project, where iterations progressed from a series of 2" hand sketches to computerized sketches showing multiple iterations of the design. Ideation drawings and sketches continued to have presence in the upper-level studios, including documentation in Design Studio IV (FSID 403), where students included process models and sketches in their project books and final design presentation materials.

- 2) For expectation(s) that have remained a weakness or become a strength, provide an explanation of what was observed on-site in curriculum content, student work, interviews, etc. that led to this conclusion.

N/A

The following expectations contributed to the overall assessment of the Standard:

Student Learning Expectations	Insufficient Evidence	Awareness	Understanding	Ability / Application
Students are able to:				
d) express ideas clearly through visual media (ideation drawings and sketches). ¹	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Standard 8. History

Entry-level interior designers apply knowledge of interiors, architecture, decorative arts, and art within a historical and cultural context.

- 1) Describe steps the program has taken toward improvement since the last accreditation review and whether the evidence reviewed during the interim visit demonstrated improvement.

Content pertaining to furniture, decorative arts, and art is now included in the required history courses taught within the program. In History of Interiors I (FSID 207), students are introduced to movements, theories, and traditions in furniture, decorative arts, and art in addition to architecture and interiors. Readings, lectures, and PowerPoint presentations evidenced that students are taught this information. Quizzes and tests demonstrated that students understood the historical context of furniture and decorative arts as they relate to architecture and interiors.

- 2) For expectation(s) that have remained a weakness or become a strength, provide an explanation of what was observed on-site in curriculum content, student work, interviews, etc. that led to this conclusion.

Although art-specific questions were not present in any of the tests available for review, some students did reference art pieces in the visual history books. As a historical frame of reference, students were required to create a book that included information and images about style, vocabulary, furniture, motifs, and decoration for ten different periods over the course of the term. In some of these books, students also referenced art, such as images of Romanesque frescoes from Spanish churches or an image of the *Mona Lisa* as an example of Italian Renaissance art that used proportions as in Renaissance architecture. In Design Studio IV (FSID 403), students selected an abstract painting to use as the concept for a retreat in the painterly space project. Students first wrote short research papers identifying the movement and the design principles or theories explored in the painting. These design elements and principles then became the basis for the concept in their retreat design. Students had to analyze and interpret the work in order to synthesize this information into a more formal translation in the design of their painterly space. Overall, the visiting team determined that students demonstrated only an awareness of movements and traditions in art. This is a program weakness.

The following expectations contributed to the overall assessment of the Standard:

Student Learning Expectations	Insufficient Evidence	Awareness	Understanding	Ability / Application
Students <i>understand</i> movements and traditions in:				
d) furniture, decorative arts, and art.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Standard 9. Space and Form

Entry-level interior designers apply elements and principles of two- and three-dimensional design.

- 1) Describe steps the program has taken toward improvement since the last accreditation review and whether the evidence reviewed during the interim visit demonstrated improvement.

Students first learned about the elements and principles of 2- and 3-dimensional design in Introduction to Design (FSID 109), where they developed a complex 3-dimensional concept and final spatial model based on the elements and principles of a famous 2-dimensional art piece. Students built on this learning in the two new foundation courses, Foundation Studio I and II (FSID 120, FSID 206), by completing 2- and 3-dimensional ideation sketches and models. Students explored full-scale cardboard models of furniture in Foundation Studio I (FSID 201) and continued to use 3-dimensional models throughout their studio coursework as a way to understand interiors and develop concepts.

Projects have been introduced across the curriculum that encourage students to explore multiple layers and planes within the spatial envelope. For example, for the painterly spaces project from Design Studio IV (FSID 403), students selected paintings and used the elements and principles to articulate spatial definition. One student used Paul Klee's painting, *Spiralschraubenbluten*, and identified value, contrast, organic shapes, and repetition as the important design elements. He used these elements to design the retreat for a musician. These elements were evidenced throughout the design including in perspective.

Students' perspectives for the level-up project and third spaces project completed in the second half of Design Studio IV (FSID 403) included designs of the entire spatial envelope including ceilings, walls, and floors. This depth of spatial understanding continued in Senior Thesis Project (FSID 407). In addition, some students used spatial research to inform their design. For example, a student researched the application of wayfinding through color in the senior project titled Hotel Kearney.

- 2) For expectation(s) that have remained a weakness or become a strength, provide an explanation of what was observed on-site in curriculum content, student work, interviews, etc. that led to this conclusion.

In Foundation Studio II (FSID 206), students gained exposure to fabrication equipment such as the 3D printer and laser cutter that support more advanced 3-dimensional explorations and applications, such as the wrap lounge chair and the furniture I lounge chair in Foundation Studio II (FSID 206). Concept models were used throughout the studio sequence, including as inspiration for lights in Design Studio IV (FSID 403). By their senior year, students had produced numerous 3-dimensional renderings to support their understanding of 3-dimensional design. Applying elements and principles of design to 3-dimensional design solutions is a program strength.

Standard 9. Space and Form

The following expectations contributed to the overall assessment of the Standard:

Student Learning Expectations	Insufficient Evidence	Awareness	Understanding	Ability / Application
Students effectively apply the elements and principles of design to:				
b) three-dimensional design solutions. ¹	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Students are able to analyze and communicate theories or concepts of spatial definition and organization. ¹	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Standard 10. Color

Entry-level interior designers apply color principles and theories.

- 1) Describe steps the program has taken toward improvement since the last accreditation review and whether the evidence reviewed during the interim visit demonstrated improvement.

Restructuring of content in the studio sequence and the addition of new foundation courses have contributed to the improvement in applying color effectively in visual communication.

Students were introduced to color principles through the superstructures projects from Introduction to Design (FSID 109). Students applied color in all subsequent studios. For example, students included color studies in their project books for the Wesley Mission project from Design Studio II (FSID 318), which showed the use of soft green and blue hues to support restoration theory. For the painterly spaces project from Design Studio IV (FSID 403), students selected and analyzed an abstract painting that fit with their specific client's personality and informed their color selections for the retreat space. Color was used throughout students' projects, as observed in concept models, 3-dimensional visual spaces, and elevations. For the third places project from the same studio, one student worked with a neutral color pallet and used color through light. She used theories of color and symbolic meaning to select the colors. She effectively used LED color wall washers and seam lighting in addition to neon lighting to add color and vibrancy to the neutral background. Another student used UNK gold and blue for the third places project to reinforce the school colors. In Senior Thesis Project (FSID 407), students' research included color. Examples included a student who used color as a wayfinding tool and another who researched and applied color appropriate to how it relates to historic preservation and the different time periods she researched for her hotel project.

- 2) For expectation(s) that have remained a weakness or become a strength, provide an explanation of what was observed on-site in curriculum content, student work, interviews, etc. that led to this conclusion.

N/A

The following expectations contributed to the overall assessment of the Standard:

Student Learning Expectations	Insufficient Evidence	Awareness	Understanding	Ability / Application
Students:				
d) apply color effectively in all aspects of visual communication (presentations, models, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Standard 12. Environmental Systems

Entry-level interior designers use the principles of lighting, acoustics, thermal comfort, and indoor air quality to enhance the health, safety, welfare, and performance of building occupants.

- 1) Describe steps the program has taken toward improvement since the last accreditation review and whether the evidence reviewed during the interim visit demonstrated improvement.

Two faculty members attended and completed the Teaching of Lighting Workshop (TOLW) sponsored by the Illumination Engineering Society (IESC), and the course Lighting in Interior and Product Design (FSID 306) has been completely revised based on this workshop.

Students in Lighting in Interior and Product Design (FSID 306) spent the final weeks of this course working on lighting their commercial design project from Design Studio II (FSID 310). In addition to including reflected ceiling plans in their Next Competition entries for Design Studio II (FSID 310), students completed a lighting poster for the Next Commercial studio in the lighting course. The poster included calculations, lighting and switching plans, and lighting specifications and also identified the different types of lighting throughout their spaces including daylight, glow, task, ambient, and accent lighting. Lighting plans and specifications were required in all subsequent studio projects, including the Wesley Mission project from Design Studio III (FSID 318), the third-place project from Design Studio IV (FSID 403), and in presentations and booklets for projects from Senior Thesis Project (FSID 407).

- 2) For expectation(s) that have remained a weakness or become a strength, provide an explanation of what was observed on-site in curriculum content, student work, interviews, etc. that led to this conclusion.

N/A

The following expectations contributed to the overall assessment of the Standard:

Student Learning Expectations	Insufficient Evidence	Awareness	Understanding	Ability / Application
Students:				
b) competently select and apply luminaires and light sources.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Standard 13. Building Systems and Interior Construction

Entry-level interior designers have knowledge of building systems and interior construction.

- 1) Describe steps the program has taken toward improvement since the last accreditation review and whether the evidence reviewed during the interim visit demonstrated improvement.

Design Studio II (FSID 310) focuses on commercial design and includes more complex project development and exploration of furniture systems. In this course, students completed the Next Competition and produced a construction document set that included furniture plans and electrical/data plans demonstrating understanding of how systems furniture interfaces with electrical sources, data, and with the existing building.

Students were introduced to stairs in Design Studio I (FSID 210) through a two-story residential project. Students had to design a new stair system located on the second and third floors and include an elevator in the space to accommodate ADA. Students also completed detail drawings of the stair as part of a small construction document set in Design Technology I (FSID 265). In Design Studio IV (FSID 403), students designed the stair in the painterly spaces project and also in the third-place project, which also demonstrated understanding of egress, fire stairs, and areas of refuge. Stairs and elevators were also included in all projects from Senior Thesis Project (FSID 407).

- 2) For expectation(s) that have remained a weakness or become a strength, provide an explanation of what was observed on-site in curriculum content, student work, interviews, etc. that led to this conclusion.

N/A

The following expectations contributed to the overall assessment of the Standard:

Student Learning Expectations	Insufficient Evidence	Awareness	Understanding	Ability / Application
Student work demonstrates <i>understanding</i> that design solutions affect and are impacted by:				
e) the interface of furniture with distribution and construction systems. ³	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) vertical circulation systems. ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Standard 14. Regulations and Guidelines

Entry-level interior designers use laws, codes, standards, and guidelines that impact the design of interior spaces.

- 1) Describe steps the program has taken toward improvement since the last accreditation review and whether the evidence reviewed during the interim visit demonstrated improvement.

The program has added content in Design Studio I and II (FSID 210, FSID 310) to introduce accessibility. Students designed an ADA toilet room for the residential project in Design Studio I (FSID 210) and documented accessible clearances in their commercial plans in Design Studio II (FSID 310) by locating a 5' turning radius at multiple points of circulation. For the retro entertainment project from Design Studio IV (FSID 403), students conducted a code review that covered accessibility codes and then planned accessible restrooms. The final projects from Senior Thesis Project (FSID 407) all included an accessible hotel room and bathroom.

- 2) For expectation(s) that have remained a weakness or become a strength, provide an explanation of what was observed on-site in curriculum content, student work, interviews, etc. that led to this conclusion.

While there was evidence that students understood the turning radius and general layout guides for an ADA bathroom, the application was weak. In Design Studio I (FSID 210), students located the grab bar placements and heights, but not necessarily the sink height or spatial requirements underneath the sink (in many projects, the drain was missing). In addition, door push and pull side clearances were not correct in many of the residential construction documents from Design Studio I (FSID 210). The same errors appeared in student projects from Design Studio IV (FSID 403) and Senior Thesis Project (FSID 407). While students understood the overall ADA guidelines for restrooms, they were not able to apply the details accurately, so this remains a program weakness.

The following expectations contributed to the overall assessment of the Standard:

Student Learning Expectations	Insufficient Evidence	Awareness	Understanding	Ability / Application
Students <i>apply</i> :				
i) accessibility guidelines.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Standard 16. Support and Resources

The interior design program must have a sufficient number of qualified faculty members, as well as adequate administrative support and resources, to achieve program goals.

- 1) Describe steps the program has taken toward improvement since the last accreditation review and whether the evidence reviewed during the interim visit demonstrated improvement.

The program is currently conducting a search, and NCIDQ certification is listed as one of the priorities.

- 2) For expectation(s) that have remained a weakness or become a strength, provide an explanation of what was observed on-site in curriculum content, student work, interviews, etc. that led to this conclusion.

Despite the outcome of the search noted above, the program struggles to meet this expectation. While the University of Nebraska interior design program does have some adjuncts who teach studio coursework, there are very few architects or designers located within Kearney or the surrounding area with NCIDQ certification.

The following expectations contributed to the overall assessment of the Standard:

Program Expectations

A majority of faculty members and other instructional personnel with interior design studio supervision have:

- c) passed the complete National Council for Interior Design Qualification exam.

No

Yes

Conclusion

Based on the visiting team's evaluation, how successful has the program been in improving areas found to be weak during the last CIDA accreditation review? Overall, what are the program strengths and weaknesses?

The interior design program at University of Nebraska at Kearney has undergone several changes in faculty since the site visit in 2014. Currently two tenure-track faculty members, one who was in attendance during the 2014 visit and another who is in her second year, support the program. A search for a third faculty member to start fall 2018 is underway. Despite the changeover of faculty in the last several years, the program has made substantial progress in improving the program and in addressing the weakness identified during the 2014 site visit.

The program has substantially changed the content of the majority of their studio courses and in the foundation sequence, leading to a stronger focus on research and process and a clearer progression of complexity from foundation studios through Senior Thesis Project (FSID 407). These changes have led to demonstrated program strengths in Standard 4 and Standard 9. The studio changes also included several student work outcomes demonstrating understanding of accessibility guidelines, although the ability to apply these guidelines remains a program weakness.

The program will be in a new building in fall 2019 and will be housed with the Industrial Technology Department, which includes a construction management major, the only other built environment major in the university. These opportunities in addition to the changes in curriculum still in progress and the dedicated faculty will contribute to continued success and progress in the interior design program.