GRADUATE PROGRAM HANDBOOK
DEGREE REQUIREMENTS AND STUDENT PROGRESS

ACADEMIC POLICIES
A full description of academic policies for all schools of Tulane University are outlined in their section of the University catalog. Students should review these policies thoroughly. Additional academic policies or specific requirements for the School of Architecture are outlined below.

HONOR CODE
Regulations regarding student conduct are given in Supervision of Student Conduct, which is available in the Office of the Assistant Dean of Student Services. The School of Architecture Honor Code and information on the Honor System are available in the Administration office. Students accused of conduct or Honor Code violations will be given a hearing in accordance with the procedures described in these documents. Penalties range from a reprimand to disciplinary probation, suspension, and expulsion. Suspension occurs for a specified period of time, and the fact is entered in the student’s record and transcript while it is in effect. Expulsion is entered in the student’s record and will appear on all transcripts issued after that time.

COURSE LOADS
For the School of Architecture, the normal course load for graduate students varies from 15 to 18 credits per semester. The student who completes these credits each semester in the required and elective courses as outlined in Programs of Study will meet the graduation requirements in the customary timeframe. A lighter load must have the approval of the Graduate Program Director.

In any given semester and with the permission of the Graduate Program Director, when registration opens for the next semester, students may register for as many as 18 credits. In special circumstances, graduate students who have earned a 3.0 or higher grade point average on 18 or more credits during a semester may register for as many as 22 credits with the Graduate Program Director’s approval.

ADVANCED STANDING, EXEMPTION AND ADVANCED PLACEMENT
Advanced Standing and Advanced Placement within the School of Architecture:

For architecture courses other than studio, students with superior ability or previous course work in a given subject area may request that the Graduate Program Director review their past work, previous relevant syllabi and transcripts for credit and substitution. The Graduate Program Director makes an evaluation to determine whether or not a course at a prior institution is equivalent to the course in question. If equivalency is determined, the course in question can be replaced with an advanced elective in the subject area.

AUDITING COURSES
Any full-time graduate student may audit one course per semester without credit in any school of the University, after completing formal registration and obtaining approval of the instructor for the course. Although credit is not granted for audited courses, such courses are considered part of the student’s semester course load and are recorded on the student’s permanent record. An audit enrollment that results in an overload is not permitted unless the student is qualified for such an overload. An auditor who is absent excessively will be dropped without record. Students who decide to audit a course after initially attending the course as a grade-seeking student must submit the appropriate change form to the registrar following the approval of the Graduate Program Director.

CLASS ATTENDANCE
Regular attendance at classes, studio and laboratory periods, and scheduled course conferences is required; it is essential to successful academic progress. All absences must be reported to the course instructor; the only excused absences are those for reasons of health or crisis, and must be justified with written documentation.

Unexcused absences could reduce a student’s course grade, as will late arrivals or early departures from class. Three consecutive absences or four nonconsecutive absences will, in normal circumstances, mean that the instructor may give a WF grade to the student.

Instructors are not authorized to excuse absences that extend holidays.

A student who stops attending a course listed on his or her registration form, without formally dropping this course, receives a WF grade if recommended by the instructor on or before the official deadline for authorized drops. Students should officially withdraw from a course if they are no longer attending it. After that date, the student will be assigned an UW as a final grade.

EXAMINATIONS
Attendance at final exams is required. A student who must be absent from a final examination will be given permission to take a special
examination only if he or she presents to the course instructor and the Dean's office an acceptable excuse and appropriate documentation before or within three days after the examination. A student whose absence from an examination is excused will be given an I (Incomplete) and a makeup examination; a student whose absence is not excused will be given an F in the course. Incomplete grades must be resolved with final grades reported to the dean's office within thirty days from the end of the semester or the I grade becomes an F.

STUDIO REVIEWS
Studio reviews are a critical part of the design studio curriculum and evaluation process. Attendance at these reviews is mandatory. Policies for Mid-term and final studio reviews are equivalent to those for examinations in other courses (see above).

GRADES
The School attempts to keep its students informed of their progress at all times. Federal law prohibits the sending of grade information to third parties, including parents and guardians, unless the student provides the Associate Dean of Students of the School of Architecture with written authorization for release of such information. Such a request may be made by the student at any time.

A student who has a complaint regarding grading or academic evaluation has recourse to the grievance procedure developed by the University Senate Committee on Academic Freedom and Responsibility of Students. Copies of the Student Grievance Procedures are available in the Director of Academic Affairs office. The student must first discuss the complaint with the professor; then, if dissatisfied, submit a written complaint to the Associate Dean of Academics of the School of Architecture.

At the end of each semester, a final course grade is given in each subject. This grade is based on all the student's work during the semester and is entered on the student's transcript. The School of Architecture uses the University-wide grading system for courses. A full description of Grades and Grading Policies are outlined in the Newcomb-Tulane section for the undergraduate college.

Exceptions and additions are as follows:

WF  Withdrawn with failing grade
WF grades may be administratively assigned, for excessive absences, for disciplinary penalty or for failure to attend a course, which is shown on registration records. WF grades are treated as F grades in computing semester and cumulative averages. They remain on the record even if the course is later completed successfully.

W  Withdrawn
W grades do not imply a penalty and are not counted in the grade point average.

I  Incomplete
An incomplete grade, I, is given at the discretion of instructors when, in their view, special circumstances prevent a student from completing work assigned during the semester and with the understanding that the remaining work can be completed within 30 days. Extensions of the 30-day deadline must be requested in writing by the student and must be approved by the instructor and the Associate Dean. Extensions are approved only when a student has made an attempt to complete the missing work within the original 30-day period but, in the view of the instructor and the Associate Dean, has been prevented from completing the work by some special circumstance beyond the student's control. Extensions must be approved before the 30-day deadline expires; extensions are not approved retroactively. Incomplete grades are also given when a student's absence from a final examination has been excused by the Associate Dean prior to or within one day following the final examination.

Any officially authorized I grade, if not resolved (changed to another grade) within 30 days after the end of the semester, is recorded as an F.

GRADE POINT AVERAGES
A student's progress toward graduation is measured not only by credit earned but also by the grade-point average. Cumulative grade point averages are determined by dividing the student's total number of quality points by the total number of quality hours (credits attempted).

Semester grade point averages are calculated for architectural design courses (the design average) and for all courses together (cumulative average) by dividing the number of quality points by the number of credits attempted.

COMMENDATION
Commendation is an honor given to Master of Architecture students in Thesis Studio whose final projects are designated as exceptional by the thesis directors and who receive an A grade (4.0) in their final project. A student who has received a commendation for their final project will receive a letter of commendation from the Dean and thesis directors upon graduation.
LEAVE OF ABSENCE
Students in good academic standing normally attend the School of Architecture each semester consecutively; however, occasionally it is in the best interest of the student to take a leave of absence from the School for a semester or a year. Students considering a leave of absence should consult the Graduate Program Director.

To obtain a leave of absence, the student must make written application to the Graduate Program Director stating the reason for the request and the proposed period of absence. Upon written approval by the Graduate Program Director, the student is guaranteed readmission if all conditions of the request and approval are met.

VOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL

FROM A COURSE
To drop a course, a student must obtain the approval of the instructor and the Graduate Program Director. Withdrawals from courses are not recorded for the first four weeks of class. After the fourth week of classes and before the last date for drops as reported in the official calendar, a grade of W will be recorded only if withdrawal is officially approved and the instructor reports satisfactory standing in the class at the time of withdrawal. Students considering withdrawal from required courses must consult with the Graduate Program Director before withdrawing. Required courses in the School of Architecture must be taken sequentially and withdrawal may result in the extension of the program of study. Students must always carry the fulltime minimum course load of 12 credits.

FROM THE SCHOOL
A student who decides to withdraw or resign from the School of Architecture and Tulane University after the semester begins must discuss withdrawal plans with the Graduate Program Director and file a written request for permission to withdraw from all classes. This statement should include the student’s reason for requesting to withdraw. Withdrawal forms may be obtained from the Graduate Program Director.

The authorized date for withdrawal generally is the date that the formal withdrawal request is received. This date is important in determining eligibility for refund or account adjustment and grading status.

Requests for retroactive medical withdrawals cannot be approved after a student has completed his or her final examinations and the semester has ended.

QUALITY OF WORK REQUIREMENTS
The School of Architecture is not obligated to give individual warnings to graduate students in danger of probation or exclusion. Each student is responsible for his or her academic performance and its consequences.

PROMOTION
School of Architecture students are expected to follow the appropriate curriculum outlined in Programs of Study. Students are classified within a given year according to the number of credits earned. A student may be excluded from the School of Architecture for lack of sufficient academic progress toward fulfilling degree requirements. Failure to meet stated degree requirements within a reasonable period of time may result in exclusion. Sufficient academic progress is also measured by minimum credit and grade point requirements.

Graduate students in Architecture must maintain the academic standards of the School to meet their degree requirements.

Graduate students who meet the minimum semester requirement of 12 passed credits, maintain at least a 3.0 cumulative GPA as well as a 3.0 GPA in design studios, and also earn the required number of credits to advance from one semester to the next are considered to be making progress toward their architectural degree. To qualify for admission into the next year of the program, a fulltime graduate student must therefore pass a minimum of 30 credits of B average work in the previous calendar year (August to August, including a summer session, if necessary).

PROBATION AND EXCLUSION
At the end of the academic year a graduate student must have a minimum of 12 hours of B average work as well as a design studio cumulative grade point average of B or better. Students who do not meet these minimum requirements will be placed on probation. B average work is defined as courses whose quality point average is at least 3.0.

Graduate students in the School of Architecture are also placed on probation in the following instances:

• A graduate student, whose cumulative academic grade point average falls below 3.0 in any given academic semester, as calculated at the end of that semester, is placed on academic probation for the subsequent semester. If the student’s cumulative average has not risen to 3.0 by the end of the probationary period, the student is not permitted to remain in the School.
• A graduate student whose grade point average in architecture design courses falls below 3.0 for a given semester, as calculated at the end of that semester, is placed on design probation for the subsequent semester. If the student's year average in architectural design courses has not risen to 3.0 by the end of the probationary semester, the student is not permitted to remain in the School.

STUDENT WORK
Any work performed for credit by students enrolled in the School of Architecture may be retained by the School for its records. Students may, as an alternative, provide suitable reproductions.

Thesis students are required to provide complete documentation of the thesis to the School for the Architecture Library. Although some student work may be retained for a period of time in order to document it, the School is not responsible for any student work (or equipment) left in Richardson Memorial Hall after the end of the term in which it is executed.

All examinations and assigned written work other than design work that are used by an instructor to arrive at an academic evaluation, and are not returned to the student, are kept by the instructor for a period of six months after the semester's end.

STUDIO WORK PORTFOLIO REQUIREMENTS
Each student in the School of Architecture maintains a portfolio, in 8.5” x 11” and digital formats, recording comprehensively the design studio work undertaken in the School each term. For students in the 3 ½ Year M.Arch I Graduate Program, this portfolio is collected and evaluated by design faculty during the spring semester of the first year. At this time a student may be asked to meet with a group of faculty for discussion of the work and his or her status, progress, strengths, and weaknesses. Although the portfolio review is advisory, the portfolio is a part of design studio evaluation. Maintaining a portfolio is an important and integral part of the student's curricular program, providing a valuable opportunity for a student to see the work from a broader perspective than a single semester's evaluation affords.

Submission of the portfolio is required for application to many of the School’s special programs and academic opportunities as well as consideration for awards offered by the School. This portfolio also forms the basis of the professional portfolio each student assembles to seek summer and long-term employment.

REPEATED COURSES
For graduate students, a course completed with a grade of D-, D, or D+ must be repeated. When a course is repeated both grades, the original grade and the grade resulting from repeating the class, are included in the GPA. The first completed credit with a passing grade is counted toward graduation. The repeated effort is recorded on the permanent record, but does not count as credit earned. If an F or WF graded course is repeated, both the original F or WF and the grade for the repeated effort are recorded. F and WF are counted in the cumulative average. In order to repeat a course, students must be enrolled in a minimum of 12 new credits in addition to the repeated class. No more than one course may be repeated in any semester.

COMMENCEMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
A candidate for graduation must complete the total number of credits and all courses required for his or her program of study, must have a cumulative grade point average in all academic courses of at least 3.0 for the Master of Architecture I (three and a half year program) and must receive certification for graduation by the faculty of the School of Architecture.

A graduate student expecting to receive a degree in May must register as a candidate for graduation with the Graduate Program Director by October 1 of the previous year. The commencement ceremony is held only in May. Unless excused by the Associate Dean, candidates are required to attend commencement. Requests for an excused absence must be submitted in writing at least two weeks prior to the ceremony.

SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
Tulane University and the School of Architecture recognize that a growing number of people with disabilities have joined the University community in recent years as students, faculty, and staff. The University welcomes these individuals, and seeks to support their particular needs and rights, and to ensure that they have an equal opportunity to participate in the University community.

The University’s diverse student population includes well-qualified students with documented disabilities who may require learning, sight, hearing, manual, speech, or mobility accommodations to ensure fair access to educational and residential resources. These students are intelligent and capable, and have met the same rigorous standards for admission as other students. To provide students with disabilities every educational opportunity to demonstrate their talents and intellect on a level playing field with their peers without disabilities, the University makes available reasonable accommodations in accordance with Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The University’s Office of Disability Services (ODS) serves as the central campus resource for
Tulane students with documented disabilities or with disability concerns. ODS is a part of the Educational Resources and Counseling office and is located on the first floor of the Science and Engineering Complex. ODS can be contacted by telephone 504.865.8433 or in person, between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and also can be found on the Web at erc.tulane.edu/disability. ODS works in partnership with students, faculty, and staff to develop successful strategies for maximizing students' academic achievement and participation in extracurricular activities and programs.

Students with disabilities must register with ODS as soon as possible and follow all ODS procedures for requesting accommodations. Because current clinical documentation is required before ODS can consider any requests for reasonable accommodation, newly matriculating students who have documented disabilities should contact ODS and submit all necessary forms and documentation at least one month before arriving on campus if possible.

Students should be aware that they are responsible for making requests for reasonable accommodations and for submitting all necessary documentation in support of those requests. ODS can help students articulate their needs, engage with students in an interactive discussion about possible accommodations, and can assist students in communicating any approved accommodations to instructors or staff. Students remain ultimately responsible for complying with ODS and University procedures and for ensuring that the University is aware of the need for accommodations in the first place.

Any student with specific questions about ODS procedures and policies should contact the manager of ODS at 504.865.8433.