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November 21, 2014

To: John E. Schaufelberger, Dean, College of Built Environments

From: David L. Eaton, Vice Provost and Dean

Rebecca Aanerud, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs

RE: Review of the Ph.D. in the Built Environment (2013-2014)

This memo outlines the recommendations from the review of the Ph.D. in the Built Environment in the College of Built Environments. Detailed comments on the review can be found in the documents that were part of the following formal review proceedings:

- Charge meeting between review committee, program, and administrators (May 23, 2013)
- Built Environment Ph.D. self-study (January 30, 2014)
- Site visit (May 5-6, 2014)
- Review committee report (June 2, 2014)
- Built Environment Ph.D. response to the review committee report (June 12, 2014)
- Graduate School Council consideration of review (November 6, 2014)

The review committee consisted of:

Phillip S. Thurtle, Associate Professor, UW Comparative History of Ideas (Committee Chair)
Linda G. Shapiro, Professor, UW Computer Science & Engineering and Electrical Engineering
Forster Ndubisi, Professor and Department Head, Department of Landscape Architecture &
Urban Planning, Texas A&M University

The Built Environment PhD program is housed in the College of Built Environments Dean's Office under the direction of an interdisciplinary faculty group. Faculty from each of the college's four departments participate in the program, which is the only PhD offered within the college.

A subcommittee of the Graduate School Council presented findings and recommendations to the full Council at its meeting on November 6, 2014. After discussion, the Council recommended a ten year review (2023-2024) for the PhD program, contingent on a strategic plan delivered to the

Dean of the College of Built Environments by the beginning of Autumn Quarter 2015. Specific comments and recommendations regarding the program include the following.

Program Strengths

The review committee found this to be an excellent program, with a strong sense of intellectual focus and strong faculty. The program attracts good students and quality faculty.

Program Challenges & Risks

The review committee made the following recommendations to address challenges and risks faced by the program.

- *Governance.* The program should strengthen its governance through the following:
 - Empower the steering committee by formalizing its authority, structure, roles, and responsibilities.
 - Increase the involvement of the Dean and department chairs from the college.
 - Develop a strategic plan by September 2015.
- *Advancement.* The program should work to improve its fund-raising efforts.
- *Students.* Improve the student experience through the following:
 - Formalize the mentoring of students and involve the steering committee in the process.
 - Work to help students to become better educators.
 - Continue to develop the colloquium.
 - Provide support for professional opportunities for students.
- *TA Support.* The program should make its TA selection process more transparent. In addition, consider the following to increase TA support for students:
 - Develop undergraduate courses in the college that would provide staffing opportunities for graduate students.
 - Assure a consistent number of TAs from each department from year to year.
 - Explore connections with departments in other colleges with the goal of acquiring TA positions.
- *Connection to Interdisciplinary UDP PhD.* Explore and strengthen connections with the Interdisciplinary PhD Program in Urban Design and Planning.

Areas of Concurrence and/or Disagreement

The program found the review committee recommendations to be consistently helpful and expressed a desire to implement them without exception. Specific feedback from the program includes the following.

- *Governance.* The Steering Committee has begun to take a more active role and has adopted many of the specific recommendations. The Steering Committee will develop a strategic plan to be completed by September 2015. In addition, the program and college will create a college-level leadership committee to increase the involvement of the Dean and department chairs.
- *Advancement.* The program will work on fund-raising and advancement.
- *Students.* The program wholeheartedly embraced these recommendations. The Steering Committee and faculty will:

- Participate more actively and more formally in the mentoring process.
 - Help students learn about pedagogy.
 - Continue to develop the colloquium.
 - Provide support for further opportunities for professional development.
- *TA Support.* The program response addressed the following items:
 - The program will clarify the TA selection policies and procedures and make the process more transparent to students.
 - The college will continue to develop lower division undergraduate courses.
 - The program will assess the TA positions allocated by the college's departments, probably via the college-level leadership committee.
 - The program will work to develop long-term relationships with departments across campus, both by formalizing existing relations and developing new ones.
- *Connection to Interdisciplinary UDP PhD.* The program will explore and strengthen connections with the Interdisciplinary PhD Program in Urban Design and Planning.

Graduate School Council Recommendations

The Graduate School Council recommends the following for the PhD in the Built Environment:

- The program should develop a strategic plan by the beginning of Autumn Quarter 2015, submitted to the Dean of the College of Built Environments with copy to the Graduate School. The Dean of the College of Built Environments will notify the Graduate School whether the strategic plan is satisfactory.
- Contingent upon submission of a satisfactory strategic plan, the Graduate School Council recommends continuing status for the PhD in the Built Environment, with next review in ten years (2023-2024).

We concur with the Council's comments and recommendations.

cc: Ana Mari Cauce, Provost and Executive Vice President
Patricia Moy, Associate Vice Provost for Academic and Student Affairs
Robert Mugerauer, Director, PhD in the Built Environment
Members of the academic program review committee
Members of the Graduate School Council
David Canfield-Budde, Academic Program Specialist, The Graduate School
GPSS President