

University of Maryland School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation

UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS

Frequently Asked Questions.

Why is the University of Maryland a great place to study architecture?

With close geographical proximity to three metropolitan areas, Washington DC, Baltimore, and Annapolis, the University of Maryland offers something that few American Universities can match. The School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation is located only seven miles from downtown Washington, DC. Connected to the city by Metrorail and Metrobus, students and faculty enjoy a close proximity to the museums, libraries, theatres, and cultural institutions that can only be found in a world-class international city. Nearby Baltimore and Annapolis provide contrasting examples of architecture, urbanism, history, local culture, and development patterns. Few areas nationwide compare architecturally, urbanistically, historically, and culturally to the diverse Baltimore-Washington metropolitan area.

What kind of architecture degree does the University of Maryland offer?

The Architecture Program offers a four-year undergraduate course of study leading to the Bachelor of Science in Architecture. This degree program is designed to provide students with comprehensive liberal education while delivering rigorous pre-professional study in Architecture. In contrast to the traditional five year program, the four year program offered in Maryland gives the opportunity to its students to explore a range of disciplines before committing to the rigorous architecture studio education. With over 100 majors in 12 separate colleges, our students get a broad based liberal arts education that provides them with the necessary tools to succeed.

Many students who complete the Bachelor of Science in Architecture continue in our Master of Architecture program or elect to pursue graduate studies at another institution. In a sense, when combined with the Master of Architecture (professional degree) the pre-professional Bachelor in Architecture degree can be viewed as analogous to pre-law or pre-med baccalaureates.

How does the architecture program address Sustainability?

As the 16th ranked “Green University” in the Nation, Maryland is a forward thinking, environmentally friendly institution with many opportunities to get involved. Maryland prides itself on innovative and eco-friendly design. Our LeafHouse placed first in the nation in the 2007 Solar Decathlon. With environmental impact becoming a larger and larger contributing factor, architecture is evolving to adapt to the new demands of a rapidly changing industry. In our multidisciplinary School with programs in Real Estate, Historic Preservation and Urban Planning, the Architecture Program at Maryland is rapidly adapting to meet these emerging needs. Students at Maryland have taken initiative in the creation of new clubs and organizations such as the Emerging Green Builders, to rise to the challenge of sustainable design.

I have heard that the architecture program is an LEP (Limited Enrollment Program).

What does this mean?

As a limited enrollment program, the Architecture Program at the University of Maryland is able to offer small class sizes and a low student to faculty ratio. Advantages to this include personal attention, increased exposure to faculty and critical review from experienced architects. Information about the LEP can be found at www.lep.umd.edu

How can I visit the school?

The University of Maryland invites all Prospective Students to “Visit Maryland Day’s” (dates available on the Admissions website) where you will have the opportunity to meet with faculty and students from the School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation. We can help you decide if the University of Maryland is the place to start your future. Informal student-led tours take place on Fridays (during term time) starting promptly at 1pm. You may make an appointment for a tour by emailing archtours@umd.edu.

What is the profile of Applicants?

Applicants to the Bachelor of Science in Architecture degree program are typically highly motivated individuals who demonstrate proficiencies in the visual arts as well as in mathematics and sciences. Many undergraduates participate in the University Honors Program or College Park Scholars Program while enrolled in the University. While an art background is not mandatory, students are encouraged to practice their visual communication skills through freehand drawing, painting and mixed media before they enter the program and throughout the course. Computer drafting ability is not a pre-requisite.

What are the educational requirements needed in order to become an architect?

In order to become an architect you need a Professional Degree in Architecture. That professional degree can be acquired through three different paths. The Bachelor of Science degree in Architecture offered at the University of Maryland is a Pre-Professional degree. Students must continue their study in an architecture graduate program at the University of Maryland or at another institution, to receive a Master of Architecture degree. This is a four plus two option. A professional degree can also be acquired through a 5 year Bachelor of Architecture degree offered in other Universities. Bachelor of Architecture degrees are typically more concentrated and do not allow for opportunities to explore the liberal arts. The 3 ½ year Graduate Program is an option for students with an undergraduate degree other than the BS in Architecture.

After you receive a Professional degree you will do an internship (generally 3 years) followed by the examination for registration. Once you complete the internship and pass the exam, you can call yourself an architect and practice architecture.

I am not sure if architecture is for me. Does the University of Maryland offer a Career Discovery summer program?

The University of Maryland's Discovering Architecture summer course is offered every summer to high school students interested in getting a sneak preview of a college education in architecture. Our hands-on course is designed to teach high-school juniors and seniors about careers in architecture, landscape architecture and urban design. The program runs for three weeks during the summer, Monday through Friday from 9-5. During this intensive course, students are introduced to successful architects, taken on tours of architectural landmarks and introduced to basic design principles used to complete their own design projects in the design studio. The course is a great way to earn three college credits and try on a career before you start college.

What kinds of courses should I be taking in high school to better prepare me for an architectural education?

When in high school it is important to take advantage of college preparatory courses such as those in Calculus, Physics and English. Art courses in all media are highly recommended.

Do you need a portfolio as an incoming freshman?

Starting in Fall 2009, applicants will be required to submit a drawing with their admission materials. Specifications for the drawing can be found on the University's admissions website. Follow the directions precisely. For questions, please email the Office of Undergraduate Admissions at um-admit@umd.edu

Is it possible to transfer into the program?

Yes, every student interested in the architecture program at University of Maryland goes through a review process after their third semester of their undergraduate career. Both transfers and pre-admitted students into the architecture program submit a portfolio, essay, and transcripts to the school for admission into the studio sequence. This process is called the Review Process. Transfer students are normally already admitted and attending the University of Maryland. See www.lep.umd.edu Architecture for more information on the Review Process.

Is there a way to become an architect if I am from a different undergraduate major or if I am not accepted into the Undergraduate Architecture Program?

The Architecture Program offers a 3 ½ year Master of Architecture degree to candidates who come from diverse undergraduate backgrounds. Information can be found on the School's website www.arch.umd.edu

What kinds of courses will I be taking the first two years? The last two?

The first two years of the program are modeled in a way to allow our students to gain the most from their University experience. The gateway courses specific to architecture in these first two years mainly apply to the CORE requirements that every student in the University must meet. These include: Introduction to the Built Environment, Architectural Drawing, and Architectural Histories. Other requirements include Calculus, Physics, and one of several science courses. Junior and senior year are devoted to design studio, technical courses and a variety of upper level electives both within and outside of the architecture program.

When and where can I study abroad?

The University of Maryland emphasizes the importance of study abroad. The School recognizes that architecture is meant to be experienced and studied beyond the history books. If you are interested in studying abroad for a semester you should contact your advisor to make sure that you are fulfilling all major requirements before the studio sequence (your Junior and Senior year). Semester-long study abroad sessions can usually be taken in the spring of your sophomore year and are through the University of Maryland Study Abroad Program.

The School of Architecture Planning and Preservation offers three to six week long programs in both the winter and summer terms. In each of these, students gain an understanding of the architecture and urbanism of foreign cultures through an intensive program of drawing, analysis and historical studies. With programs in countries including Russia, Egypt, Thailand, Italy, France, India, Turkey, and Peru, The Architecture Program prepares students for practice in a global economy.

What kinds of extracurricular activities are undergraduate students involved in?

Attending a big University should not be a worry. The architecture program is a very small academic environment that feels very much like a community. As a freshman, getting involved at the University of Maryland couldn't be easier with more than 300 clubs, hundreds of cultural events, fraternities and sororities, movies, speakers, concerts, and sports. Looking for a fencing club, a cappella singing group, mock trial team, a Buddhist Thought and Meditation Group or ballroom dancing? We've got you covered. Or maybe your interests lean towards the Terrapin Trail club or one of the scores of social and service fraternities and sororities. Maryland has an active and growing program of community and volunteer services that can connect you with local and national organizations for elder care, tutoring, mentoring, or environmental action. In the Architecture Program, you can get involved in the American Institute of Architecture Students, Emerging Green Builders, and Student Assembly and you can participate with faculty in a number of Program and School committees.

How will the University of Maryland undergraduate architecture program prepare me for graduate school?

Graduates of Maryland's School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation are regularly admitted to the nation's top graduate programs in Architecture, including our own. Recent graduates have also entered graduate programs in Law, Business, Urban Planning, Real Estate Development, Fashion and Graphic Design.

For further questions, please contact the Office of Undergraduate Admissions at um-admit@umd.edu.

Admitted transfer students should contact the Architecture Undergraduate Advisors on archadvise@umd.edu

Please direct questions about the Architecture Graduate Programs to grarchadvise@umd.edu

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