



University of Maryland  
School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation  
Architecture Program

# Diversity Plan

Approved Spring 2008

presented by:  
Architecture Program Diversity Task Force

We have become not a melting pot but a beautiful mosaic. Different people, different beliefs, different yearnings, different hopes, different dreams.

Jimmy Carter

The wave of the future is not the conquest of the world by a single dogmatic creed but the liberation of the diverse energies of free nations and free men.

John F. Kennedy

If we are to achieve a richer culture, rich in contrasting values, we must recognize the whole gamut of human potentialities, and so weave a less arbitrary social fabric, one in which each diverse human gift will find a fitting place.

Margaret Mead

## Introduction

In the Fall of 2005 the Architecture Program adopted its updated Strategic Plan and named as one of its major goals to: “Nurture a collegial, diverse, inclusive, and inter-generational community of students, scholars, and practitioners.”

Another of its goals, in relationship to intellectual and cultural diversity proposes to:

“Sustain and enhance expertise in urban design and building craft by integrating historical, technical, conceptual, and scholarly knowledge focused on making ‘place’ at diverse scales, in diverse cultures, and in diverse environmental conditions.”

It is from these strategic goals that this Diversity Plan emerges. It embraces the overriding principles of respect, collegiality, fairness, inclusiveness, accountability and mutual support. It is designed to provide a working mechanism for creating plans, measures and milestones to ensure that establishing and maintaining diversity within the Architecture Program, both socially and intellectually, remains a high priority.

Although, the arguments or rationale for a Diversity Plan for the Architecture Program could be based solely in its humanity, in ethical terms, there are also current circumstances and conditions that makes this the ideal time to embark on a proactive approach to addressing issues of diversity in our program. A brief summary of the supporting arguments and their accompanying challenges are as follows:

### **Future Demographics – A Representative Community**

The future demands it.

*Will our program be reflective of our broader environment?*

### **Sustainability & Relevance**

We must be able to be responsive to changing future conditions if we are to compete in tomorrow’s world.

*Are we presently prepared to attract and teach a broader constituency?*

### **The University’s Mandate**

The University of Maryland’s Diversity Initiative – transcending our negative history.

*What are the ways our program can contribute and respond to the University’s challenge?*

### **The State Of The Architecture Profession**

Minorities are dramatically under-represented in the Architectural Profession.

*Can the architecture schools, specifically our architecture program, do anything to reverse this trend?*

### **Our Own Strategic Plan**

The Architecture Program is committed to diversity through the goal statements referred to above.

*Would changes to existing policies and new actions reflect the seriousness of this commitment?*

### **NAAB Accreditation Mandate**

The Program’s accreditation depends on it. Our last review requested a diversity action plan.

*Will we be able to show significant progress by 2011 without embarking on those issues now?*

### **An Opportunity For Leadership**

Stepping up in support of change.

*Can our program provide the catalytic leadership to the entire School of Architecture Planning and Preservation and to other architecture programs?*

### **Toward A Richer Learning Environment For Our Students**

Diversity, both demographic and intellectual, provides a variety of experiences, perspectives and ways to learn from people different from ourselves.

*Will our students receive a more complete education as a result of their diverse experiences in our program?*

## The Ten-Point Diversity Plan

In seeking to address these challenges and opportunities, the following Ten-Point Diversity Plan is proposed for the Architecture Program. The components of that Plan are as follows:

- I. Mainstreaming Diversity – Establishing On-Going Mechanisms To Consistently Address Diversity Within The Program
- II. Emphasizing Diversity In The Program’s Promotional Material
- III. Recruiting A Diverse Student Body
- IV. Retaining A Diverse Student Body
- V. Recruiting A Diverse Faculty
- VI. Retaining A Diverse Faculty
- VII. Teaching A Diverse Curriculum
- VIII. Stressing Diversity In The Program’s Extra-Curricular Activities
- IX. Achieving Diversity In The Program’s Outside Reviewers
- X. Community Engagement As A Way To Promote Cultural Diversity

## Definitions

### **Underrepresented groups**

“Underrepresented groups,” as used in this document, refers to those demographic groups who currently are not represented in the discipline of architecture commensurate with the group’s representation in the demographics of the United States. Traditionally these groups have been disenfranchised from the discipline of architecture on the basis of race, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, religious/cultural affiliation or physical disabilities. It also includes individuals whose viewpoint, interests and background expand the Program’s current perspective and intellectual dialogue.

### **Diversity**

Consider this quote from Rupert W. Nacoste Phd, Vice Provost for Diversity and African American Affairs at North Carolina State University:

“At North Carolina State University diversity is said to exist when the mix of people from a wide variety of niches in society is such that the occurrence of a conflict of ideas is inescapable. So defined and conceptualized, diversity then, is at the heart of the university’s academic mission.”

UNIVERSITY OF

**The Diversity Plan**

ARCHITECTURE  
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PRESERVATION

MARYLAND

## I. Mainstreaming Diversity – Establishing On-Going Mechanisms To Consistently Address Diversity Within The Program

**Expected Outcome:** The discussion and promotion of the diversity goals of the Architecture Program's Strategic Plan will become a permanent structured commitment.

### Objectives:

Identify and focus the program's many efforts to reinforce a diversity agenda.

### Actions:

- a) The Director of the Architecture Program shall create, with the approval of the faculty, a standing faculty committee, called the Diversity Committee, which shall include student and administrative representatives.
- b) The role of the Committee shall be:
  - to promote diversity of the student body, faculty, administrative staff, curriculum, and extra-curricula programs within the Architecture program;
  - to assist the Director, in the setting of diversity goals within the programs various activities and relationships;
  - to review the actions and activities of the program and report annually on its progress in achieving related diversity goals;
  - to hear and provide counsel to the Program Director regarding actions brought before any of its grievance process regarding issues of discrimination.
- c) The Director of the Architecture Program shall promote and encourage the formulation of focused student groups to address the issues of their particular diverse condition within the architecture program's student body and meet with each such group, or its representative(s), at least once during the academic year. The intent of the formulation and on-going communication with such groups shall be:
  - to provide a direct communicative link between individually diverse groups and the Director of the Architecture Program;
  - to sensitize the Program Director to the various issues that relate to those individual groups;
  - to provide the Director with a forum for the discussion of potential actions, activities or policies of the Architecture Program as they may relate to such groups.

## II. Emphasizing Diversity In The Program's Promotional Material

**Expected Outcome:** The widest spectrum of student and faculty demographic groups will be represented in the Program's promotional materials. The promotional material will be illustrative of a diverse, inclusive, and collegial environment of students and faculty passionate about architecture.

### Objectives:

Seek to assure that the Program promotes the inclusion of underrepresented persons in its promotional materials.

### Actions:

- a) The Program Director shall request members of the Diversity Committee to provide regular input regarding communications strategies, including type of media, and character, quality, and representation of the program. The Director with the advice of the Diversity Committee will work to ensure that diversity is reflected in all images of the program and to encourage featured presentations of diverse members of the program's community in its media communications. For example, the School Web pages will include prominent female students, faculty and alumni as well as students, faculty and alumni of color and differing cultures. The work should be representative of the highest quality work produced in the program, and the wide spectrum of student, faculty and alumni/ae demographics.

## II. Emphasizing Diversity In The Program's Promotional Material | Actions (continued)

b) A separate section on diversity should be established on the program website with links to:

- Architecture Program Diversity Plan
- Architecture Program Diversity Committee
- "Alumni Spotlight" (with feature stories on alumni; rotating and should include alumni of widest range of demographic groups)
- AIAS
- "The Architecture Program in the Community" to feature community engagement projects such as partnerships with local schools for mentoring, career days, etc.
- Discovering Architecture Workshop
- Courses on Non-western architecture
- Other efforts to promote diversity

## III. Recruiting A Diverse Student Body

**Expected Outcome:** The Program will reflect a diverse student body which includes both individuals from underrepresented groups as well as individuals whose viewpoint, interests and background expand the Program's perspective and intellectual dialogue.

### Objectives:

Increase the percentage of diverse students of the Architecture Program at the graduate and undergraduate level.

### Actions:

- a) Expand relationships with regional high schools whose student population is primarily students of a diverse background.
- b) Provide Architecture Program information to HBCUs, HACUs institutions to increase diversity at the graduate level
- c) Develop a more direct connection with mentoring programs such as the ACE (Architecture, Construction, and Engineering program
- d) Continue to provide and expand Dean's Fund Scholarship for students to attend ARCH 150: Discovering Architecture
- e) Establish relationships with academic units on campus to broaden recruitment at graduate level.
- f) More actively provide information through National Name Exchange, program of the Graduate School.
- g) Host a recruitment event inviting faculty from regional schools which have direct links to qualified diverse students.

## IV. Retaining A Diverse Student Body

**Expected Outcome:** The Program has identified the challenges to the retention of a diverse student body and has developed programs to remove or lessen the potential obstacles.

### Objectives:

- Identify aspects of the existing program which present challenges to the academic and social success of particular segments of a diverse student body; propose programs/actions to address these issues.
- Identify conditions or circumstances of particular diverse segments of the student body which create obstacles to their academic or social success; propose programs/actions to address these issues.
- Encourage the creation of representative groups within the student body who can advocate the cause of specific diverse populations.

### Actions:

- a) The Architecture Program's Diversity Committee, along with the School's Equity officer shall seek to develop approaches to addressing the first two objectives above.
- b) The Program Director shall study institutionalizing a formal mentoring program for all students, with particular sensitivity to particular diverse segments of the student population.
- c) The Program Director should promote the establishment of a student chapter of NOMA – National Organization of Minority Architects.

## V. Recruiting A Diverse Faculty

**Expected Outcomes:** The Program has developed means to seek, identify and attract a diverse pool of candidates for both full and part-time faculty positions and have been successful in hiring representative candidates from this pool. The ultimate goal of such recruitment is to maintain a balanced faculty which includes individuals from various under-represented groups.

### Objectives:

- To continue best practices mandated by the University's Equity Council including the inclusion of diverse members within the search committee as well as the inclusion of diverse candidates.
- To develop diversity standards and processes for recruiting adjunct faculty that are consistent with University guidelines and expectations.
- To systematically identify diverse candidates from within the program's alumni who may be considered for potential future faculty positions.
- To explore the development of stronger relationships with regional HBCU programs of architecture where diverse candidates might abide such as Morgan State University, Howard University and Hampton University.

### Actions:

- a) The Program Director with the assistance of the Diversity Committee shall develop diversity standards for the search and recruitment of adjunct faculty with the goal that those standards are identified and incorporated by Fall '08.
- b) The Program Director shall seek to identify and locate suitable alumni who represent diverse backgrounds and contact them to determine their interests in assisting the program through roles as visiting critics, adjunct or future full time faculty.
- c) The Program Director shall seek to meet with the leadership of regional HCBUs on an annual basis to explore programs of mutual concern regarding the issue of diversity within the profession.
- d) The Diversity Committee shall seek to identify the obstacles to the successful recruitment of certain diverse candidates for adjunct and full time faculty positions.

## VI. Retaining A Diverse Faculty

**Expected Outcomes:** The Program has identified the challenges to the retention of a diverse faculty and has developed programs to remove or lessen the potential obstacles.

### Objectives:

- Identify aspects of the existing program which present challenges to the academic development, promotion and social success of particular segments of a diverse faculty; propose programs/actions to address these issues.
- Identify conditions or circumstances of particular diverse segments of the faculty which create obstacles to their academic development, promotion or social success; propose programs/actions to address these issues.

### Actions:

- a) The Program Director shall study institutionalizing a formal mentoring program for all new faculty, with particular sensitivity to new diverse faculty members and their particular conditions.
- b) The Program Director shall establish annual meetings with all new faculty to identify problematic issues as they arise.
- c) The Program Director and the School's Equity officer shall conduct systematic exit interviews with fulltime faculty who leave the program to determine if the person's diversity status or the environment within the program contributed to their departure. Ascertain what, if anything, the Program could have done differently to have retained the person. Analyze this information and summarize it in an annual equity report.



## VII. Teaching A Diverse Curriculum

**Expected Outcomes:** The Program includes the study of works of historically underrepresented architects, non-western architectural philosophy and architects with a variety of professional viewpoints throughout its curriculum, and particularly in its required courses.

### Objectives:

- Increase the extent to which the contributions of women, persons of color, persons with physical disabilities, and gays/lesbians are included in the architecture course offerings.
- Increase the opportunity for study of non-western architecture and theory within the curriculum.
- Expand the range of viewpoints and pedagogical opportunities to engage architecture.

### Actions:

- a) The Program's Diversity Committee will meet with the Curriculum Committee to explore how information about underrepresented individuals can become an integral part of studio courses.
- b) Faculty will be encouraged to develop a broader range of elective courses that expand pedagogical opportunities to engage architecture, and diversify the range of viewpoints presented to students.
- c) Encourage all courses to promote direct engagement in diverse communities as a learning experience.
- d) The Professional Practice course, and Careers in Architecture course will discuss as part of the curriculum, the history and current conditions of diversity in the profession.

## VIII. Stressing Diversity In The Program's Extra-Curricular Activities

**Expected Outcomes:** The Program includes opportunities to engage extra curricular activities that promote the rich and diverse opportunities for engaging and understanding our built environment including its exhibitions, lectures, service, social, and other activities.

### Objectives:

- Students should be exposed to a broad range of cultural, ethnic, and societal situations in order to broaden their understanding of architecture, urbanism, and its allied disciplines.
- Through lectures, exhibitions, field trips, community interaction, service, and service-learning activities students can gain a broader and deeper understanding of the context in which our discipline is practiced.
- Faculty and administrators should strive to consider and provide extra curricular activities that are representational of the profession's best aspirations toward diversity.

### Actions:

- a) The Program Director shall direct the lecture series coordinator to consider diversity when devising a program of extra curricular lectures on a semester-by-semester basis. The lecture series coordinator is to provide a diversity report on a semester-by-semester basis illustrating the manner in which the goals of diversity were addressed and achieved in the series.
- b) The Program Director shall direct the gallery-exhibition coordinator to develop a diversity agenda when planning and installing gallery exhibits. A yearly diversity report is to be submitted to the Program Director illustrating the manner in which the goals of diversity were addressed and achieved in the exhibition program.
- c) The Program's faculty should consider, field trip, service, and service learning venues that promote a broader understanding of the diverse cultural and intellectual environment in which the practice of architecture takes place.
- d) The Program's Career Fair activities shall only include firms which support diversity and who indicate that they have, or are in the process of developing an internal diversity plan within their own offices.

## IX. Achieving Diversity In The Program's Outside Reviewers

**Expected Outcomes:** Outside reviewers to the architecture program regularly reflect a wide spectrum of ethnic, racial and gender conditions as well as a wide range of educational and philosophical backgrounds.

### **Objectives:**

- Invite reviewers and consultants to participate in all aspects of the Architecture Program that are representative of the diversity agenda.
- Avoid the homogeneous “all white male” stereotype that is so prevalent in many student reviews.
- Encourage reviewers to engage issues of diversity and share their experiences with students when and where appropriate.

### **Actions:**

- a) Faculty members should consider diversity when assembling a panel of reviewers or consultants to studios and other coursework. Faculty members should seek input from students and alumni to ensure that the objectives of diversity are represented in the review of student work.
- b) The Program should proceed with the maintenance of a list of persons who have been invited to participate in reviews of student work as required by the National Architectural Accrediting Board to maintain. The Director of the Program should require that such lists be maintained in a semester-by-semester report from faculty members including the manner in which the goals of diversity were addressed and achieved through its invited guests. (All studios and courses that receive instructional funding from the Program must justify expenditure of these funds from a diversity perspective.)

## X. Community Engagement As A Way To Promote Cultural Diversity

**Expected Outcomes:** The Program is consistently engaged within a wide range of its neighboring communities, such as Prince George's County (as well as elsewhere in the State of Maryland), where a high concentration of underrepresented demographic are represented.

### **Objectives:**

- The Architecture Program will actively seek stronger relationships with community organizations, institutions, and government, and leverage those relationships to engage community of diverse demographics.
- Such engagement promotes architecture as possible career path, and awareness and appreciation of the built environment to the very groups underrepresented in our program.
- Community engagement may also serve as a longer-term recruitment strategy, by increasing the visibility of the school in the community, and presenting architecture as an attractive career to diverse students at an early age.

### **Actions:**

- a) The Program Director should establish a task force to explore the formation of a Community Design Center.
- b) Increase the extent to which the Program engages the community through design projects.
- c) Faculty should be strongly encouraged to offer service on local and regional community and municipal boards, and participate in public school events that promote architecture as a profession.

## Contributors

The collective authors of this document include the Diversity Task Force 2006-07 as well as the continued effort of the Diversity Task Force of 2007-08:

Gary A. Bowden FAIA, Professor of Practice, Faculty Co-Chair, 2006-08  
Kristina Crenshaw, Graduate Student, 2006-07  
Ronit Eisenbach, Visiting Associate Professor, 2006-08  
Deborah Oakley, Assistant Professor, 2006-08  
Brian Kelly AIA, Associate Professor and Program Director, 2006-08  
Stanley Mathurin, Graduate Student, 2007-08  
Corey Powell, Graduate Student Co-Chair, 2006-07  
Jay Ranaweera, Undergraduate Student 2006-07, Student Co-Chair 2007-08  
Lee Waldrep, Associate Dean, 2006-08  
Isaac Williams, Assistant Professor, 2006-08  
Joanna Yu, Undergraduate Student, 2006-07  
Irimi Zhupa, Undergraduate Student, 2007-08

## Resources

- The Equity Officer of the School of Architecture Planning and Preservation
- Architecture Program's Academic/Studio Task Force Policy
- The University's Human Relations Code - <http://www.president.umd.edu/policies/vi100b.html>
- University of Maryland /Diversity <http://www.umd.edu/diversity/>
- National Name Exchange <http://www.grad.washington.edu/nameexch/national/>
- List of HBCUs - <http://www.ed.gov/about/inits/list/whhbcu/edlite-list.html>
- Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities ([www.hacu.net](http://www.hacu.net))
- NOMA - <http://www.noma.net/local/>

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**Kathryn H. Anthony** | Author, *Designing for Diversity: Gender, Race and Ethnicity in the Architectural Profession*;  
Professor: School of Architecture, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

**Marshall E. Purnell FAIA** | 2008 National President – AIA;  
Design principal of Devroux + Purnell Architects and Planners PC, Washington, DC;  
Former Faculty member of University of Maryland Architecture Program

**Geraldine Forbes Isias AIA** | 2003 Past President – ACSA;  
Director Architecture Program, School of Architecture & Planning, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM

**Theodore C. Landsmark Ph.D, Assoc AIA** | 2007 President – ACSA;  
President/CEO Boston Architecture Center

**Robert E. Waters, Jr.** | Special Assistant to the President for Equity and Diversity; Chair, Equity Council – University of Maryland

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