

CTE QUESTIONS FOR THE ARCHITECTURE DEPARTMENT Fall 2013

1. How strong is the occupational demand for the program?

Employment for Architects is projected to grow 24% from 2010 to 2020, (according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.). Current demographic trends will result in a greater need for architects in the near future. As campus buildings age many school districts will build new facilities and renovate existing ones. As the population continues to live longer and baby boomers retire, there will be a need for more healthcare facilities, nursing homes and retirement communities.

The Occupational demand for architecture students is strong because there are so many different types of jobs the students can go into with just a foundational education in architecture. The ECC Architecture Department places students in not only local architects' offices, but with engineers, surveyors, developers, real estate offices, construction companies and other disciplines as well.

2. How has the demand changed in the last 5 years and what is the outlook for the next 5?

The occupational demand is steadily increasing, there was a recession in the construction industry over the last 5 years but now it is slowly turning around and banks are starting to lend more money to developers and homeowners, which in turn has jumpstarted the architecture business back to where it used to be. As I stated in the first question above, the Bureau of Labor Statistics says that architecture is projected to grow 24% by 2020.

All of the architects that are on our advisory committee said they have more work this past year than any of the previous 5 years so we can already see a surge in the local architecture business. We placed 6 students in offices around the South Bay over the past 6 months. I have had several architects call me since we started the fall semester, as well, looking for students to hire because their business is picking up.

3. What is the districts need for the program?

There are no other architecture programs in our district so the need is great because local professionals have no other institutions to be able to get potential employees.

4. What is the State's need for the program?

There are roughly 35 community colleges that have Architecture programs in the state of California and so about a third of all the community colleges in California have an architecture department or program of some kind. With all the new technology coming on the scene in the Sustainable and Green new building codes now being enforced, the need is great for our program being taught at community colleges. All Architecture programs are impacted at the University level as well so there will be more students taking classes at community colleges until they can get accepted into a University program.

5. How does the program address needs that are not met by similar programs in the region?

Our Architecture Program has several courses that no other community colleges have in our region of Southern California. The Design Build Studio course promotes inter-discipline work between architecture and construction students in our respective labs, students learn more about the other discipline as they design, then build new innovative structures. We have a Structural Analysis course that no other college in the region offers that helps the student know how to work and interact with the structural engineer better when they go to work for architects. The new Environmental Technology courses will teach our architecture students all about how to design and create LEED certified buildings that are both sustainable and green.

6. Are the students satisfied with their preparation for employment?

Many students have come back to our department after they have graduated to let us teachers know how they are doing in industry. They tell us the software they are working on in their respective offices and how they apply what we taught them in the various architecture classes here. The students let us know what they are

experiencing out in industry and that usually, in turn, leads us to put future wishes in software, and industrial machines on our plan builder.

7. Are the employers satisfied with the level of preparation of our graduates?

We had 18 professionals at our last advisory committee meeting, which was held last spring. Almost all of them have employed one, or more, of our students at one time. The committee members always have input on what and how we teach our students. We were told in the past that the student needs to understand which drawings are required to obtain a building permit. So we put emphasis on that requirement in the following Architecture courses: Architecture 150a, 150b, 119,121,125 and 179. The point of this last statement is that the faculty listen to the needs of the advisory committee employers and act on what they tell us they need. They have expressed satisfaction in what we teach and show it by hiring more of our graduates each year as their business grows.

The Universities that we transfer students to are also satisfied with the level of preparation of our students before they transfer. We transfer more each year and are working out articulation agreements with new colleges that are coming on the scene as well, so our students will be able to transfer the maximum amount of units with them when they leave us.

8. What are the completion, success and employment rates for the students?

We graduated 12 students last spring. We placed 10 students in jobs around the South Bay area. Most of our students are trying to get enough education to obtain a job so we encourage them to get a certificate and/or an A.S. Degree so they can put that on their resume. Many students come to build up their portfolio so they can get accepted in a university architecture program. We transferred 14 students last spring to various universities, not only in California but around the US as well. We try and encourage the student to not leave our program until they have at least a certificate.

9. What is the role of the Advisory Committee and what impact does it have on the program?

Our Advisory committee is composed of many ECC Alumni and other working professionals from the South Bay area. Their role is to evaluate what we are teaching to make sure we are being current with the information we are teaching in our courses. They review our projects and give us feedback on how we can make them more realistic.

They also act as support in the form of letting our students come take tours of their offices, or they take our students on some of their jobsites, so they can see buildings under various levels of construction. They also volunteer to come do critique reviews and lectures to our program about their practice and lend some good advice to students.

10. Is there a licensure exam for students in our field?

Yes but the student cannot take the Licensing Exam, (referred to as the A.R.E. Architectural Registration Exam,) until they have their Bachelor's Degree in Architecture, and over 5,000 hours being an intern. The average El Camino Architecture student does not take the test until many years after they leave El Camino. El Camino's Program teaches the basic foundational information the student needs to know to get a job and then they can begin to earn these hours of internship before they can take the test. We actually teach many code and engineering informational topics that a candidate would see on the exam, which would not be taught at the University level in any of their coursework. Becoming a "Licensed Architect" is not the goal of every architecture student, some just want to be a team player in an office, such as a Computer Aided Design operator, or model maker and work in the industry as an employee for numerous offices.