



IIT College of Architecture

About the College

In 1895, the trustees of Armour Institute (a predecessor of Illinois Institute of Technology) and the Art Institute of Chicago merged the architecture offerings of both schools to create the Chicago School of Architecture of Armour Institute. The program produced generations of influential architects who rebuilt Chicago into a modern city after the Chicago fire.

IIT College of Architecture forged its Modernist reputation at the hands of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, the former head of the Bauhaus in Dessau, Germany, who was head of IIT's Department of Architecture from 1938–1958. He developed a curriculum that was to become standard pedagogy: students first learned to draw, then mastered the use of building materials, and finally learned the fundamental principles of construction before undertaking building design.

During the 1990s, the college began to refashion its program to incorporate fundamental principles while having students develop information through discovery, integrate it within the core of learning, and then apply this knowledge to increasingly complex design decisions.

Mies' masterpiece, S. R. Crown Hall, is home to IIT's architecture program, and was designated a Chicago Landmark in 1997 and a National Historic Landmark in 2001.

Dean: Donna V. Robertson, FAIA
John and Jeanne Rowe Chair

Divisions of Study

Undergraduate Program

For decades, IIT College of Architecture has offered the professional Bachelor of Architecture degree, a comprehensive, five-year program of study accredited by the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB). Recognized by the American Institute of Architects for excellence, the integrated curriculum provides students with a fundamental body of knowledge and skills by coordinating design studios with courses in structures, mechanical/electrical systems, housing and ecological planning, architectural history, professional practice, and digital design. General education courses in math and physics are tailored to architectural concepts, while humanities and social science courses emphasize broad social and global concerns of the built environment.

Following three years of foundation studios, students enroll in two years of advanced studios and seven architecture electives as they define their professional identity and specializations. In addition to the college's Paris Program, study abroad opportunities in many parts of the world allow students to gain a global perspective during summer and semester courses with faculty at IIT and other architecture schools.

In the United States, most state registration boards require a degree from an accredited professional degree program as a prerequisite for licensure. As the sole agency authorized to accredit U.S. professional degree programs in architecture, the NAAB has recently granted IIT College of Architecture a six-year term of accreditation.

Design/Build Studio

IIT's Design/Build Studio is a unique method of teaching architectural design through construction. Developed by Associate Professor Frank Flury, it gives students the opportunity to test their imaginations and participate in important community-service projects.

Mies' Master Plan

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe was commissioned to design an innovative master plan for IIT. His vision defined a new campus for the university, selected in 1976 by the American Institute of Architects as one of the top 200 architectural achievements in the United States. In 2005, the National Park Service added IIT's Main Campus—which houses the largest collection of Mies buildings anywhere—to the National Register of Historic Places.

Academic Degrees

The College of Architecture awards bachelor's, master's, and the doctor of philosophy degrees:

Architecture (B.Arch., M.Arch., M.S.Arch., M.S.Arch. [specialization in Sustainable New Cities], Ph.D.)
Master of Integrated Building Delivery (M.I.B.D.)
Master of Landscape Architecture (M.L.A.)

Contact Information

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IIT College of Architecture

Graduate Programs

The college's graduate professional and post-professional degree programs emphasize the integration of architectural design, theory, and technology. Through rigorous work and critical thought, the college promotes innovation and underscores refinement with the objective of developing outstanding proficiency in the practice of architecture and landscape architecture.

Master of Architecture

The Master of Architecture first professional degree serves those students seeking a consummate professional education. The degree is accredited by the NAAB and is a necessary component for licensure in the field. The curriculum addresses principles of design concepts, materials, construction, systems, planning, history, and visual judgment, which are fundamental for development of the creative process. The curriculum is progressive with required core coursework offering foundation knowledge, skills, and vocabulary, while upper-level study seeks a broader understanding of architecture by combining theoretical exploration with practical considerations.

Master of Science in Architecture

The Master of Science in Architecture offers advanced architectural study that builds upon knowledge acquired from a first professional degree. The program combines courses and in-depth research concerning a specific area of concentration, culminating in the completion of a thesis. Students pursue a high level of architectural research, analysis, and synthesis through thesis work in design, structures, systems, digital media, and a variety of other topics. Areas of faculty excellence in the thesis program include: high-rise and long-span design; environmentally conscious design; advanced information systems; innovative design methodologies and architecture; advanced programming issues in housing, airport design, and other topics; advanced critical analysis and history/theory; sustainable new cities; and critical and theoretical assessments pertaining to construction and the built environment.

Landscape Architecture

The Program of Landscape Architecture is the only such professional program in Chicago, graduating its first class of Master of Landscape Architecture students in May 2009. The Master of Landscape Architecture underwent an initial review for accreditation by the Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board. Accreditation status will be confirmed by fall 2010.

Integrated Building Delivery

The Master of Integrated Building Delivery program educates architects to more actively participate in, guide, and/or undertake the full range of entrepreneurial and innovative activities comprising design, develop, and build initiatives.

Doctor of Philosophy in Architecture

The Ph.D. program fosters and promotes research in architecture that is driven by technology, to advance knowledge and scholarship in architecture. The program is pursuing the current boundaries of knowledge and exploring new ideas in areas such as high-rise building; energy-conscious technology; computer applications; emerging urbanisms; and history, theory, and technology.

Projects and Collaborations

- **Experiment in Architecture** is a two-week summer program for high school students. Students tour Chicago, complete a series of design projects, and attend lectures by IIT faculty. The program is intended to inform students about the study and practice of architecture, and architecture education and careers.
- **IntroARCH: Graduate Preparatory Course** is designed to prepare students for the graduate architectural studio sequence at IIT. It is highly recommended for students embarking on the three-year professional M.Arch. degree (those without prior architectural studio experience) and is recommended for students embarking on the two-year M.Arch. The course is also open to those who are not currently seeking a degree but are interested in pursuing architectural graduate studies in the future.
- **Sustainability** is at the heart of many faculty research projects at the college. Under the auspices of IIT's Wanger Institute for Sustainable Energy Research, Professor Peter Land is leading an interdisciplinary research program to develop innovative, sustainable high-rise buildings. Students in Associate Studio Professor Paul Pettigrew's course Architecture and Furniture examine the relationship between architecture, furniture, and the environment. Martin Felsen, studio associate professor, and his firm, UrbanLab, won a national competition sponsored by the History Channel for Growing Water, which envisions Chicago as a city that could recycle 100 percent of its water via a system of eco-boulevards.
- **The Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat**, founded in 1969 and now based at IIT, is an international not-for-profit organization supported by architecture, engineering, planning, development, and construction professionals, and designed to facilitate exchanges among those involved in all aspects of tall buildings.

ABOUT IIT

Founded in 1890, Illinois Institute of Technology is a private, Ph.D.-granting university that awards degrees in engineering, the sciences, architecture, law, design, psychology, humanities, and business. IIT's interprofessional, technology-focused curriculum is designed to provide distinctive and relevant education in an environment of scientific, technological, and professional knowledge creation and innovation.