



April 6, 2017

Dear Members of the NAAB Board:

I am writing to offer a post-NAAB visit update from the University of South Florida's School of Architecture and Community Design (SACD). Let me first offer my compliments to the NAAB Team led by NCARB representative Jeanne Jackson. The team was very well prepared, focused, rigorous and receptive to our work, ideas and concerns. I have either led or been deeply involved in several accreditation visits and I found this team to be exceptional in every manner.

The Team found two "unmet" items in the final draft of the Visiting Team Report (VTR):

I.2.1 Human Resources and Human Resource Development: [The visiting team found the school faculty to be overburdened due to the loss of a faculty line following the departure of a faculty member. Further, the program is lacking in adequate IT support and administrative support.](#)

I.2.2 Physical Resources: [The visiting team found the SACD physical facility to be inadequate in terms of space needs, types of spaces, and functionality.](#)

I am pleased to report the response from the University has been swift. The week after the NAAB visit, I spent 90 minutes with the USF President Judy Genshaft and Provost Ralph Wilcox. We discussed the strengths and aspirations of the program, visited the Team Room Exhibit and reviewed the unmet items listed above. Both expressed concerns and a strong willingness to address these issues in a timely manner.

I.2.1 Human Resources.

The Provost quickly arranged a meeting with USF VP in charge of IT, Sydney Fernandez. I, along with faculty members Trent Green and Taryn Sabia, met with Mr. Fernandez and IT senior staff Jason Hair for almost two hours. The upshot was the understanding that IT has failed to learn the "culture / business" of the SACD. We have formed a sub-committee charged with developing a list of "services" the school expects and needs USF IT to provide. This will include at least one full-time staff member reporting to the SACD Director and solely dedicated to the complex academic and research missions of the SACD. I believe the level of support required of the school should also include a second position (perhaps part-time).

The Provost recently announced support for "high level, high performing" faculty hires across the university. These are expected to be hires with established research agenda offering prestige and/or substantial grant support to the university. I forwarded two names to Provost Wilcox in January. He responded last week, saying he understood the appeal of the proposed hires and inquired as to what kind of investment would be required to bring each of them to USF. He also asked for a summary of the strategic output each would bring to the program (enrollment, degrees and/or program quality, etc). So, it seems there is at least a conversation to be had regarding new faculty lines. I am in the process of following up with the proposed candidates and Provost Wilcox.

I.2.2 Physical Resources.

During our post-NAAB visit meeting, the President and Provost seemed to understand the limitations of our building as currently configured. At one point the President stated she would be more than willing to assist in any fund raising required to upgrade and/or add to the current facility. I find this very encouraging.

SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE AND COMMUNITY DESIGN

University of South Florida • 4202 E. Fowler Ave. HMS 301 • Tampa, Florida 33620-8340
(813) 974-4031 • FAX (813) 974-2557 • www.arch.usf.edu

I have since met with representatives from the USF Facilities and Physical Plant to discuss the building. They explained new procedures designed to improve building maintenance (elevator and flooding issues, specifically). We also discussed the issue of acquiring and upgrading additional space in the existing building. While I found the Facilities and Physical Plant staff somewhat resistant, we agreed to develop both a short term and long term vision for the building. To this end we have established a SACD sub-committee to review the building and develop the short and long term vision as agreed. We will continue to advise the President and Provost of our interests with respect to the building. Associate Provost Kofi Glover has become involved with this matter and will work with us to address our needs and concerns outlined in the VTR.

Finally, and coincidentally, the Provost has just requested proposals for design related programs following a meeting with the State of Florida Board of Governors. The College of the Arts (the home of the SACD) has developed a schematic proposal addressing our interest in Landscape, Industrial Design, and an interdisciplinary approach to Design and Technology. I think this is relevant for it suggests a broader interest in and possible support for design related disciplines across campus. In summary, I will say that the items unmet in our recent accreditation visit are largely out the immediate control of the SACD administration, faculty and staff. That said, it seems we have the attention of the university administration and while on their radar, we are optimistic that we will receive the support required to address the unmet items as described in the VTR.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the VTR and offer an update on the university's initial reaction.

Sincerely,



Robert M. MacLeod, AIA
Director & Professor