Architecture at Chicago

Guide to Undergraduate Programs

UIC

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The UIC School of Architecture

Architecture is one of the most powerful tools available for imagining possible futures and reshaping our world. At UIC, we believe in a generalist approach to architectural education—fostering **critical thinking, theoretical speculation, open-ended experimentation, and a "we-can-make-it-happen" mindset**.

Its role in contemporary debates and its position in Chicago make the school a potent **cultural hub**. Events, publications, fabrication labs, networking with active practitioners, and a renowned faculty that offers a diverse range of original and stimulating studios and seminars all make the school an exceptional environment for the personal growth required to enter a competitive professional world.

Studying at UIC is a unique experience in which students are mentored to **find their voices and get involved**.
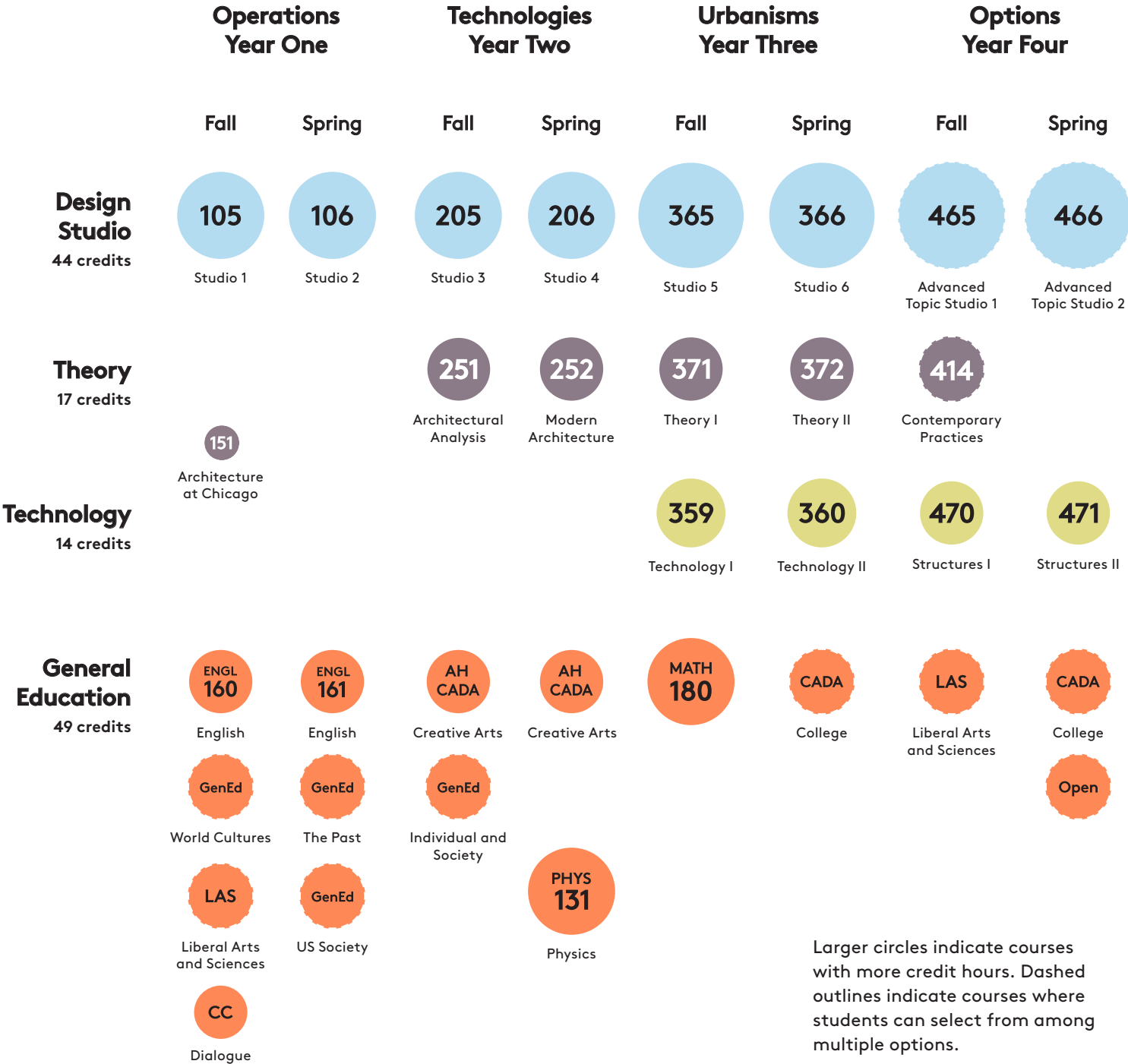
The UIC campus, with Architecture + Design Studios highlighted.

Bachelor of Science in Architecture

The four-year Bachelor of Science in Architecture (BSArch) is a comprehensive pre-professional education in architecture within the broader context of liberal arts study provided by the university. Consisting of an eight-semester studio sequence in architecture and urbanism supported by coursework in technology and theory, the program provides an intensive introduction to the discipline of architecture.

The BSArch equips students with design skills and critical tools that enable them to follow a variety of career paths. While many graduates continue their education in a professional Master of Architecture degree program, others pursue work or graduate study in fields such as law, graphic design, real estate management, urban design and planning, and business.

The BSArch curriculum.

	Operations Year One		Technologies Year Two		Urbanisms Year Three		Options Year Four	
	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring
Design Studio 44 credits	105 Studio 1	106 Studio 2	205 Studio 3	206 Studio 4	365 Studio 5	366 Studio 6	465 Advanced Topic Studio 1	466 Advanced Topic Studio 2
Theory 17 credits			251 Architectural Analysis	252 Modern Architecture	371 Theory I	372 Theory II	414 Contemporary Practices	
Technology 14 credits	151 Architecture at Chicago				359 Technology I	360 Technology II	470 Structures I	471 Structures II
General Education 49 credits	ENGL 160 English; GenEd World Cultures; LAS Liberal Arts and Sciences; CC Dialogue	ENGL 161 English; GenEd The Past; GenEd US Society	AH CADA Creative Arts; GenEd Individual and Society	AH CADA Creative Arts; PHYS 131 Physics	MATH 180	CADA College	LAS Liberal Arts and Sciences	CADA College; Open

Larger circles indicate courses with more credit hours. Dashed outlines indicate courses where students can select from among multiple options.
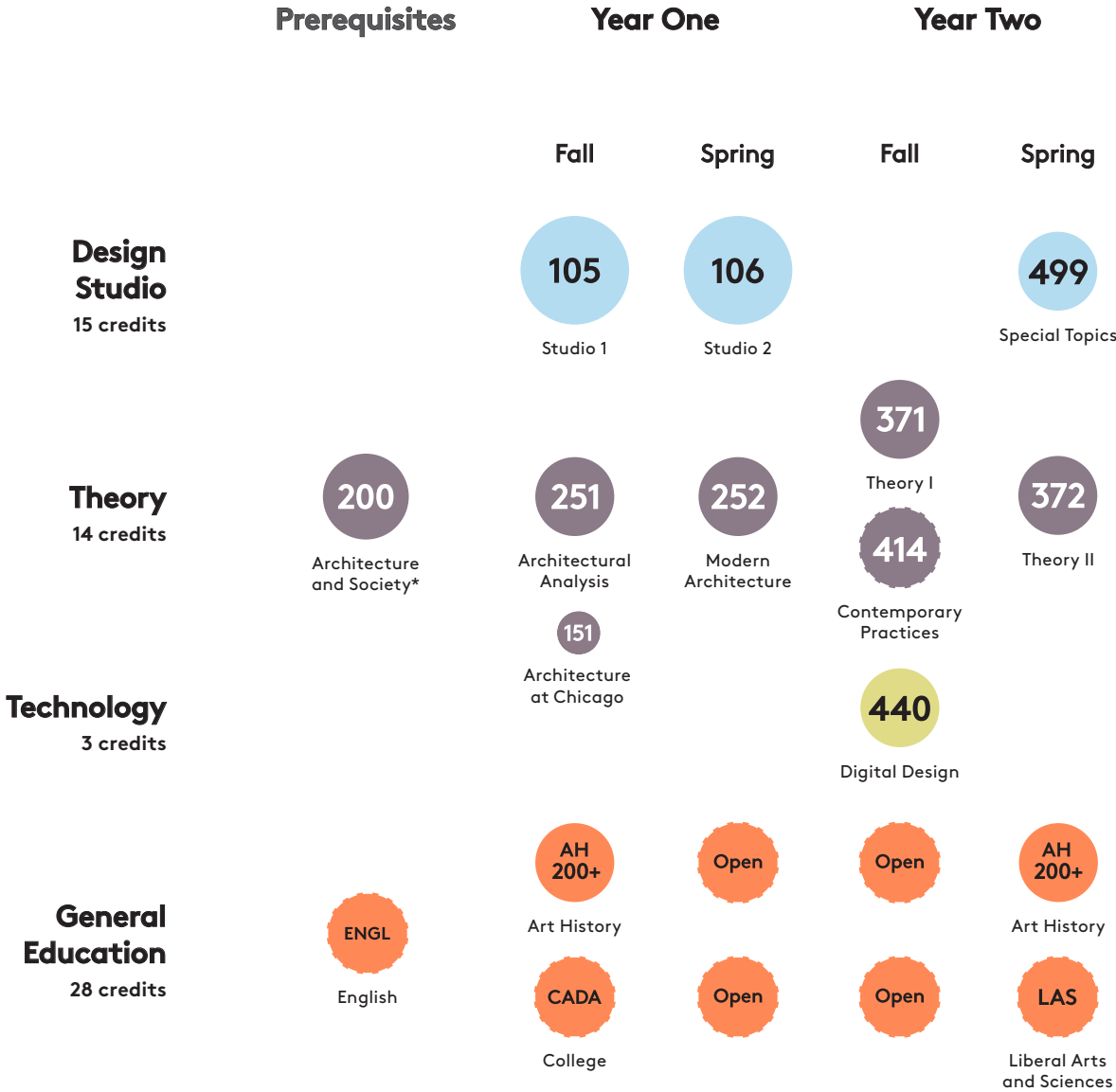
Bachelor of Arts in Architectural Studies

The Bachelor of Arts in Architectural Studies is an upper-level undergraduate program that uses architecture and related design practices as a lens through which to understand the history of ideas and cultural invention. The program also exposes students to the synthetic environment of the design studio, providing an introductory experience that some students may wish to pursue again later in graduate education.

Beyond prerequisite coursework, the program involves classes taken across junior and senior years. The BA admits undergraduate students who have completed two years of college, either at UIC or at other institutions. The curriculum also includes electives from other departments at UIC, enabling students to pursue and potentially minor in other areas of interest.

The BA in Architectural Studies curriculum.

	Prerequisites	Year One		Year Two	
		Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring
Design Studio 15 credits		105 Studio 1	106 Studio 2		499 Special Topics
Theory 14 credits	200 Architecture and Society*	251 Architectural Analysis / 151 Architecture at Chicago	252 Modern Architecture	371 Theory I / 414 Contemporary Practices	372 Theory II
Technology 3 credits				440 Digital Design	
General Education 28 credits	ENGL English	AH 200+ Art History / CADA College	Open / Open	Open / Open	AH 200+ Art History / LAS Liberal Arts and Sciences

*Arch 200 is a prerequisite for students already enrolled at UIC. Transfer students from other institutions take Arch 200 in their first semester in the program.

Larger circles indicate courses with more credit hours. Dashed outlines indicate courses where students can select from among multiple options.

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Studio Culture

The design studio is the central place where the curriculum comes together. Students enrolled in studio courses are granted an individual studio space where they can store work and supplies. The School of Architecture relies on its studio environment to contribute to its culture of curiosity, rigor, enthusiasm, and ambition. Studios are supportive and respectful spaces that enable risk-taking, continuous conversation, and intensive collaboration.

Faculty member Aura Venckunaite discusses first-year work during a group desk critique, or "crit."

Students and faculty review drawings and models individually and collectively in the early stages of a design project, Fall 2019.

Students take part in an informal presentation of their models during studio time in faculty member Thomas Kelley's studio, Fall 2019.

Final Reviews

At the end of each semester, all students present final studio projects to their classmates and faculty. The school also invites guest critics from other schools and local architecture firms to offer feedback.

Students in both undergraduate programs are invited to attend the final reviews of all studios as a way to learn more about the work happening across the school and support the work of other students. For students in the first, second, and third years of the Bachelor of Science in Architecture program, reviews also provide a preview of what to expect in semesters ahead.

A fourth-year undergraduate studio final review, Spring 2019.

Facilities and Labs

Studios
All students enrolled in studio courses are assigned a desk for working and storing supplies each year. Undergraduate studios are located throughout the Architecture + Design Studios (A+D Studios) building, which the School of Architecture shares with the School of Design. Studios are organized as open spaces to encourage discussion and collaboration.

Project Lab
All students in the School of Architecture have access to a staffed and fully equipped wood- and metal-working shop within the building. The lab offers orientation and special topic workshops for students each semester.

Fabrication Lab
The School of Architecture and the School of Design jointly operate a fabrication lab, nicknamed the Fab Lab, on the first floor of the A+D Studios building. The facility includes several laser cutters and 3D printers as well as a CNC milling machine. After completing training, BSArch students have access to these machines in the third and fourth years of the program.

Print Lab
The Print Lab is open only to School of Architecture students and houses multiple plotters (large-format printers), as well as color copiers. Students can download software drivers to print to these machines over the school's wireless network. Tutorials and lab assistants are available to help with technical issues.

Building Access
A+D Studios is open to the public from 7am until 7pm Monday through Friday and closed on weekends and holidays. Students have twenty-four-seven keycard access to the building.

A student works in the Project Lab, the school's wood- and metal-working shop.

A student works in the Fabrication Lab, which houses the school's laser cutters and 3D printers.

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Student Work

The work on the following pages represents all four years of the undergraduate studio sequence, from the introductions to architectural techniques and thinking of the first year to the various options available to BSArch students in their fourth year.

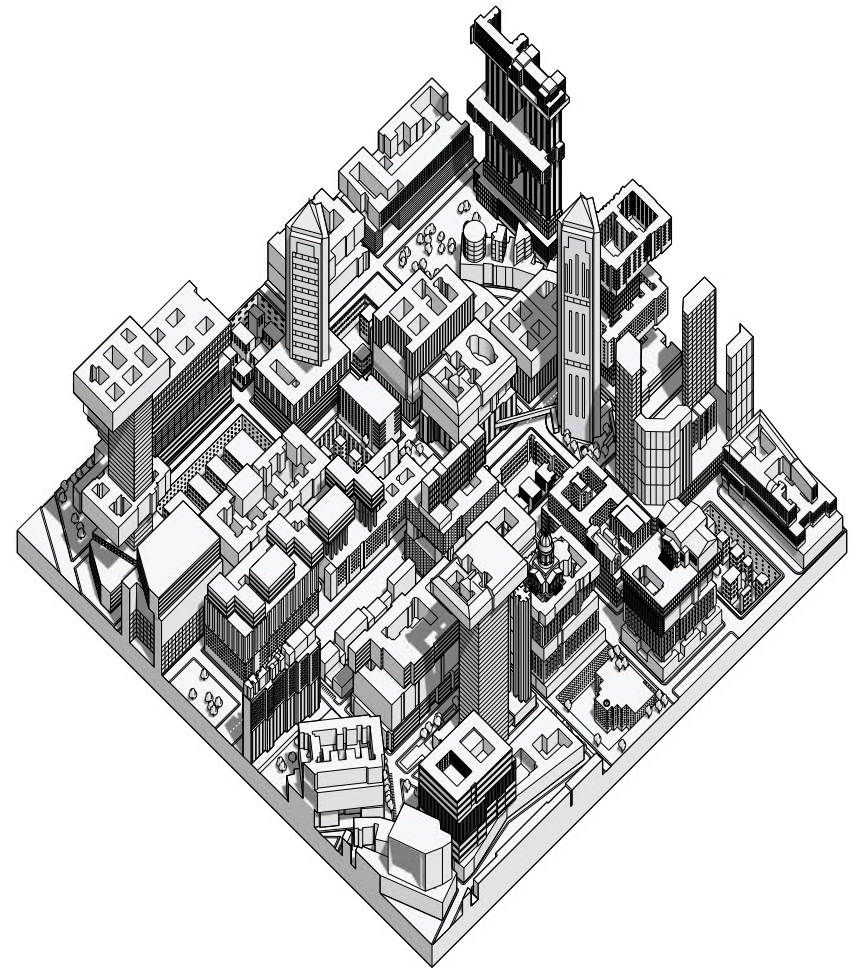An installation of student work at the Year End Show, May 2018.

Year 1: Operations
The first-year studio curriculum introduces various techniques in drawing, model-building, and digital production as organizers and generators of architectural form (Fall) and urban form (Spring). Above: A study model, Arch 105, Fall 2019.

An axonometric drawing of an urban proposal, Arch 106, Spring 2021.
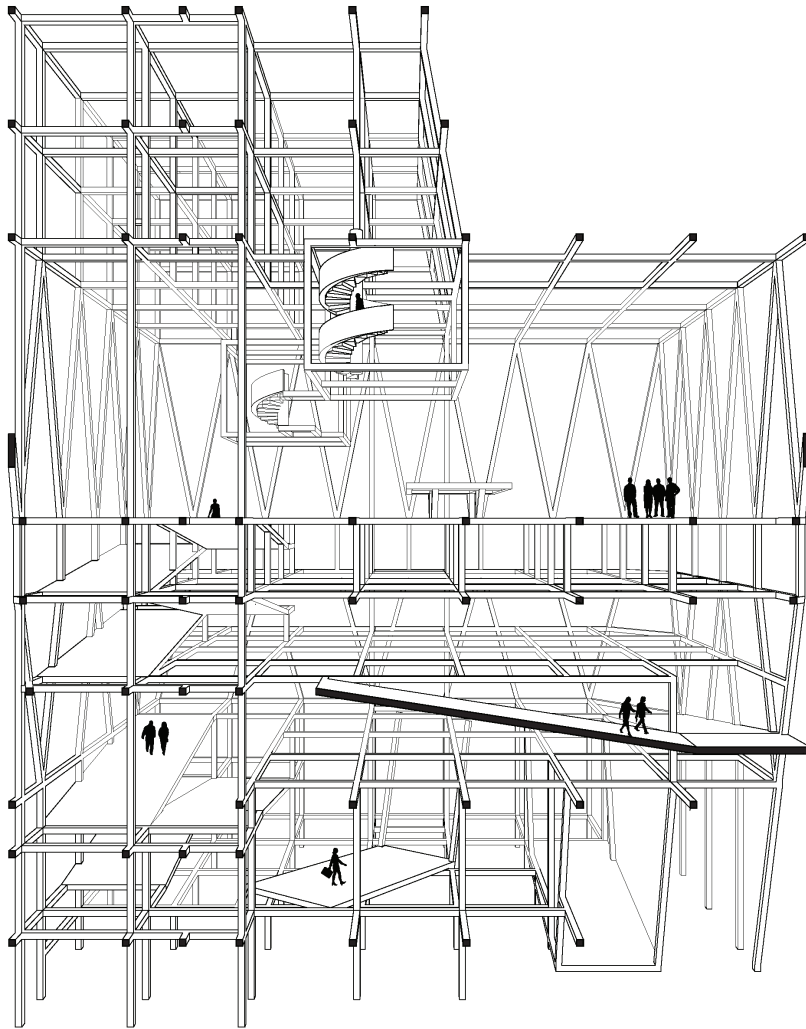
Year 2: Technologies

In second-year studios, students speculate on high-rises and explore relationships between parts, details, and wholes in a building, with an emphasis on understanding technologies in architecture. Above: A drawing of a proposed tower, Arch 205, Fall 2020.

A rendering of chair designed to match a famous architectural interior, Arch 206, Spring 2018.
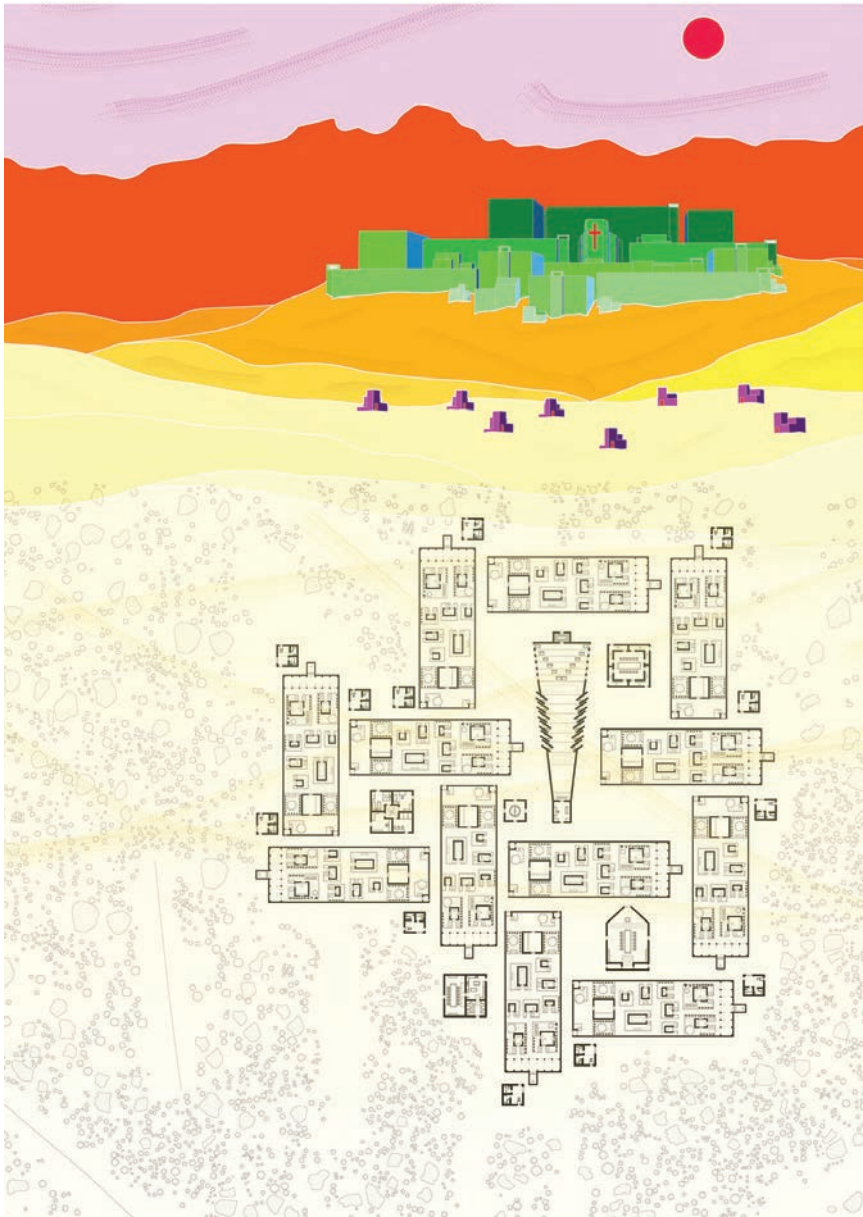
Year 3: Urbanisms
Third-year studios investigate urbanism through the design of a
complex landscape and the interior of a large, mixed-use building.
Above: Drawings of a proposed monastery, Arch 365, Fall 2018.

A perspective collage of a proposed park, Arch 366,
Spring 2018.
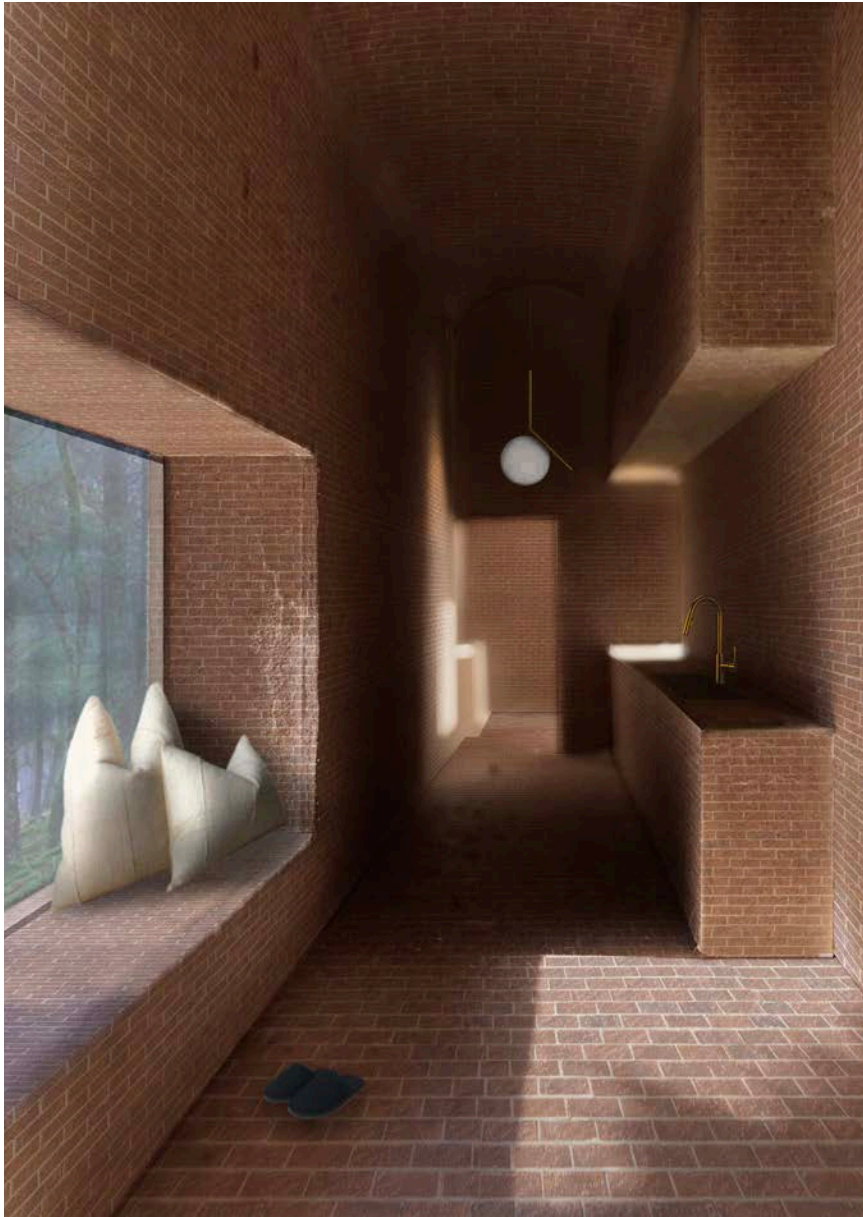
Year 4: Options
Fourth-year studios pursue design and research agendas with
contemporary relevance; students choose from among multiple options.
Above: A rendering of the interior of an artist's studio, Arch 465 studio
with Dan Wheeler, Fall 2020.

Student Work

Above: A collage of an imagined interior, Arch 466 studio
with Ania Jaworska, Spring 2021.

UIC School of Architecture

Student Life

Studying architecture at UIC involves more than just attending classes. By joining a student organization, attending lectures and panels, and participating in internships, students have multiple opportunities to explore and extend their interests.

Student Organizations
The School of Architecture has active chapters of national architecture organizations including AIAS (American Institute of Architecture Students), NOMAS (National Organization of Minority Architecture Students), and Arquitectos (the Society of Hispanic Professional Architects).

Other student groups are unique to the school. *Fresh Meat*, UIC's nationally recognized architecture journal, is independently produced by students. The Student Advisory Board is made up of elected class representatives and organizes student-led exhibitions and design competitions.

Professional Development
The school's annual Career Fair provides an opportunity for students to meet with representatives from local and regional firms seeking candidates for summer internships and positions after graduation. The school also organizes workshops focusing on topics such as licensure and the Intern Development Program, preparing a professional portfolio, public speaking, and writing about architecture. Portfolios are featured in an annual Portfolio Day, where students receive feedback from an outside jury and have the opportunity to win awards for their work.

Lectures and Exhibitions
Each semester, the school invites prominent architects and scholars to give public lectures. The school also hosts architectural exhibitions, conferences, and symposia. Students have the opportunity to participate in workshops and exhibitions with guests to the school, including with the Garofalo Fellow (an emerging designer who teaches at UIC for one year) and the Greenwald Fellow (a more established designer or scholar). The school's biggest celebration is the Year End Show, which takes place on the last day of the Spring semester and showcases the year's best studio projects.

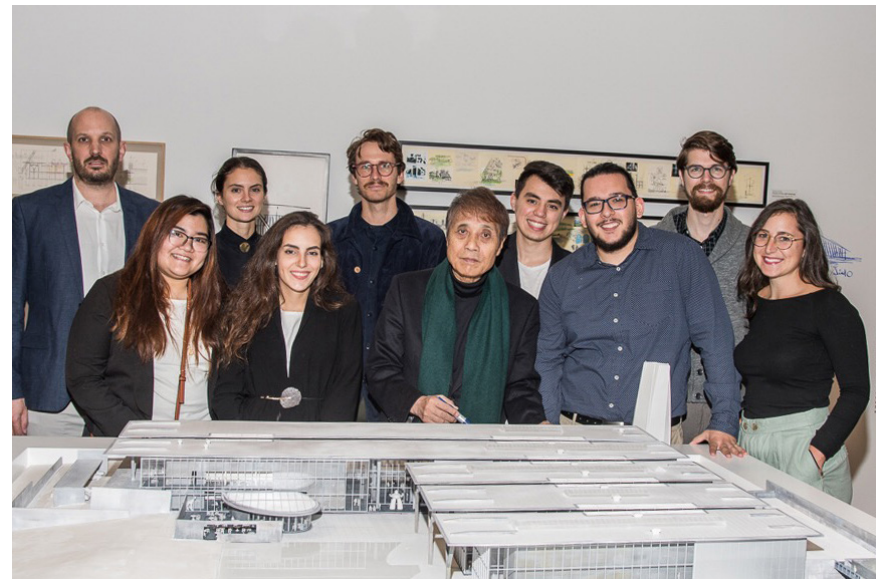Third-year BSArch students between studio reviews.

A student presents his contribution to the 2018 Garofalo Fellowship exhibition, organized by Fosco Lucarelli, April 2018.

The Spanish architect Cristina Goberna Pesudo delivers a lecture at the school, April 2019.

UIC students and faculty with Pritzker Prize–winning architect Tadao Ando, Fall 2018. Students built a model of Ando's Modern Art Museum in Fort Worth for the inaugural exhibition at Wrightwood659, a local gallery.

Alumni Profiles

Camille Castillo
BSArch, 2019

At graduation, Camille received the Alpha Rho Chi Medal of Merit, one of the school's highest honors. She worked at Vinci Hamp Architects, in Chicago, before beginning graduate studies in architecture at the University of California, Los Angeles.

"I have benefited from the School of Architecture professionally by establishing strong connections with my instructors and being able to work for them outside school. The instructors here influence students to think outside the box. The program at UIC enables us to explore beyond what is given and experiment with other styles."

Nash Kennedy
BSArch, 2020

Nash grew up in the suburbs of Chicago. At UIC, he contributed to exhibitions by school faculty at the Lisbon Architecture Triennale and the Venice Architecture Biennale. Since graduating, he has worked at the model shop of Adrian Smith + Gordon Gill Architecture.

"The school is unique because of the individuals in the program. I've met students from all over the world and been able to become friends with them because we share a common interest in architecture. I also think the professors make the school unique because they take real work experience and bring it to the classroom in a challenging but rewarding way. The program has helped pushed the limits of what I thought was possible or attainable in architecture."

Elizabeth Nogueira
BSArch, 2021

Elizabeth is from Maceió, a city on the coast of Brazil. The presence of poverty and vernacular buildings there shaped many of her beliefs about architecture. At UIC, she worked with faculty on a close study of caves as an efficient form of living, which resulted in a submission to the Tbilisi Biennial. She is currently studying architecture at Princeton University.

"UIC is a school that appreciates architecture as a cultural practice and an art form, as well. There are a lot of professors in the school who are very technical people, who work in the real world, but you also have a lot of professors who are concerned about theories of architecture. It's a really good place for you to dive into all the things that make up architecture. There are a lot!"

Martina Smith
BA in Architectural Studies, 2020

Martina emigrated from Jamaica to the south suburbs of Chicago. During her time in the BA program, she was treasurer of the UIC chapter of the National Society of Collegiate Scholars. After working at a nonprofit as an architectural intern, she is now pursuing her Master of Architecture at UIC as the school's inaugural Hartshorne Plunkard Fellow.

"I appreciated UIC's theoretical approach to architecture as it has allowed me to challenge ideas surrounding the practice. I also had the opportunity to network with professors and students to develop a more diverse approach to architecture, which I hope to continue in my graduate studies."

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Courtney Moushi
BA in Architectural Studies, 2020

While at UIC, Courtney pursued a minor in history and served as president of the Assyrian Students Association. She is currently an architecture brand reviewer for the McDonald's Corporation and a part-time researcher working with UIC faculty on the production of a book about Bertrand Goldberg, the architect of Marina City.

"UIC gave me the opportunity to gain knowledge and experience in something I was passionate about while also exposing me to many different aspects of architecture and related fields. I enjoyed my classes at UIC and was grateful to find a program that blended my interests in history and architecture."

Mario Romero
BSArch, 2016

Mario began working for Adrian Smith + Gordon Gill Architecture after graduating high school. Since his time at UIC, he has worked as a designer and technology and fabrication specialist there and at Perkins and Will's Chicago office.

"UIC's School of Architecture was an easy choice because of its history of developing students' conceptual abilities as well as helping them step outside the norm of hypertechnical architecture typically attributed to other schools. UIC's faculty is well regarded for their high level of rigor, discipline, and craft in their own work as well as the curriculum they help to build. Through this curriculum, I've been afforded a wealth of opportunities from the skills I have honed and the connections I have made."

Where Are They Now?

Alumni of the school's undergraduate programs have pursued professional opportunities and graduate studies throughout the world.

Graduate schools
Arizona State University
Clemson University
Columbia University
Harvard University
Illinois Institute of Technology
Iowa State University
John Marshall School of Law
Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)
New York University, Visual Communication
Northern Illinois University, Law and Business
Northwestern University, Engineering
The Ohio State University
Parsons the New School of Design
Portland State University
Pratt Institute
Princeton University
Rhode Island School of Design
Rice University
Royal College of Art, London
School of the Art Institute of Chicago
Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-Arc)
Syracuse University
Tulane University

University of California, Los Angeles
University of Cincinnati
University of Illinois at Chicago
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
University of Kentucky
University of Michigan
University of Pennsylvania
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
Washington University in St. Louis

Employers
Adrian Smith + Gordon Gill
Bjarke Ingels Group
Bossa Digital
Bruce Mau Design
Cannon Design
DESIGNATION Labs
FGM
FreemanXP
Gensler
The Graham Foundation
Henning Larsen
Herzog & de Meuron
HOK Architects
JGMA
KOO
McDonald's Corporation
MNML Design
Paramount Pictures
Perkins and Will
RATIO Architects
Skidmore, Owings & Merrill
Solomon Cordwell Buenz
Studio Gang Architects
UNStudio
Valerio DeWalt Train
Whitney Museum of American Art

HiArch Summer Program

HiArch is the School of Architecture's summer program for current high school students. The program introduces students to architectural ways of thinking and making through class tutorials, studio time, one-on-one desk critiques, and group discussions.

HiArch participants develop both analog and digital skills, including drawing and building models by hand, digital drafting, and computer modeling. They also gain exposure to the field of architecture through guest lectures and panel discussions with school faculty and local designers. The program concludes each year with an exhibition of students' work and a reception.

A limited number of scholarships are available for participants who need financial support. For more information and to register, visit arch.uic.edu/hiarch.

A view inside a model made by a HiArch participant, July 2019.

Ways to Learn More

Fall Open House
Each fall, the School of Architecture participates in the university's Open House event, where prospective students can visit UIC and learn more about our programs and the university as a whole. This event typically takes place in late September. More information is available at openhouse.uic.edu.

Admitted Student Open House
Each spring, students admitted to programs in the School of Architecture and their families are invited to an open house, which usually takes place in early April. Students can tour the school's facilities, hear presentations by faculty and the school's director, and see work by current students. Information about the open house is included in admissions materials.

UIC Preview Days
The UIC Office for Admissions offers Preview Days, which include campus tours and information sessions that cover academic programs, admissions procedures, financial aid, housing, student life, and other opportunities available at the university. To reserve a place, visit admissions.uic.edu.

College Fairs
For a list of fairs and other recruiting events where the College of Architecture, Design, and the Arts will appear, please visit cada-recruitment.uic.edu/events.

Individual Visits
Prospective students are welcome to visit the school and the UIC campus. To schedule an information session and building tour, contact cadainfo@uic.edu at least forty-eight hours in advance. We are unable to accommodate drop-in visits.

Application Requirements
For details on the application process, along with answers to frequently asked questions, visit arch.uic.edu/apply.

Exterior cover: A speculative urban drawing from a first-year studio, Spring 2018.
Interior cover: A carpet of urban models from a first-year studio, Spring 2019.

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