The School of Architecture and Planning (SA+P) has supported MIT’s mission of meeting the world’s greatest challenges since its start in 1865. While advocating the forward-looking, technologically-driven optimism of MIT, the School also invests in critically reflecting on technological innovation, its social impact and its confrontation with cultural values.

SA+P is made up of five main divisions—the Department of Architecture, the Department of Urban Studies and Planning, the Media Lab, the MIT Center for Real Estate, and the Program in Art, Culture, and Technology. Over the years, the School has embraced a broader range of fields that address and improve human environments.

What binds these fields together is a strong commitment to the deployment of technology towards social good. What also binds them together is the use of design and deliberation approaches towards action that are distinct from but complementary to the engineering approach to problem solving.

Design is a main unifying approach of SA+P activities. We believe that design and policy interventions should be grounded in a commitment to improving individual human lives, equity and social justice, cultural enrichment, and the responsible use of resources through creative problem solving and project execution. Our curriculum empowers students with skills that enable them to design physical spaces, policies, and technologies that will shape how those spaces are used with the goal of sustaining and enhancing the quality of the human environment at all scales, from the personal to the global.

Students

The School of Architecture and Planning enrolls an average of 600–700 students a year in a collection of courses ranging from Renaissance architecture to the cities of tomorrow, digital fabrication, motion graphics, shape grammars, photography, sensor systems, integrative design across disciplines, news and participatory media, and construction finance. By far the largest number of those students enter our graduate programs and many of them also pursue cross-disciplinary studies and dual degrees among those programs and others at the Institute.

Throughout the years, we have been noted for the diversity of our student body, drawing on candidates from around the world and from all walks of life. The Department of Architecture graduated its first woman, Sophia Hayden, in 1890, and three years later, Robert Taylor became the first African American to graduate from an American architecture program—a tradition of inclusiveness that continues today.

Global Projects

One of MIT’s founding principles is the belief that professional competence is best fostered by focusing teaching and research on real problems in the real world. Accordingly, a central aspect of our teaching and research is our ongoing participation in global initiatives—many of them collaborative undertakings among our five divisions, with other divisions of MIT, and with public and private institutions in the US and abroad.

SA+P is fully committed to the mission of leadership both locally and globally. As a result of this commitment, faculty play a central role in preparing students to be leaders and good global citizens who are engaged in the problems facing countries at all stages of development, taking part in the public discussion of issues on a global scale, studying, developing and applying best practices all around the world.

History

Our history stretches back a century and a half, providing our current students with a legacy and long tradition of pioneering excellence. The Department of Architecture was the first such department in the nation (1865) and became a leader in introducing Modernism to America. The program in city planning was the second of its kind in the country (1932), later evolving into the current Department of Urban Studies and Planning, the longest continuous planning program in the United States and repeatedly ranked number one in the nation.

The Media Lab, the birthplace of multimedia computing (1985), has come to be known around the world as a world-class incubator of new design ideas; the Center for Real Estate established the nation’s first one-year graduate program in real estate development (1984); and the Center for Advanced Visual Studies (1967), now part of the new Program in Art, Culture and Technology, pioneered the use of technologies such as lasers, plasma sculptures, sky art, and holography as tools of expression in public and environmental art.

More recently the Center for Advanced Urbanism (2012), established as a premier research center focused on the design and planning of large-scale, complex 21st-century metropolitan environments, aims to redefine the field of urban design to meet contemporary challenges utilizing interdisciplinary collaborative practices and the most advanced analytical and representational tools. The Samuel Tak Lee Real Estate Entrepreneurship (2015) promotes social responsibility among entrepreneurs and academics in the real estate profession worldwide, with a particular focus on China. Research topics include development and urbanization through private action and entrepreneurship, urban resilience and adaptation, land-use reform regulations and codes, new construction materials, data and technology, affordable housing, environmental aspects of urban growth and development, and land and real property rights.
Resources

The Rotch Library is one of the nation’s premier resources in architecture and planning, offering extensive depth in architecture, building technology, art history, photography, environmental studies, land use, urban design, housing and community development, regional planning, urban transportation, and real estate. Its visual collections hold more than 60,000 digital images and 380,000 slides.

The School’s Wolk Gallery mounts several shows a year in its exhibition space, overseen by the curator of architecture and design at the MIT Museum. The Keller Gallery, a vest-pocket space of about 200 square feet, shows a steady stream of faculty, student, and experimental work, including work from alumni and friends. The PLAZmA Digital Gallery is an electronic showcase of work and events on display in the School’s public areas, featuring faculty and student work.

The MIT Museum frequently features exhibits on architecture and visual studies in its main galleries at 265 Massachusetts Avenue, as well as in its Compton Gallery, located in the heart of campus under the big dome. The Museum’s eGallery, a virtual exhibition space and archive, features sites designed specifically as virtual exhibitions, spotlighting museum collections as well as exhibitions no longer on display in its galleries.

The List Visual Arts Center, three galleries on the first floor of the Media Lab’s Wiesner Building, presents 5–8 shows a year exploring contemporary artmaking in all media. Rotch Library also features exhibits of student, staff, and faculty work, as well as shows from its collections, in its space in Building 7-238.

The School’s newsletter, PLAN, is published in print and online by the Dean’s Office, Room 7-231; it is also available as a PDF and a mobile app. The five divisions of the School can be contacted directly about their lineup of publications.

Degrees Offered in the School of Architecture and Planning

Architecture (Course 4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SB</td>
<td>Architecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB</td>
<td>Architecture Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MArch</td>
<td>Architecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMArchS</td>
<td>Architecture Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMACT</td>
<td>Art, Culture and Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMBT</td>
<td>Building Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>Architecture: Building Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>Architecture: Design and Computation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>Architecture: History and Theory of Architecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>Architecture: History and Theory of Art</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Urban Studies and Planning (Course 11)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SB</td>
<td>Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCP</td>
<td>City Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SM</td>
<td>Urban Studies and Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>Urban and Regional Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>Urban and Regional Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dual Degrees</td>
<td>Certificates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban Design, Environmental Planning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Center for Real Estate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MSRED</td>
<td>Real Estate Development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes

Many departments make it possible for a graduate student to pursue a simultaneous master’s degree.

Several departments also offer undesignated degrees, which lead to the Bachelor of Science without departmental designation. The curricula for these programs offer students opportunities to pursue broader programs of study than can be accommodated within a four-year departmental program.

Admissions

The selection process at MIT is holistic and student centered: each application is evaluated within its unique context. Selection is based on outstanding academic achievement as well as a strong match between the applicant and the Institute.

Undergraduate applicants do not apply to a particular school, department or program and, although the application asks about a preferred field of study, most admitted undergraduates do not declare a major until the second semester of their freshman year. Admissions information for regular, transfer, and non-degree applicants is provided in the section on Undergraduate Education (http://catalog.mit.edu/mit/undergraduate-education).

Applicants for graduate study apply directly to the particular department or program of interest. See the individual department and program descriptions for specific requirements.
Office of the Dean

Hashim Sarkis, MArch, PhD
Professor of Architecture
Professor of Urban Planning
Dean, School of Architecture and Planning

Dennis Frenchman, MArch, MCP
Norman B. (1938) and Muriel Leventhal Professor of Architecture and Planning
Professor of Urban Design
Associate Dean, School of Architecture and Planning

Peggy Cain
Assistant to the Dean

Ken Goldsmith
Assistant Dean for Finance and Administration

Ramona Allen
Assistant Dean for Human Resources

Dineen Doucette
Finance and Human Resources Administrator

Barbara Feldman
Assistant Dean for Development

Devan Monroe
Administrative Assistant, Finance and Development

Tom Gearty
Director of Communications

Judy Daniels
Administrative Assistant, Communications

James Harrington
Facilities Manager