



Welcome to our chat!

Q: I have working on prerequisite courses for MARCH program and most of them ends at the end of July or August. In order to hand in my transcript of these courses, may I have a proximate date that I should submit before? I am a little confuse whether it should be before Digiblast 2 or the formal start of the semester.

A: You just need to submit your official transcripts before classes start.

Q: Do first year students with no previous background have trouble finding summer internships?

A: I don't think this is an issue. You might want to reach out to one of our architecture students. Try emailing Katrina at [kahealy@design.upenn.edu](mailto:kahealy@design.upenn.edu) or Ryan at [ryanbar@upenn.edu](mailto:ryanbar@upenn.edu).

Q: In what direction is PennDesign moving its MArch program (re: the program's priorities)?

A: Hi although I'm in the landscape program and not the architecture program, I have a lot of friends in architecture and from being here in building for 3 years I can say the best way to get a feel of the programs direction is to look at all the professors on the Architecture section of the PennDesign website and follow the links to their personal websites or portfolios. Also check out some of the architecture Ambassadors and see if they have portfolios on ISSUE. Search the PennDesign social media, Instagram, FB posts. All these will help you get an idea for the type of work coming out of the program. I can say there is a good amount of professors which focus on formal architecture and parametric based design

Q: I did not receive any forms like I- 20, is it a big concern for now?

A: after you have submitted your enrollment form and paid your tuition deposit you will receive an email within about a week with your admissions I-d number and information regarding your I-20

Q: What is the typical class size of MCP program, of which how many opt for transportation vs urban design vs CED?

A: he total cohort is about 60 students who pick between different concentrations. The class sizes of some sources will be the whole cohort while elective classes are usually 10-15 students. I had 15 students in CED and about an equal amount in transportation and urban design but it depends year to year!

Q: Do we have to do summer internship in Philadelphia?? For MCP program? Or can students undertake internship in other parts of the world

A: you do NOT need to do your internship in Philadelphia, it can be done elsewhere

Q: How many MCP students work part-time as research assistants for professors, and how competitive are such positions?

A: I know a few students who work as research assistants for professors, both Master's and PhD students. I don't think that these positions are particularly competitive, but there also aren't that

many of them. If you're interested in working with a particular professor, I would reach out to them and let them know.

Q: Is there a time before the 15th to discuss our aid packages?

A: you should direct questions about aid to your Department Chair.

Q: Can MCP students undertake dual concentration?

A: Yes you can undertake dual concentrations

Q: What does the MArch program excel at in particular? (In your personal perspective)

A: I would say the focus of MArch here is to stay current with design programs such as grasshopper, Mya, and things like that. But again, I'm not in the program I would make sure to reach out to any of the architecture ambassadors on our webpage <http://www.design.upenn.edu/graduate-admissions/get-know-us>

Q: Do you ever feel that MCP is a small fish within the PennDesign Program? Do MCP students receive equal resources as compared with other departments in the program?

A: No it doesn't feel that way - the individual departments are pretty well integrated and planning students receive great resources as well

Q: What are the prospects of job post program completion for international students?

A: For detailed information on jobs, you can email the city planning office. However, from experience, there are many job prospects for international students and I have never left like I have received fewer prospects than other students.

Q: How is the possibility MCP students distributed into concentrations they prefer the best?

A: You pick your concentration before you begin classes but you can always change it later on. You can pick any concentration that you are interested in - there is no limit to the number of students in each

Q: What are the chances of an MCP student getting the certificate in Real Estate in conjunction with the Wharton? Is it highly competitive, or do all people who apply for it get in?

A: I know a number of students who are doing a real estate certificate with Wharton or who are just taking classes in the school. I don't know what the competition is like, but I haven't heard about students not getting in.

Q: I'd like to know when the deadline for the completion of history is prerequisite for international students via online courses. Could it be Aug.25th?

A: you will need to submit proof of completion by August 25, yes.

Q: What kind of ecological research are conducting right now at the Department of Landscape Architecture?

A: there are opportunities to work along professors in their independent research, such as Keith VanDerSys and Karen M'Closkey who are looking at the hydrodynamics of the Delaware River and the potential to restore river ecology. They are also focusing their studio next fall in the Galapagos Islands and bird ecology there. There are also several written journals such as Scenario Journal and LA+ which

are opportunities to complete research and help produce the publication. Finally, if you have a specific interest that does not align necessarily, you can have an independent elective or studio in which you explore your research and choose specific faculty as mentors for the semester

Q: Do many students (MCP) opt for MUSA? What are the chances of acceptance?

A: A few of our students do take the dual MCP/MUSA program. It is not too hard to get in if you are already admitted to the MCP program.

Q: Can MCP program be completed in a year?

A: No. The program is 19 course units (roughly equivalent to 19 courses), with a minimum of 14 in the City Planning program.

Q: For MCP program, is it possible to do dual degree within design school even if I don't have previous experience in design or architecture? If so what would the time frame be like?

A: Which program are you interested in? Because it depends on what you are considering as to whether you have a chance to be admitted. We have many dual degree programs, including those within the school and those in other schools at Penn. If you've had no design or art experience, it would be difficult to get into the architecture program without a portfolio.

Q: How is the integration of robotic fabrication in the MArch studios? I ask because I was visiting the MArch program at Michigan, and although they have a fantastic selection of fabrication machines, it seemed as if the usage of the machines were not ingrained in the studio culture.

A: we are setting up our robotics lab now!!! It should be ready for use in September and I'm sure the MArch program will be integrating it into their curriculum.

Q: Do students use their own laptops? If so, are there PC requirements we should be aware of before taking Digiblast?

A: Students do need to have their own computers. I recommend emailing our architecture students for their recommendations, but the department/computing will also be sending information in May.

Q: Is it necessary to buy a desktop computer for MLA1 student?

A: You do not need a desktop for your first semester in MLA 3, you will do most of your work by hand. However, for the remainder of your semesters it would be advantageous to have your own desktop. You can get away with a powerful laptop but I would say definitely by your second year, fall semester you will definitely need a personal computer, for software reasons, as well as the fact that your major research studios require a lot of GIS work as well as modeling in Rhino

Q: In the MCP program, are larger themes discussed across concentrations (e.g. sustainability)? How do professors connect aspects of problems and engage colleagues across disciplinary lines in class?

A: yes, larger themes such as sustainability, equity, economic justice are discussed across concentrations in both studio and non-studio classes. This year, the planning workshop focused on issues of sustainability and equity in different parts of the region and each workshop sub-group was composed of students of various concentrations. While the workshop and studio are examples of hands-on cross disciplinary exercises, there are a bunch of classes that are offered that also cover these topics such as readings in race and justice, water policy etc.

Q: How can I get my Pennkey? I just get the 9 digital number for I20

A: you will get an email about your PennKey in the next 3 to 4 days.

Q: How hard is it to do an extra year and get an MBA at Wharton? Do you have to apply to the school?

A: Wharton is a very competitive school but it is definitely possible to pursue a dual degree between PennDesign and Wharton. You would first need to apply to Wharton and be accepted.

Q: Roughly how many students in MCP receive financial aid and Merit based scholarship in each fiscal year? Secondly, is there a possibility to receive financial aid in Second year of the program?

A: About 60% of our students get financial aid and about 35% get merit awards.

Q: Are the summer abroad programs in Paris, Colombia and Athens, Greece open to all students at PennDesign

A: yes!

Q: Are there options for international travel for MCP students during the program?

A: Yes! The required studio course has an option for international travel. You can also choose to do a summer internship outside of the U.S.

Q: Is there a possibility to receive financial aid in Second year of the program?

A: Financial aid is not reconsidered in a student's second year. You will receive the same amount each academic year providing that you maintain good academic standing.

Q: For the MBA program or JD dual degree with MCP, what would the time frame be like if I am planning to apply while studying at MCP?

A: You would apply to the other program during your first year @ MCP. For your second year, assuming you are admitted, you would attend classes at the other school. Then two more years split between the two schools.

Q: Can an MCP student describe academic life in general at PennDesign? How many hours spent in class per week, classes during the day or night, are they mainly lecture or discussion based, are there a lot of collaborative group projects or mostly independent work, do you engage with real communities in the city in planning courses?

A: That's a big question! I'll do my best to answer it fully. I spend about 3 hours/class/week, so about 15 hours in class total. Classes are mostly during the day, though some are offered in the evening, especially if they're taught by a practitioner in the field. There's a combination of lecture, seminar, and studio-based courses in a way that I think is balanced. There's also a combination of independent and group work. The studio-based courses have the most intense group work element, but other courses sometimes involve group projects or presentations. And yes, we engage with real communities constantly! There's a strong Philadelphia focus, especially in the first semester, but students and professors bring in experience from other places as well. Does that help?

Q: If I want to take a dual program within PennDesign for the second year, do I need to complete the online application with all the required materials once more?

A: You will need to submit a new application. If it is for another program in the School of Design, you will not need to resubmit test scores or undergrad transcripts but you will need to resubmit everything else.

Q: Have the MCP studio courses for the fall been released yet?

A: The studio courses are currently being decided and should be out in the next couple of weeks.

Q: How many student in MSD get financial aid? Is it possible to apply for it in the next year?

A: roughly 60% receive financial aid and it is NOT possible to apply again in your second year

Q: How would you describe the intimacy between different colleges across UPenn and also within PennDesign itself?

A: You'll spend the majority of your time within your own degree, but there are plenty of opportunities to mix. Through clubs, competitions, classes and studios. Some studios call specifically for students from a multiple degrees at Penn to form a collaborative environment. And there's always the school wide happy hour!

Q: How much does having the Penn alumni network affect your ability to get internships and jobs in the field?

A: It really help!!! Most of the alumni send out job listings to the planning coordinator who forwards the emails to us. I have reached out to a bunch of PennDesign alumni who are usually always willing to meet and talk about their experiences etc. The planning departments also sets you up with a mentor who is a practitioner in the field who can be a great resource for finding jobs/internships. Overall, it helps to have a strong alumni network to depend on during your internship and job hunt

Q: Can I apply to become a teaching assistance? I'm a MLA1 student. If yes from which year of the program can I make the application?

A: The MLA department does not give TAs to students in their first year. Only in subsequent years. This is so that the faculty have a chance to get to you know and your skills.

Q: Do most people in MCP with a certificate manage to finish their study in two years?

A: Yes!

Q: Is it possible to do more than 1 concentration or at least take a few classes that are in another concentration?

A: The program does not recommend that you pursue more than one concentration. However, you are able (and encouraged) to take courses in other concentrations.

Q: Does each student get their own desk? Is it accessible at all times of the day and night?

A: Yes every student gets his/her desk and its available 24/7. The building itself is locked but you can get in with your PennCard.

Q: Especially in the MCP, but in the school overall as well, is there is foundation of social justice and working toward more equitable spaces? Is this the professors' and students' drive?

A: Yes there are many current students and professors in the MCP program who are committed to social justice. More formally, there's a Social Justice Working Group within the school in addition to DiverseDesign: <http://www.design.upenn.edu/diversitypenndesign>

Q: Do you feel as if there is good cross-pollination between majors in PennDesign? Do students of different majors mingle their works and contribute to each other's studies?

A: At PennDesign almost all the programs are located in one building, Meyerson Hall. Although most programs are separated by floors, there are various integrates studios which are cross-disciplinary and include students from Landscape, Architecture, City Planning, and Preservation (as well as others). There are also cross-disciplinary elective courses. I would say students genially mix well at PennDesign, and we try to host frequent lectures and academic events open to the entire PD community. There is a happy hour every Friday that we host on site, which also lends to a more integrated and cohesive student body. As for the mix between the entire university, that is more up to the individuals. Most programs at PennDesign are very time intensive and to be honest, at the graduate level you will be spending most of your time working in studio. That being said, if you have interests that lay outside of the Design school, there are all the resources available to go pursue them.

Q: How and when can I get my immunization form for international students? Will I receive it by email or I should download it from a website?

A: You will need to reach out to International Student Scholar Services (ISSS) <https://global.upenn.edu/issis/about> or Student Health Services <http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/shs/appointments.php> regarding your question

Q: Do workshops in MCP tend to have a client focus? I have heard of cases where it does not and courses are more theoretical. How do professors keep classes relevant to a client focus?

A: The Workshop and Studio are grounded in both theoretical and practical applications of planning and are intended for a particular client. Overall, I think that the MCP program does a good job of balancing theoretical/conceptual discussions of planning with the technical skills required of planners.

Q: If I apply for the next year's MLA program, which one can I apply for? MLA1 or MLA2? I am a 5-year B.Arch. Student with no LA background. I also want to know if I can take the MLA course during MSD study.

A: You would apply to the MLA 2. You would need to complete the MSD program before beginning the MLA.

Q: Can some current MCP students share some thoughts on the upcoming boot camp

A: The boot camp is really helpful to brush up on your skills before starting class full-time. It is also a good way to meet your professors and cohort in a more informal manner!

Q: Are students recommended to bring their own laptops? Or are we given studio spaces with workstations?

A: Planning students are not given computers. You can bring your own laptop or use the ones provided by the school in the computer labs.

Q: How many courses do people usually choose for the boot camp? I definitely want to get more exposure of the techniques, but wonder if taking all of them will be too much

A: I took all of the boot camp courses and don't think that it's too much. You don't really have homework and there's no grades, so it's really just about what you want to get out of the experience.

Q: In your opinion, what is the most exciting thing about the MCP program at Penn, or what sets it apart from other programs?

A: I think the most exciting thing about the MCP program is how skill-focused it is. I have gained some key planning focused technical (GIS, RStudio) and non-technical (how do you plan for integrated communities) skills over the course of my program. These are skills that the planning department ensures you have that makes you very marketable in the job market that are not necessarily focused on in other programs

Q: What are some ways to mingle with the larger Penn community outside of design school? Can we sign up for clubs across schools?

A: There are a bunch of clubs and sports you can join that are across all Penn schools and communities. You'll have to make a bit of an effort to find what you want outside of the PennDesign community but there's plenty to choose from, just ask around!

Q: From what background do most MCP students come from? How diverse is it?

A: The students are very diverse - there are students with political science, economics, design, planning, and other backgrounds in my cohort.

Q: Are there any international studios?

A: The studios are not finalized, so there's no information available on the website yet. There is usually at least one international studio.

Q: What does the MArch program do better than higher ranked US MArch programs?

A: I would check with some of the ranking resources to better understand their rubric for ranks. But again, in my invalidated opinion, Penn Architecture does well with making sure students produce a certain level of aesthetics and drawing production quality. Again, their focus on program based design is another strong point, where you will be gaining the skills in those design software. Also, our graduates tend to have a very high rate of employment after graduation. The network here is great!

Q: As an MCP student, how do you think Penn is expressing innovation in the planning world? Is this primarily through professor research, or the workshops you are doing?

A: Check out Pennovation works! I think that there's a lot of innovation in the program, driven by both professors and by students. Many professors are on the cutting edge of the field, whether that's driverless cars or integrating public health into planning. Students bring diverse interest and passion about new topics in the field.

Q: What, if any, opportunities are there to study food systems and food justice?

A: Yes there are. Prof. Dominic offers a class on metropolitan food systems that is very good. He and Prof. Amy Hillier work on food justice issues and you can take a look at some of their work if you are interested! Additionally, you can also take classes in other schools that focus on food and public health.

Q: Are there any travel grants or stipends available for students at Penn?

A: I believe that the Department pays for your travel if it's part of your course.

Q: For a MCP student with a specialization in urban design, will it be difficult to secure internship opportunities after first-year study, especially in design industry, for we barely take any studio courses in the first year?

A: I know first-year design students who have already secured a summer internship! I don't think that that's an issue for students.

Q: Is it possible to be involved in any of the research work that is going on at Penn?

A: Yes, you can write to professors whose work seems interesting -- Penn professors are very accessible!

Q: If somebody to whom you have offered financial aid/merit based scholarship declines can that be offered to other student??

A: We actually offer more aid than we have in our budget so we don't necessarily offer more if people decline.

Q: What makes a student successful in the MArch program?

A: I would say the major point is to find a professor whose work you are interested in and make sure to connect with them. Besides taking their studio, they can help guide your time at Penn to take electives or find extra curricula's that will align with your interests. Also, in terms of the Architecture program I would say having a basic knowledge of computer programs such as Adobe suite, modeling software such as CAD or Rhino, will help put you ahead of the game. For most students coming into the 3 year program with no prior design experience, these programs are the major learning curve



Q: Are international students who hold an F-1 visa able to obtain part time work off-campus in an architect's office whilst studying?

A: You cannot work off-campus with an F1 visa while you are in school. But after you graduate, you do OPT and that is anywhere in the US at an architect's office.

Q: Are there any scholarships for international students in design school or throughout the univ? How much chance do an international student earn one?

A: Every applicant is automatically considered for merit-based aid and many of our international students receive merit-based aid. I'd also suggest checking out our outside scholarships webpage:<http://www.design.upenn.edu/graduate-admissions/outside-scholarshi>

Q: Is it necessary to work on my portfolio then, if I am looking for a summer internship in design?

A: I would definitely spend time on your portfolio, it'll be the best way to communicate your ability as a designer. I'd recommend sitting down with your professors in the fall to go over what would make the most successful summer portfolio for a planner.

Q: If I apply for a dual degree is it possible to be considered for a scholarship or financial aid?

A: Occasionally if you are admitted to a dual degree, you will be offered more merit aid since your program will be longer and we do encourage interdisciplinary. But this is not always the case.

Q: I know that Penn cares a lot about digital representation. Would you say that hand-making model or thinking through drawing/making is still valued here?

A: For architecture, a majority of your work will be digital, but depending on the professor and their personal aesthetics and design goals, you will be making a lot of models. In terms of hand drawings, that is less likely besides summer studio for the three year program. But again, there is a wide variety of professors and their interests differ so I would look at current students work on ISSUE or the PennDesign social media feeds to get a better understanding of the type of work produces

Q: How can we apply for part-time jobs on-campus? Is there a minimum time of working per week?

A: Our Student Employment Office will have a list of jobs available on campus. It will show up in mid-August.

Thank you everyone for joining! If you still have outstanding questions you can always email us at: [admissions@design.upenn.edu](mailto:admissions@design.upenn.edu) or call us at 215-898-6520

