



Q: If travel restrictions continue or I am unable to get my visa on time will my scholarship money be guaranteed to carry forward if I have to delay my studies or start later? (Since this is not a voluntary deferral as an intl student)

A: We are definitely allowing deferrals in the cases where you can't get your visa on time, and also guaranteeing your scholarship.

Q: How are remote studios working while the school is closed?

A: The studios are all a little different. Some studios are doing group bluejeans or zoom meetings. My studio personally is just like having "desk crits" where we Skype with our studio professor and GA for about 30 mins 3 times a week

Q: I imagine you don't have access to any of the fabrication equipment. Is that impacting your studies?

A: Yes, we have had to make some adjustments. Final requirements for the studio have not yet been determined because of that. As of now, no final physical model is being required

A: My architecture class has also suspended final models but discussed producing video walk throughs or vr animations to upload online as a replacement.

Q: I have a question about the certificate in Real Estate Development, how do we apply? and when should we do it?

A: If you are an MCP student, you should apply in your first semester of the program. The Real Estate Design and Development (REDD) Certificate only reviews applications for spring admission, and spring application deadline for certificates is usually around November 1st. The application requires a one-page statement of intent.

Q: I am wondering if any MCP students can discuss their post grad plans...specifically as it relates to finding a job. Where are you looking? Has Penn provided resources to assist with this process?

A: Great question as I am in the process now! my personal plans were place specific, so looking for jobs in a particular city can be a little limiting. however, if I weren't city-bound, the options would be pretty good. our department sends out daily job leads, and our alumni are always looking for recent grads. also, local employers flock to the Penn grads and are always offering opportunities. the school also does other things like host a huge career fair, and some of my best leads have come from networking with classmates and adjunct profs.

Q: The information for the dual MLA and MUSA program is not available — how long is this dual degree and where can I find the details?

A: I believe it extends your program by one semester, but you can check with the departments.

Q: Are there plans for how the summer and (if it comes to that) fall studios will adjust?

A: So far everything is still up in the air. We are hoping to resume classes in the summer, if not summer session 1, then summer session 2.

Q: For MSD-HP, Will there be a possibly for assistant ship possibilities and what is the application process.

A: You should check with Frank Matero about assistantship positions

Q: Is it too late to apply for financial aid?

A: You can still reach out to your program's Director to request financial aid.

Q: Are you thinking that the summer workshop MSHP will still go forward?

A: And we do think that the summer HSPV workshop will go forward. If not in-person, remotely.

Q: For the MLA program - What is the usual process in looking for summer internships?

A: Typically, people start their search in December/Jan. There are portfolio reviews in January and by February people are typically applying. Career fair is a great way to connect to people but not the only place to secure an internship. Typically, you would email a cover letter, resume , portfolio. LinkedIn, handshake, word or mouth, and google are places to start searching for open positions.

Q: What support has been provided to intl students who live in on-campus housing and had to leave due to the covid issue. If you don't have somewhere to go in the US?

A: Our international students have been able to stay on campus if they did not have elsewhere to go

Q: I understand deferring admission for a year is available. What's the process and deadline for doing so?

A: You will need to get permission from your Chair, stating your reasons why. You also must submit your deposit and enrollment form by April 15.

Q: Can I submit the request for deferral to the dept chair over email?

A: Yes, email is fine.

Q: I saw that registration for fall classes is March 23-April 6. Do I fill out the guide for registration and who should I speak to about course selection?

A: Advance registration has been pushed forward. You can check with Frank and Micah about your next steps.

Q: MCP question. Can you talk about what the transition was like to take on a graduate school workload? Any tips you may be able to give?

A: Sure. for me, the adjustment was a challenging one. prior to grad school, I'd been working for about 7 years, so there was a shift in brain space and time management. grad school is such a unique experience that you'll often find yourself taking things day by day. overall, it's been one of the most rewarding experiences learning from peers, learning from myself, and just challenging myself in ways to get the

most out of my two years. also, for the first two semesters...your schedule is pretty set so it's just about managing time (ex. person, schoolwork, jobs, etc.) after the first year, you'll get the hang of things and find your rhythm.

Q: (MCP) What is the process to apply for Teaching assistantships and research assistantships? When is the best time to apply for these?

A: you should contact Lisa Servon. She can tell you what is available and whether she is able to give you one for fall or spring of your first year.

Q: Following up to the question about the MSHP summer workshop, if the workshop ends up being remote, I assume that means our first semester could be remote as well? I realize this is all speculative right now, but just trying to get an idea of what may be to come. Thank you!!

A: you are definitely correct that this is all speculative; however, it is possible that the workshop will be remote but that we would be back on campus for fall coursework. Part of our decision over whether the summer workshops will be held remotely is for our international student population who may be up against a tight timeline to get their immigration documents done and get into the country.

Q: Are on-campus jobs available for international students?

A: There are plenty of on-campus positions that are available to international students, though there are more that are available to those that qualify for the federal work study (U.S. students) because the federal government pays half of the wage. But if you want to work on campus as an international student, you definitely can.

Q:What are TA opportunities like?

A: there are certainly many opportunities to TA. Typically, these are opened up around the end of the first year. Sometimes professors will ask a student. Some students ask professors and show interest in the position and work it out from there. Depending on the class you TA for it can be a few hours a week of work to 15 hours of work or more. There are TA's for every single class so you can help in design, planting and technical classes, history classes, or digital media classes.

Q: For MCP is the breakup of required courses and electives? And for the electives, are we free to take classes outside of Weitzman in other schools within the university? Do students typically do that?

A: it differs by specific concentration, but typically you have roughly 3-5 elective slots that you can fill in with either Weitzman courses or outside of the school. check out this site that tells you more about the course requirements and this should be used as a guide: <https://www.design.upenn.edu/city-regional-planning/graduate/graduate-city-and-regional-planning-programs>

Q: Is there any chance that OPT, or its STEM extension can get removed for students who have already started the program or do changes to the OPT program not affect those who are already enrolled?

A: I suppose that is possible, but we haven't seen it happen. I would assume that, unless the curriculum changes, the STEM eligibility would not change.

Q: How much is the tuition for two credits of Summer Design Studio? Is it paid separately from the annual tuition?

A: it is 2 course units-worth, so about \$14,000 or so, for tuition. It is in addition to the academic year tuition.

Q: I also had some questions about Penn Praxis. Can students take up employment within that? Are there paid positions?

A: there are paid positions at Penn Praxis, but we're not sure whether they are summer only or also offered during the academic year.

A: Penn Praxis, from what I know, typically has paid positions in the summer. I am unsure what amount of work or paid work happens during the semester. Projects vary and are based on what professors secure

Q: I am finding it difficult to justify taking out large loans to offset tuition costs. Any tips about this? Even tips about requesting more scholarship assistance from the Department in general

A: I would suggest reaching out to your Chair to request more scholarship. If you have better scholarship offers from other schools, you can include that in your request. Also, we would suggest applying to outside scholarships. We have an outside scholarships webpage here:
<https://www.design.upenn.edu/graduate-admissions/outside-scholarships>

Q: was really looking forward to knowing what you can say about the current direction that the program is going towards, is it heavily digital and parametric? this is my biggest concern for the program

A: The Penn curriculum is slowly evolving (depends on your professor). It is a very heavily digitally based and you will be using various types of modeling software's (again, depending on your professor). With climate change being a major issue all designers face, some studios are shifting towards that thought process. I just completed a studio where it was very research intensive in trying to design a self-sustainable residential community and my studio this semester is designing a Climate Research Center in NY which is also very research intensive. There are studios that are still in the parametric pedagogy, but in your second and third year you can elect which studio you'd like to take, so if parametric isn't your style, you do have options.

Q: Can you take elective courses at other UPenn schools?

A: My understanding is that it's pretty easy to take courses outside of the Weitzman school! That's definitely something people really enjoy about the program. I would say almost everyone takes a course or two in another school. I'm currently taking a course at the law school!

Q: For MCP isn't the required internship also during the summer? Could we take up a Penn Praxis position along with that?

A: yes, the internship is mandatory and typically occurs over the summer. but in one off scenarios, students are encouraged to work with the department on meeting the internship requirements. I've had friends who interned during the semester and used that experience to count towards the summer internship requirement.

Q: When will a decision on summer going online or not be available? (intl MLA student)

A: good question! We hope soon, but in these very trying times, it is hard to say.

Q: If it is changed to online course because of COVID-19, will the tuition be the same?

A: yes, most likely.

Q: Do students hold one RA/TA position per semester typically? How do you get a position and what are the hours like?

A: RA(research assistant) is like a TA position. Hours will depend on professor. I would reach out to a professor whose work interests you and see if they need an assistant. There are also independent studio credits which can be used to pursue your own research if that is something you are interested in.

Q: On the outside scholarships webpage I've noticed that there are none under historic preservation, do you have any current recommendations for outside scholarships specific to historic preservation?

A: If we knew of any they would definitely be posted there- I would perhaps reach out to the department as they may know of something that we do not.... also, most of those opportunities are available to students in any program

Q: To all the students in this chat, (and specifically MCP) were any of you initially torn between two schools? What helped you make your decision to come to Weitzman?

A: I was torn between several schools. several factors played into my decision including cost, courses, learning styles, etc. for me, the decision to come to Penn was mostly based off of my personal interests and the warmth of the professors. the profs and instructors really care, from the chair on down

A: It was definitely a difficult decision for me when it came time to choose the school I wanted. I am not a formalist (as some Penn students/faculty are) so I questioned whether or not I would have trouble adjusting. I did my research on a lot of the faculty at Penn and on Philadelphia and that helped me make my decision. I think faculty is one of the biggest factors to consider because you want to make sure that you know who you'll be learning from, what you'll be learning, and how you'll adapt. I love the work I'm doing right now at Penn and I am honestly so happy with my decision.

Q: Do you find it useful to live around campus? I live outside Philadelphia but feel it may be useful to have the luxury of going back and forth to campus (using library whenever necessary)

A: Many (most perhaps) of our students live off campus because it's cheaper. But it's good to live relatively close to campus, a bike ride or subway ride away.

A: I think living near campus is nice in terms of library, gym, and socializing after class and things like that. However, I know a handful of people that live outside of Philly and take regional rail to get to 30th street station and then walk to campus and that seems to work fine for them!

Q: Do students typically live on-campus or off-campus? Which is more economical? and what is the average cost of living like?

A: Most of our graduate students live off-campus as it is more economical. We find that our students typically pay \$600-\$1100 in rent.

Q: Similar question about how much time is spent on campus. is it daily? I live an hour out of Philly is it reasonable to expect to drive daily?

A: I'll let the students respond to your time spent on campus question, but it would be more expensive for parking if you drove in every day.

A: My studio partner also lives an hour out of Philly. He drives every day and so spends very little time on campus. We try to do quick meetings and split up work. It is possible but it is certainly not the best.

Q: Would you recommend the area living that is not so far from the school?

A: Most students live either in West Philly, Graduate Hospital, or Rittenhouse Square area.

Q: Are there online equivalent courses for the prerequisite? Both for the history of architecture and physics.

A: The most popular online class for fulfilling the Physics prerequisite is the following course offered by Straighterline: <https://www.straighterline.com/online-college-courses/sciences/general-physics-i/>. For History of Architecture, there are very few online courses that offered a full survey of the history of Western architecture from ancient up to modern. However, this Oxford online course will meet the prerequisite requirements: <https://www.conted.ox.ac.uk/courses/learning-to-look-at-western-architecture-online>

Q: What does parking run for the semester? How expensive is it??

A: Parking lots, to my knowledge, run about \$250-\$350 per month. We wouldn't suggest this. Most of our students do not have a car and say that they do not ever feel like they wished they had one. There is also street parking, but much of it is metered or zoned (meaning you can only park for 2 or 3 hours at a time unless you live in that zoned area)

Q: How do students typically commute to school? Are there many living options within walking distance?

A: Most students walk or bike in, or else take the bus or subway. Our transit system is pretty good. I take the subway to Penn myself. Yes, plenty of living options within walking distance.

Q: What would be your suggestion for skill building/ preparing for the MLA program if we have a few months free before the program? I have a non-design (social sciences) background.

A: I would login to Lynda.com and at least learn the basics of rhino, photoshop, illustrator and InDesign. They will teach you all of this but it may help to know those in advance so you can focus on plants and design not on finding commands

Q: I very much enjoy Penn and Philly but the heavy emphasis on parametric is a bit worrying to me as I don't know much about it and from what I can see, not super interested in it. Does Penn offer enough options for people who might be interested in other areas?

A: Yes. If you looked at my portfolio, I am very "not Penn" so I had the same worry. Each studio is different and your first year you don't get much choice, but second and third year you can elect which studio you want based on the studio's design intent. There is something for everyone

Q: Can you talk about the studio environment and studio space?

A: The studio environment was one of the major adjustments I had to make. I wasn't used to having 79 people around me at all times haha. That being said, it most definitely isn't for everyone. During busy times, the studio can become a bit noisy and make it hard to focus. On the other hand, I really enjoy the collaborative feel from the studio. Being able to see what the other students are working on and being able to have productive conversations across the studios is def great. My new favorite time to go to studio is in the morning when it's nice and quiet and then I don't have to stay too late

Q: Due to the Covid-19 situation, is it possible that starting school this fall will be postponed ? If not, then is the study will be held online?

A: the fall semester, as it stands now, will not be postponed. There may be a slight chance that the fall semester starts remotely but we are not certain and are hoping that is not the case

Q: For MCP- what software's should students be skilled at before coming to the program?

A: It really depends on your concentration...for urban designers, they should come pretty equipped (whatever those requirements are). but as for other skills, you'll often pick up skills in the Adobe Suite, R, GIS, graphics, etc. No pressure to feel like you need to have certain skills bc you'll learn a lot from your peers!

Q: MCP- is the studio in the second year based on your concentration?

A: your concentration is taken into consideration and you get to rank your preferences. but your studio group will most likely be a mixture of concentrations unless the studio is very specific for a certain skillset that may have more students from a certain concentration

Q: Is there any deadline for a decision of deferral due to Covid-19 ?

A: For deferrals, you must accept your offer of admission and pay your deposit by April 15th. But after that, we assume we may have international students that need to request deferral due to visa issues, so there would not be a specific timeline on that, if that is your reason for deferring. If you would like to request a deferral for non-immigration reasons, you need to contact the Chair of the program to inquire about the possibility of deferring.

Q: For M Arch students who missed applying for scholarships, is it any chance to get scholarships in the second year or the third year? or is it suggested to request for scholarships now before getting enrolled?

A: it is possible but not usual. Typically, you receive the same amount that you were initially offered through the course of your program.

A: Whatever scholarship package you enroll with will stay with you during your entire academic career at Weitzman- you cannot 'reapply' each year. We suggest asking your Chair for a scholarship now, before you enroll.

Q: MCP: I come from an architectural background, so I am well skilled at Autodesk and Adobe software's. My concern is GIS based software's. Would they be easy to catch up if I have no previous experience with those?

A: Yes, GIS is a required course so you will get exposed!

Q: If the fall semester needs to start remotely will the resources such as library will be hard to access ?

A: The libraries do have some online features. But we are really hoping that it won't come down to that.

Q: How many students are usually in the MCP program? and what is the diversity within the students like typically? How many are international?

A: we have about 130 students altogether in the MCP program. I don't have the US/intl ratio off the top of my head, but you can email us to follow up at admissions@design.upenn.edu

Q: Can you transfer my admission to unconditional admission? I need this for my off-campus scholarship application. Or after I registered for the online courses in physics and history of architecture. It will be too late if I have to finish the online course, then get the unconditional admission for scholarship application

A: Please follow up with me at archprer@design.upenn.edu with further details on what you are requesting. We will do what we can to assist.