



Q: How has studio culture changed since quarantine? Do you still feel you are able to problem solve as well without your studio mates?

A: Studio is quite different. Studios are now held via zoom with a large class meeting, individual meetings with the professor, and class closing meetings for class. My class has been doing mini Pachuca style presentations once or twice a week to show work and troubleshoot things. We have a lot of more structured tutorials. The different departments have slack channels as well to facilitate conversation. Classes also set up their own group chats and conversations to help keep conversations and ideas flowing. While the work has become much more independent it doesn't have to be.

Q: I'm an M.Arch 1 and I'm hoping you could talk about the amount of work you spend on studio vs non-studio classes. also, are you often pulling all-nighters?

A: this is definitely all dependent on your time management. Your first year is definitely intense and it will take you some time to adjust to the types of classes you take and your studio workload. Personally, my first semester was a busy, but I always made time once a week to have dinner with friends or to take a couple hours on a weekend and walk to center city. It may take you a month or so, but you'll figure out how to balance the two. All-nighters are unfortunately a thing. I didn't pull that many, but I pulled one in the first week of classes. Student council and GAPSA try to provide outings or activities to help students make time for themselves

Q: MSD: Starting off New Program SO will Liken to M.Arch, how involved are faculty with Current Building initiatives in Philadelphia. How Closely Does Staff Work in industry?

A: I'm not in MSD, but the professors all pretty much have their own practice. The professors are mostly New York based so not many of them work in Philly, but we do have a couple that work actively in Philadelphia

Q: Do we need to buy our own 3d-printer? I heard the M.Arch program is big on 3d printing.

A: we have about 35+/- 3D printers at Meyerson that are open for students to use yet depending on your studio and the amount of work you'd want to 3D print, it is always helpful to have your own printer. I just bought one this semester since we needed to produce a lot of prints for studio.

Q: MLA: I have a MacBook pro from 2016, do you think it will be adequate for the programs we will be using?

A: I had a MacBook 2016 when I first started as well but quickly decided to change over to PC because of all the differences in the programs we use. Also, I had issues with windows/mac side of the computer for a number of programs since some aren't available on mac. There's a handful of people in the program who use macs though and seem to manage. They just use the computer labs when necessary.

Q: MCP: Is the MCP studio space outside of the Weitzman school? If so, how has this impacted your experience.

A: so the studio spaces vary based on availability throughout the campus...some studios meet in the Meyerson bldg. and others will meet in nearby bldgs....it's all within close distance of Meyerson ...as for impacting my experience....space wise, this hasn't had an impact on my experience...I just build it into my schedule...as for studio as a whole...total experience...it's like being a consultant for a few months and working on a an issue of interest

Q: I still haven't got a PIN code from the school; I need to use it to apply for I-20. I don't know if I will get the pin code after I complete the prerequisite course

A: I think we need to follow up with you about your prerequisites before we can begin your I-20 process. Please follow up with us at archprer@design.upenn.edu and we'll look into as soon as possible!

Q: MCP: While I'm filling out my I-20, am I required to show financial sources equal to the annual cost of attendance? Or may I have the I-20 stipulating the remaining amount and show necessary funds during the F-1 VISA process?

A: you do need to show financial documentation that covers the first year of study. This documentation can include your scholarship offer letter from us as meeting that part of the finances. Does that answer your question?

Q: MARCH: what type of program do you use and is there a type of representation that the professor wants or are we allow to pursue the style of representation that we want?

A: we use rhino a lot, V-Ray and Keyshot for rendering, and definitely Adobe photoshop/illustrator etc. Some professors have specific representational styles that they teach and recommend, but there are some studios where you are freer in exploring your own style of representation. Mostly, professors just want to see great work -- if you have a strong style that is appealing to them, then usually they will encourage you to pursue it. It really depends!

Q: M.Arch 1: how well do the summer digital design programs prepare you for the fall course work?

A: The summer digital prep is meant to be an overview. You'll learn some good tips and tricks but its best if you already have a good sense of the program. If you are doing the full summer rather than the shorter prep course, you will likely cover more. That is for non-architecture backgrounds though.

Q: MSD: MSD- EBD: What kind of projects are dealt with? Do you get to work on (or study) any live project?

A: I think that they do but I'm not positive. And we don't have an EBD student here. I would recommend reaching out to Bill Braham, brahamw@design.upenn.edu.

Q: Do you feel as satisfied with the new studio format

A: I really enjoyed the feedback and workflow within studio, so this new format isn't my favorite. It is a great preparation for working on teams that aren't in the same place. Some larger offices have teams all around the country or world and work this way on the regular so it's nice to be exposed to that. It also gives a lot more flexibility to your schedule and to the type of work produced. I do hope we return to studio as it was though.

Q: MCP: MCP - Are students generally absorbed into the professional planning practices they intern with?

A: students are generally not absorbed with the professional planning practices they intern with. Many students take internships for experience they may inform their field but doesn't have to be the same practice they work in after graduating!

Q: M Arch 1: Mac or PC

A: PC is very recommended. Especially since all computers and programs at school are also PC, so it is easier to transfer files as well. Most software's work better with PC as well in general.

Q: M.Arch: are there a lot of M.Arch students that take EBD classes? And if so, can they integrate/collaborate between those classes and the Design Studios?

A: If you are interested in EBD you can take the certificate or dual degree. If you do the certificate, it will give you the chance to work in an EBD studio. The EBD studios are right next to the architecture studios, so you can always see what they're working on

Q: M.ARCH: does the school help with finding internship opportunities?

A: Weitzman has a great network of alumni and contacts in the professional world. We have a career fair that usually happens in February where you get to meet employers from many highly reputable firms. I just secured an internship for the summer through this career fair, so it is a great resource!

Q: M Arch: what is the primary software? and is it taught at the school or are you expected to learn it on your own?

A: MArch typically uses rhino, some grasshopper. They do teach Revit but don't use it much for studios. Adobe photoshop, illustrator, and InDesign are used to produce drawings. The school doesn't teach rhino much you are expected to know that more or less. They will get into teaching grasshopper (the landscape program has a very good media series for that). Revit is taught by the school.

Q: Do you mean that I can only start my I-20 audit if I have completed the prerequisite course? Because now UPenn is not sure if online courses will be offered, it may be too late to apply for I-20 after I complete the prerequisites

A: no, we just need to consult with you on your plans for completing the prerequisites. Once you let us know your plans and we have confirmed that the courses you are completing will meet the prerequisite requirements, we can move forward with the I-20 process.

Q: What Resources are Available to ensure Internship opportunities for Qualifying Students?

A: I just answered a similar question above -- also please note we also have great other resources such as a portfolio review where alumni come in and review your work; we have a close relationship with career services who come in regularly for Resume workshops; we also have an online platform called Handshake that has job opportunities and provides connections with alumni and employers

Q: M Arch: is there any word on when things might return to normal or is isolation the new normal expectation?

A: your guess is (almost) as good as mine! Right now, we're assuming that we will be holding in-person courses starting in the fall. But we will keep everyone informed as the summer progresses (and hopefully the coronavirus doesn't).

Q: M Arch: what is the best resource for learning rhino?

A: I learned it in undergrad. I would say looking at Lynda.com you may be able to find good tutorials. The school has a free membership for students so you can learn a lot of different software while at Penn.

Q: Visa question: I am a senior at Temple University right now and my visa will expire on June 25th, 2020. I have decided to stay in Philly before the digital workshop starts in August. Will I still be able to stay in the U.S between June 25th to August 3rd when the workshop begins?

A: you may be eligible for a SEVIS transfer. Are you planning to be on OPT during the summer with Temple's I-20/visa?

Q1: No, and Do I also need to submit a SEVIS transfer-in form to Penn? I know I would need to submit a transfer-out form to temple.

A2: we will need to confer with our International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) office about your specific case - could you please email me at lhoover@design.upenn.edu with the specifics of your I-20 and visa so that I can confer with ISSS?

Q: M.Arch: I request for a deferral of admission by email. But nobody replied to me.

A: to confirm, you emailed arch@design.upenn.edu? if so, that is correct, however, we are all working remotely so response times may be delayed unfortunately

Q: Now the best solution for my prerequisites is to take UPenn's online courses, such as physics and architecture history. But if UPenn can't provide online courses for summer vacation, is there any other recommended way?

A: it is my understanding that the summer prerequisite courses in History of Architecture and Physics are going to be offered online, but the Architecture Department should be informing all admitted students of the specifics shortly. If your plan is to complete those courses, please just include that in your email to archprer@design.upenn.edu.

Q: is there any Historic Preservation Certificate available? or is it specifically a major.?

A: yes, we do have a Historic Preservation Certificate. You can apply for that in the fall when you arrive. The certificate generally doesn't add extra time to your degree program. You fill a lot of electives with the HSPV courses.

Q: M Arch: Are we able to Defer?

A: Generally, M.Arch does not offer deferrals unless it is for something like military leave or a medical emergency. This year they will be lenient with international students who cannot get a visa on time. Any request for a deferral must be sent directly to the department.

Q1: does Global pandemic count as a medical emergency?

A2: I suppose if you get COVID-19 while you are pursuing courses, you could take a leave of absence after you are enrolled. That would be a medical emergency. Also, if you were diagnosed with cancer or another debilitating disease...

Q: if MLA II is pursued with the M.Arch is the M.Arch NAAB accredited?

A: yes, even when combined with a dual degree, the MArch is NAAB accredited. The dual degree curriculums have been approved to ensure that you will complete all requirements to receive the accredited degree.

Q: MFA: Hi everyone: Can current students give an estimate of how much time they realistically have for on campus jobs?

A: For Federal Work Study you are allowed to work a maximum of 20 hours a week. Typically, people work closer to 10 hours. Some students work internships off campus. They tend to limit it to one day a week crammed between classes. Really depends on how well you manage time and workload, but I would say 20 hours is the absolute max.

Q: MCP: MCP - For the current students who will be graduating, how does Penn's program prepare you for unprecedented situations like COVID in securing employment? Especially as an international student.

A: I do know some international students that are still taking interviews. Two have actually gotten offers last week but there is a lot of uncertainty for everyone, international and domestic students alike.

Q: When does the online summer course start? When does it end?

A: please follow up with arch@design.upenn.edu for specifics on the summer prerequisite online courses. We haven't yet received the specifics from them.

Q: MCP- is there any flexibility to change your concentration once you've already started the program,

A: yes! there is flexibility...especially in the first semester. many students switch. but I would lock in a decision around 2nd semester so that you don't get into a funky credit situation

Q: MCP - Hi all. I was wondering if you could talk about RA and TA positions. Do these positions cover tuition for that semester? Are they typically a semester-long commitment?

A: each department handles these positions differently, but to my knowledge none of our student positions would cover tuition, especially not for the entire semester. I believe all positions are paid via weekly payments, not tuition remission, but please double check with cityplan@design.upenn.edu

Q: M Arch: Which classes have you found the most valuable?

A: honestly, my most valuable classes have been the ones taken outside of architecture. Interdisciplinary classes have taught me a lot and have given me the opportunity to get new perspectives on things. The conversations are different, and you start to address issues you never even knew existed that may impact architecture

A1: I think it's evident that studio is the most valuable since we spend the bulk of our energy and time on it, and they produce the most important work for portfolio. Yet I am learning a lot in other classes - in construction, for example, we are learning Revit intensely and are building a construction set, which is

a super valuable skill. Our architecture history classes are also amazing at Penn, and we have important scholars who teach those classes. In visual studies, we explore various representation techniques and tools to create strong drawings.

Q2: can you provide an example?

A2: I've taken an course in the School of Engineering about renewable energy, last semester I took a city planning course on sustainability and environmental planning, and this semester I am taking a Landscape course where we are learning about large scale land reclamation which goes hand in hand with my studio project. I think you benefit the most from interdisciplinary courses because you meet new people (usually not a single architect in them)

Q: Depending on how things go with Covid-19 is the MFA department willing to consider deferrals?

A: the departments decide whether to allow deferrals. You should follow up with Ken about this.

Q: I have submitted my decision letter, but I did not find a place to submit my deposit.

A: because you are a current Weitzman School of Design student, we did not charge you a deposit.

Q: MLA: Aside from the readings Richard sent, is there anything you would recommend I do to prepare for the semester?

A: A student is answering more in line with your program, but I also wanted to mention that you should check out our pre-arrival checklist on our admitted student's webpage!

A2: Rest and take it easy! Richard told me this when I asked him when I started and its good advice. I would definitely recommend doing some of the readings and getting acquainted with the profession. I would also say you can check out lynda.com for some tutorials if you want to get used to the adobe suite particularly photoshop, illustrator, InDesign, and rhino. You will be introduced to all of these but always good to at least open the programs and explore around.

Q: MSHP/MArch- I'm interested in research opportunities. What are the research facilities and opportunities for students in the school? What is the application process for those positions?

A: Research opportunities for preservation are available. When you begin your studies, you can meet with your adviser, talk to Frank, and express interest in research work. Many of the students in my cohort do research for various professors in the program.

Q: MSD.AAD: we have preparatory courses begin at August.10th, will the course be postponed due to the coronavirus or we have online courses ?

A: the summer courses, including the preparatory course will be online. The departments should be following up with admitted students about this shortly. The University just announced that all of summer courses will need to be online today.

Q: M Arch: is anyone doing the EBD dual major? or would be able to speak about the experience?

A: there isn't anyone here who is dual MAR/EBD, maybe check with Bill Braham who could put you in touch with someone.

A2: I don't think any of us in this chat are, but for the certificate you are required to take an EBD studio. The studios perform a lot of simulations about environmental conditions. You can contact Bill Braham who's the head of EBD and he can answer more on the certificate. brahamw@design.upenn.edu

Q: what is everyone's favorite thing to do in Philly?

A: The farmers markets are fun and walking the city you can stumble on lots a lovely place to eat. I also enjoy brunch with friends and there are lots a good brunch place! The parks are also nice places to read and very easy to get to!

A2: Taking advantage of the amazing food/restaurants and spending time in the parks/greenspaces!

A3: I like exploring West Philly. There are lots of cool bars and restaurants around. The museums and other cultural sites are great as well.

A4: that's a tough question. I personally like eating and walking around the city most. Love just going to explore the food scene then walking it all off while taking in the Philly urban scape

A5: my favorite thing to do in Philly is eat! There are so good places to try new things and the variety is amazing. There is always something new somewhere new to try

A6: I like roller skating or ice skating at the blue cross river rink!

Q: I heard there are renovations happening to Meyerson hall the outside plaza? When will they be completed, and will it affect our access to any facilities?

A: I believe that the plaza will be finished in the fall. That's the plan! and it would not affect your access at all

Q: Do you know if MSHP students can publish articles or papers in any sort of academic platform? (Other than thesis)

A: If you're interested in having your writing published, I would also speak to your adviser about that. There are a number of journals and academic periodicals that you will become familiar with as part of the HSPV coursework, and those publications usually almost always have open calls for papers. In the meantime, check out Places Journal, Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, Future Anterior, and the Journal of Cultural Heritage

Q: MSD-RAS - do any of you know where our personal studio space is in relation to the new fabrication lab

A: they will have dedicated studio space in one of our outbuildings, I believe. You should double-check with Rob for confirmation.

Q: Talking about getting visas on time for international students, do you know the current policy? Has the state or gov, stopped issuing students visas?

A: right now, what we are hearing is that individual consulates have started taking visa appointments, but we are only hearing anecdotally. I actually have you on my list to follow up with tomorrow about your I-20 - at that time I will advise you on contacting ISSS to get more information about the current status of visa appointments.

Q: MCP: If we have to defer for a year, are we still able to do research with professors when we are away from campus?

A: if you defer, you are not considered a student and thus cannot do research with our professors.

Q2: What would be the best way to continue engaging with the school for the time we are in deferment?

A2: through social media (Facebook, Instagram) and also through our lectures (in person or through Vimeo).

Q: For confirmation, dual master's students start making their thesis in the third or fourth year?

A: we think it would be in your fourth year...

Q: SO, with the information's provided tomorrow I will contact someone at ISSS, will you put me in contact with one person in particular or will I have to reach the general ISSS office?

A: I will try to inquire on your behalf to get a quicker response if possible.

Q: When would the school residential apartments begin to apply

A: you can see the specific information about applying for on-campus housing as a graduate student here: <https://cms.business-services.upenn.edu/residential-services/applications-a-assignments/graduate-students/new-graduate-student-applications.html> . The application should be open as it states it opens on April 1st, but you need to setup your PennKey and password before you can submit the application.

Q: If the university has to take measures for the Fall, regarding Covid-19, is there a timeline / date for when the university will let students know? Moving costs can be high, so I imagine, the university will let the students know about any changes before they move to Philly, is that right?

A: we all totally agree! I'm hoping they will decide by the end of April, but this is just a guess on my part.

Q: MCP: Since the first bill is due in July, does that also reflect on our I-20s if we receive them after we pay it?

A: - I am not sure I fully understand your question. But if you receive a tuition bill in July and still have not completed the I-20 process, please let me know and we can make sure that you do not need to make a payment before you are sure you can come.

Q: Is there any discussion about tuition decreases if things are online in the fall due to Covid-19?

A: not at this time. We still have to pay the professors, who are actually finding that they are spending MORE time teaching remotely, than in person! But everything will be on the table going forward.