Q: I read that there is no set score. But are some basic score requirements that adds up to a 308. What role does our GRE score play in the application? Is it a make it or a break it kind of a situation?

A: The GRE is only a part of your application. The Admissions Committee will be putting the most emphasis on your portfolio. The GREs are looked at along with your GPA as your "scholastic" ability.

Q: As per the MSD-AAD course description, it says that the course is focused on 'innovation in architecture design'. I would like to know more about what all it covers. Are there any specific contemporary issues addressed?

A: I'm sorry, we unfortunately do not have any MSD-AAD students logged on this morning, but I would suggest that you contact Han Zhang, a current student in the program who is about to graduate in December, I'm sure he can answer your questions! You can contact him at hanzh@design.upenn.edu

Q: I have been working in the professional world for about 3 yrs now. Both in the USA as well as here in India. The projects that i have worked on after graduating from Miami University are significantly larger (University campus and tourism projects in India) than the ones that I have worked on in school. How do you advise me to organize my portfolio in order the make the most out of it?

A: this is a good question. It depends on what your role was in your work experience. Were you the designer? The Committee will want to see your original work, so you should have a good number of school projects. You can also add a few work projects as long as you describe your role in each project.

Q: I am wondering if there are any research opportunities at the City and Regional Planning program? Such as opportunities for students to participate in faculties' research as research assistants?

A: yes, each department generally has opportunities to work as a TA or research assistant though you would unfortunately need to reach out to City Planning directly as each department handles these positions differently. You can email them at cityplan@design.upenn.edu

Q: This might be a question asking for most applicants who are applying for the dual degree program. Do we have to submit two different versions of portfolio when we are filling out our applications?

A: you will submit two separate applications, but it is up to you to decide if you want to submit the same portfolio for both applications or if you would like to tailor them to the particular programs.

Q: Do students have to fill out the financial aid form if they want to be considered as recipients of scholarships?

A: yes, you should fill out the form. We look at both need and merit when awarding scholarships.

Q: Does the Scale of the projects matter? As during my time at Miami, I only worked on small scale projects that mainly focused on details. Also is there a way that i can schedule a meeting with the faculty to review my portfolio and get some inputs on it?

A: there is no set formula. you should put in your best work. It wouldn't hurt to show a variety of scales. Unfortunately, the faculty are not available to review portfolios prior to the admissions review.

Q: How is does the masters studio structure work? How do feel about your experience at UPenn so far?

A: Studios are structured around themes. Typically, a general site is selected and from there your instructor will determine the deliverables and pacing. I have found that the first years have more abstract small projects and one larger "real" project. Your second and third years go up in scale and in detail. You will incorporate the knowledge gained from other classes into your studio work and your studio work will help you understand some of your other classes.

I have loved my Penn experience thus far! The students and faculty here are very friendly. The work is interesting and challenging. I like that it incorporates skills from all my classes and that I continue to develop a style, personal thesis as I continue at Penn.

Q: My background might be a little different. Due to financial considerations, I sold my restaurant and might have to sell assets in order to apply for & to focus on attending graduate school. I am wondering if students are eligible to gap a year before entering the program?

A: generally, you should apply for the semester which you are able to start, i.e. applying in January 2020 for Fall 2020 start. In rare cases the faculty will grant a one-year deferral to enter the program a year later. Though for the M. Arch. program specifically, this is very rare and usually for medical emergencies.

Q: I am interested in the PhD in architecture, is it required to contact a professor before applying?

A: it is not a bad idea! You should write to the Chair of the Graduate Group, Professor Daniel Barber, at barberda@design.upenn.edu. Explain your interests and ask him which of his faculty most closely align with them.

Q: For the letter of recommendation, at least 2 from academic professors, but does it matter if this professor is from intermediate level studio I took or is from the professional level (Basically my question is can i have one letter of recommendation from professor who teaches in first or second year studio)?

A: they really prefer at least two from professors, but it doesn't matter which level they teach. I would say the one who knows you the best!

Q: MCP program here - What are some of the most common internships during the summer months for MCP students?

A: I would say that it would depend on your concentration area. The program would have more specific information, as they assist with internship searches, but I would also suggest that you look over Penn's Career Surveys from our recent graduates, as Career Services has started to gather internship information. You should go to the following page and click on the linked years next to 'School of Design': https://careerservices.upenn.edu/post-graduate-outcomes/

Q: what kind of role the Academic writing sample play among all the application materials? I am trying to apply for MSD-ADD program, and it is interesting to see this on required material which the similar program from the other schools usually don't have.

A: I would say that your portfolio will be the most important part of your application. In your writing sample, the faculty will want to see how articulate you are in expressing your thoughts.