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7 Reasons You Need Your Master's in Architecture

SoAD -- Tue, 07/05/2016 - 9:50am

Why would you need a master's in architecture? Here are some of the biggest ones.

1. You want to become a licensed architect

Having an accredited degree in architecture is one of the pillars of becoming a licensed architect. If you earned a four-year degree in architectural studies, a field related to architecture, or a field unrelated to architecture, you'll have to earn your master's in architecture to become licensed and become a practicing architect. The five-year accredited Bachelor of Architecture and the Master of Architecture are the only two degrees recognized by the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB), the organization that is responsible for granting licensure. In some cases, you can substitute extensive work experience for the Master of Architecture degree when you're going through the licensure process, but that can require six to ten years of working at a firm or registered organization.

2. You want a salary increase

It's no secret that having an advanced degree increases your earning capacity, and that holds true for architects, too. For architecture grads with one-to-four years of experience, the national median salary for architects with a Bachelor of Architecture degree is just over \$45,000--but the national median salary for architects with a Master of Architecture degree is \$56,380.

3. You want to teach

Because architecture students need to learn from other professionals, a Master of Architecture degree, combined with experience at an architecture firm, you'll need the degree to be considered for any teaching position at the university level.

4. You want to be constantly evolving

Stagnation is not an option after earning your master's in architecture. With a master's of architecture degree, you'll be better prepared to take on a wider range of projects--or you can choose to focus on something more specific, like place-based architecture projects. Your Master of Architecture degree will set you up for a lifetime of on-the-job learning.

5. You know that good design makes people's lives better

Architects make a difference, whether people notice it or not. With your master's in architecture, you'll gain a true understanding of how thoughtful and intentional design improves our everyday lives. As a Master of Architecture student, you'll be in a challenging, rigorous, and collaborative environment, giving you the experiences you want and need to prepare you for your work as an architect.

6. You're passionate about designing meaningful spaces

View Student Work!



Take a look at the student work of our Master of Architecture Program!

SEE MORE
([HTTP://ARCHITECTURE.LOUI
/PROSPECTIVE-STUDENTS/STU
WORK/MASTERS-ARCHITECTU](http://architecture.louisiana.edu/prospective-students/student-work/masters-architecture))

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information](http://gradschool.louisiana.edu/prospective-students/application-information))

M. Arch. Blog



Check out the blog for our Master of Architecture program at UL Lafayette!

Architecture is as much about how buildings are assembled as it is about the environment in which buildings exist. These spaces can range from a single room to an entire community, and you'll get experience working with both in our Master of Architecture program. You will learn how to design meaningful spaces and to help your community through your passion for design.

M. ARCH. BLOG
([HTTP://ARCHITECTURE.LOUI](http://architecture.louisiana.edu/blogs)
/BLOG)

7. You can be your own boss

Many architects go on to own their own architectural firms, where they have the freedom to design what they love and build significant and complex structures that can resonate with a community. A master's in architecture is essential to reaching such a level of professional and creative freedom. Owning an architectural firm will also increase your earning potential beyond simply working for someone else.

Find out more about our Master of Architecture program > (</programs/master-architecture>)

@ulsoad Instagram



SOAD'S BLOG ([/BLOGS/C00001058](/blogs/C00001058))

VERSION #1 - SENT TO PROGRAM FOR REVIEW

master of architecture
masters of architecture
masters in architecture

1. You want to become a licensed architect

Having an accredited degree in architecture is one of the pillars of becoming a licensed architect. There is no getting around it. If you earned a four-year degree in architectural studies, a field related to architecture, or a field unrelated to architecture, you'll have to earn your master's in architecture to become licensed and become a practicing architect. The five-year accredited Bachelor of Architecture and the Master of Architecture are the only two degrees recognized by the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB), the organization that is responsible for granting licensure.

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The master's of architecture degree is a terminal degree, which means it's the highest-level professional degree you can earn in the architecture field. Because architecture students need to learn from other professionals, a Master of Architecture degree, combined with experience at an architecture firm, is required to teach at the university level.

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Stagnation is not an option after earning your master's in architecture. With a master's of architecture degree, you'll be better prepared to take on a wider range of projects--or you can choose to be hyper-focused on one type of architectural field. Your Master of Architecture degree will set you up for a lifetime of on-the-job learning.

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Commented [FMJ1]: Kari... I need your help with this paragraph. I'm just still not sure if its right. I know that the PhD is now the terminal degree for academic positions, but I also know that it is still relatively new (since 2004). Additionally, I'm wondering (from what I've read) whether it's accurate to say that the M.Arch. is still regarded as the highest-level *professional* degree that can be earned. Should we just take out the first sentence.

6. You're passionate about all of the space around you

Architecture is as much about how buildings are assembled as it is about the space that is created by the assembling. These spaces can range from a single room to an entire city. As you're earning your master's of architecture degree, you will learn not only how to appreciate the relationships between spaces but also learn how to create them in a way that will help your community and express your passion for design.

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PROGRAM RESPONSE TO VERSION #1

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Commented [SKJ1]: There are a few jurisdictions that allow a person to substitute work experience for the terminal degree. The Louisiana State Board of Architectural Examiners is considering this path.

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Commented [SKJ2]: Source? This varies according to region.

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Commented [SKJ3]: This paragraph does need reconsideration. Even though many who teach in architecture are not Ph.D's. more and more are earning an M.ARCH II- a graduate degree intended for those who already have a professional degree in architecture.

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Commented [FMJ4]: Kari... We need your help with this paragraph. I'm just still not sure if its right. We know that the PhD is now the terminal degree for academic positions, but we also know that it is still relatively new (since 2004). Additionally, we're wondering (from what we've read) whether it's accurate to say that the M.Arch. is still regarded as the highest-level *professional* degree that can be earned. Should we just take out the first sentence?

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Commented [SKJ5]: This is not quite right. For our program we would want to put an emphasis on place-based projects. Our program does not offer specializations in for example, health care architecture.

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Commented [SKJ6]: Although we often work at the scale of cities, we do not offer a Master of Urban Studies and Planning or Master in City Planning degree.

7. You can be your own boss

Many architects go on to own their own architectural firms, where they have the freedom to design what they love and build structures that can resonate with a community. A master's in architecture is essential to reaching such a level of professional and creative freedom. Owning an architectural firm will also increase your earning potential beyond simply working for someone else.

Commented [SKJ7]: Louisiana has exemptions for unregistered and unlicensed persons to create designs for one-family and two-family residences as well as other structures of limited scope. However, structures of significant size or complexity must be stamped by registered/licensed professionals.

VERSION #2 - WITH EDITS & RESPONSES TO PROGRAM FEEDBACK

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masters in architecture

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Commented [SKJ1]: There are a few jurisdictions that allow a person to substitute work experience for the terminal degree. The Louisiana State Board of Architectural Examiners is considering this path.

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Commented [FMJ2]: Kari, is this an improvement? Or should we leave it out? What are your thoughts?
Source: <http://www.ncarb.org/Certification-and-Reciprocity/Alternate-Paths-to-Certification/Broadly-Experienced-Architect-Program.aspx>

Commented [SKJ3]: Source? This varies according to region.

Commented [FMJ4R3]: Yes, of course. This is the national median salary as identified by payscale.com. Given that we're now really recruiting beyond Louisiana, I think we should be using the national median salary here. (Is the LA median salary is higher?) What are your thoughts?

3. You want to teach

~~The master's of architecture degree is a terminal degree, which means it's the highest-level professional degree you can earn in the architecture field.~~ Because architecture students need to learn from other professionals, a Master of Architecture degree, combined with experience at an architecture firm, ~~you'll need the degree to be considered for any teaching position is required to teach~~ at the university level.

Commented [SKJ5]: This paragraph does need reconsideration. Even though many who teach in architecture are not Ph.D's, more and more are earning an M.ARCH II- a graduate degree intended for those who already have a professional degree in architecture.

Commented [FMJ6R5]: While the M. Arch II may be an option, it's not an option that we offer. With this blog, we're wanting to focus on why you need your M.Arch. I really don't think we want to get into the M.Arch II here, especially since we don't offer it. ☹️ I suggest we pull the first sentence and we revise the remaining as noted here. What do you think? Should we also move it down in the ranking?

4. You want to be constantly evolving

Stagnation is not an option after earning your master's in architecture. With a master's of architecture degree, you'll be better prepared to take on a wider range of projects--or you can choose to ~~focus on something more specific, like place-based architecture projects, be hyper-focused on one type of architectural field.~~ Your Master of Architecture degree will set you up for a lifetime of on-the-job learning.

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Commented [SKJ8]: This is not quite right. For our program we would want to put an emphasis on place-based projects. Our program does not offer specializations in for example, health care architecture.

Commented [FMJ9R8]: How about this revision?

lives. As a Master of Architecture student, you'll be in a challenging, rigorous, and collaborative environment, giving you the experiences you want and need to prepare you for your work as an architect.

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Commented [SKJ10]: Although we often work at the scale of cities, we do not offer a Master of Urban Studies and Planning or Master in City Planning degree.

Commented [FMJ11R10]: Is this revision better and/or accurate? Even though we do not offer these degrees, your program does encourage students to consider cities and communities, right?

Commented [SKJ12]: Louisiana has exemptions for unregistered and unlicensed persons to create designs for one-family and two-family residences as well as other structures of limited scope. However, structures of significant size or complexity must be stamped by registered/licensed professionals.

Commented [FMJ13R12]: How about this? Or do you think we need to provide more qualification to these statements?

PROGRAM RESPONSES TO VERSION #2

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masters in architecture

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Commented [FMJ1]: Kari, is this an improvement? Or should we leave it out? What are your thoughts?
Source: <http://www.ncarb.org/Certification-and-Reciprocity/Alternate-Paths-to-Certification/Broadly-Experienced-Architect-Program.aspx>

Commented [SKJ2]: I am in favor of providing the. Prospective pre-professional degree holder students to the graduate program are already indoctrinated, but prospective students who are coming from an unrelated discipline should weigh all options.

Commented [SKJ3]: Source? This varies according to region.

Commented [FMJ4R3]: Yes, of course. This is the national median salary as identified by payscale.com. Given that we're now really recruiting beyond Louisiana, I think we should be using the national median salary here. (Is the LA median salary is higher?) What are your thoughts?

Commented [SKJ5]: The AIA is the source of salary calculation that I advise my students to reference: <http://info.aia.org/salary/>

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Commented [SKJ6]: Revision suggestion: You're passionate about designing meaningful spaces

Commented [SKJ7]: This sentence is a little awkward. I think you are trying to get at context and scales of design? Perhaps-Architecture is as much about how buildings are assembled as it is about the environment in which buildings exist

Commented [SKJ8]: Although we often work at the scale of cities, we do not offer a Master of Urban Studies and Planning or Master in City Planning degree.

Commented [FMJ9R8]: Is this revision better and/or accurate? Even though we do not offer these degrees, your program does encourage students to consider cities and communities, right?

Commented [SKJ10]: Suggestion: You will learn how to design meaningful spaces and learn how to help your community through your passion for design

FINAL REVISION

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masters of architecture
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~~According to the American Institute of Architects (link to article), "Advanced architecture degrees, licensure, and Revit/BIM experience can also help to bump up salaries. Nearly three quarters of all firms (72%) pay higher salaries for employees who are licensed, and more than half (53%) pay a premium for workers with a Master of Architecture degree. By firm size, 88% of firms with 100 or more employees offer a bump for a Master of Architecture degree, and 31% of all firms offer a salary bump for experience with Revit/BIM, an emerging and important area of expertise."~~

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Commented [SKJ1]: Let's use the national median salary information you found the AIA basis it on experience.

Another piece:
<http://www.aia.org/akr/Resources/Documents/AIAB095069>

"Advanced architecture degrees, licensure, and Revit/BIM experience can also help to bump up salaries. Nearly three quarters of all firms (72%) pay higher salaries for employees who are licensed, and more than half (53%) pay a premium for workers with an MArch degree. By firm size, 88% of firms with 100 or more employees offer a bump for an MArch degree, and 31% of all firms offer a salary bump for experience with Revit/BIM, an emerging and important area of expertise."

Commented [ER2]: I don't understand this comment, but I tried my best.

Commented [FMJ3R2]: I appreciate your efforts here, but I don't think we should link it to the article or quote from here. It's 2011 data. Too old and she says in the comment above "Let's use the national median salary information you found..."

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