

School of Architecture and Design

Prepared for *Engineering World*

Engineering-related programs at the American University of Sharjah are offered through two schools: the School of Engineering (SOE) and the School of Architecture and Design (SA&D). AUS is fully accredited in the United States by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. All degrees offered by both SOE and SA&D are therefore recognized in the United States and worldwide.

SA&D upholds the notion that good design results from a synthesis of a deep understanding of culture, ethical engagement in society, and respect for the creative skills needed to establish a sustainable and inspiring built environment. Faculty members have come from diverse educational, practice, and research backgrounds and are selected with a particular consideration of their familiarity with higher education system and practices in North America. They combine mastery in teaching with continuing growth in their respective disciplines and areas of expertise.

SA&D offers three undergraduate degrees related to the engineering field: Bachelor of Architecture (B.Arch.), Bachelor of Interior Design (B.I.D.), and Bachelor of Science in Design Management (B.S.D.M.). Moreover, and in partnership with the SOE, SA&D also offers the Master of Urban Planning (M.U.P.) degree.

The B.Arch. is a 5-year, first professional degree program. Both the B.I.D. and the B.S.D.M. are 4-year programs. The three degree programs prepare students to successfully engage in the architecture and design practice in the Gulf region and at the global level. All students joining SA&D must complete the first, foundations year before they carry on their work towards their specific major (e.g., architecture, interior design, etc.).

The design studio experience is a significant component of student learning in both the architecture and interior design programs. The studio affords students the opportunity for hands-on, interactive learning aimed at nurturing the student's critical thinking and independent creative skills. Furthermore, SA&D degree programs provide students the freedom to integrate their major (core) course requirements with elective courses that best fit their personal interest. And, like in the rest of AUS degree programs, SA&D curricula are based on integrating liberal arts offerings with professional education.

The first of its kind in the UAE, the Master of Urban Planning (M.U.P.) is a 48-credit-hour program intended to provide students with specialized graduate-level education that enables them to undertake leadership roles in managing urban growth, prescribing urbanization policies, and advancing sustainable development. In addition to the program core course requirements, students can choose one of two areas of specialization: Transportation Planning, or Design for the Built Environment. Students currently enrolled in the program hold undergraduate (Bachelor) degrees in either architecture or civil engineering. They are mostly working professionals who hold key positions in either public or private agencies. They all share the genuine passion for making cities a better place for living.