



School of **Architecture**

Future Prospects in Architecture

What is architecture?

Architecture is the creative study of buildings and cities. As a subject with ancient roots, it considers how humans have been dwelling in the world for thousands of years. As a contemporary activity, it is the creative design of new buildings at the forefronts of culture, technology, and the environment.

What does an architect do?

An architect may participate in various design activities: from houses to public buildings and urban designs. Depending on one's interests, an architect may focus on topics such as historical buildings, community development, or building construction. Visiting an architect's office will introduce you to some daily activities.

Who is well suited to become an architect?

A potential architect is someone who enjoys designing and is interested in buildings and cities. Architecture combines fine arts, humanities, and technologies, so well-rounded students with creative ability and a good academic record are prime candidates. Previous building designs are not expected.

How long does it take to become an architect?

After finishing high school, an architecture student completes six years of university. (This includes general studies in other subjects, as well as professional studies in architecture.) After receiving an architecture degree, a graduate typically works in an architectural office and may do professional examinations three years later to become a registered architect.

Does it make sense for students from the United States to study in Canada?

Yes. Professional architecture degrees are recognized in both countries, so a U.S. citizen who graduates from a Canadian architecture school can return to the United States to become an architect there. Students also may find that tuition fees in Canada are more affordable than at comparable universities in the United States.

Where are architecture schools located in Canada?

Twelve Canadian universities offer professional architecture programs: Dalhousie University, Université Laval, Université de Montréal, McGill University, Carleton University, University of Toronto, Toronto Metropolitan University, University of Waterloo, Laurentian University, University of Manitoba, University of Calgary, and University of British Columbia.

Architecture at Dalhousie University

How is Dalhousie's architecture program organized?

Before entering the architecture program at Dalhousie University, a student must complete at least two years of courses at any university in subjects other than architecture. This is followed by four years of architecture: two years leading to a Bachelor of Environmental Design Studies degree and two years leading to a Master of Architecture degree.

What should I study before applying to the architecture program?

To develop a well-rounded academic foundation, consider taking high school courses in three general areas: art/music, mathematics/science, and history/literature. For your initial undergraduate program at university, choose a subject area in which you're liable to do well: depending on your interests and academic strengths, this may be liberal arts, science, fine arts, engineering, computer science, etc.



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The only specific course requirements for admission to the architecture program are:

- two university courses in a math or science subject (biology, chemistry, computer science, engineering, geology, mathematics, physics, or statistics)
- two university courses in a humanities or social science subject (anthropology, art history, classics, literature, music history, philosophy, political science, psychology, or sociology)
- a university course that includes an emphasis on writing skills.

To develop skills for studio work, a course in freehand drawing, material craft, or digital design is also useful.

Can I take architecture courses before applying to the architecture program?

Yes. Several introductory architecture courses are open to all students from Dalhousie and other universities in Halifax.

Which courses are included in the program?

The architecture program includes eight academic terms. The emphasis is on architectural design, with other courses in architectural history/theory, building technology, representation, and professional practice. In addition to attending lectures and participating in seminars, students work individually and collaboratively on design projects in the studio. This involves lots of drawing and model-making, by hand and on computer. Students have their own studio space and can work in the studio after hours. One-third of the building is devoted to studios. The Faculty's facilities include computer labs, woodworking shop, digital lab, photo studio, and a large exhibition hall. The university's architecture library is located nearby.

What practical experience do students receive?

Dalhousie's architecture program includes co-op work terms that provide students with twelve months of practical experience in building design and professional practice. Many students use the work terms as an opportunity to live, work, and travel in another province or country. Work term salaries also help pay for one's academic studies. Typically, a co-op work term involves working in an architectural office and assisting with various aspects of building design: drawing, model-making, computer drafting, construction supervision, meeting with clients and consultants, etc.

Where do Dalhousie architecture students come from?

Usually, about 40% are from western Canada, 30% from Atlantic Canada, 20% from Ontario and Quebec, and 10% from other countries. Although two years of university are required for admission, most incoming students have three to four years of university. Each class includes diverse academic backgrounds. The male/female ratio is usually equal.

What are my chances of being admitted into the architecture program?

Each September, 65 students are admitted. The acceptance rate is about 20%. Most applicants have a B+ average in university and a good design portfolio that demonstrates creativity and artistic skill.

What might be included in a design portfolio?

A design portfolio is a collection of design work, digitized and assembled in a PDF. A portfolio may include freehand drawings, paintings, furniture, sculpture, craft objects, creative photography, construction projects, etc. Building designs are not expected. This work may have been done in academic courses or on your own.

Can I visit the school and see what students are doing?

If you plan to be in the Halifax area and would like to receive a guided tour of the Architecture building, please contact the Architecture office.

Where is the architecture school located?

It's in downtown Halifax, at Spring Garden Road and Brunswick Street, two blocks south of the Halifax Citadel, five blocks west of the Halifax harbour, and next door to the Halifax Central Library. The Faculty of Architecture and Planning and the Faculty of Engineering are on Dalhousie's Sexton Campus, in the middle of Halifax's prime commercial area, with many shops, restaurants, theatres, and other facilities nearby. The main Dalhousie campus is a fifteen-minute walk away, and NSCAD University is ten minutes away.

How can I find out more about the program?

Please contact the Architecture office to ask for an undergraduate admission package to be mailed or e-mailed to you. This material is also available on the Architecture website.

Questions?

Contact the Architecture office:

- ✉ arch.office@dal.ca
- ☎ 902.494.3971 (undergraduate and transfer admissions)
- ☎ 902.494.3973 (graduate admissions)
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