

REVIEW OF SCHOOL RESPONSES TO THE EC'S REPORT

Technion

The response prepared by the faculty of the Technion is systematic, clear, discerning, and productive. It is plain that the assessment process has been taken very seriously and that both the faculty and the School leadership have committed themselves to a disciplined and creative process of self-evaluation and change. The structure of the School's response (sequential listing of EC's observations followed by the School's response) is very effective.

1. Faculty- it would be good to know exactly what steps have been taken to: "instill a sense of community, etc. among the faculty. That "less disharmony" exists is a very positive sign. That recruitment efforts are underway is also very positive.
2. Collaboration with relevant programs- the optimism is encouraging, but there is little evidence of changes at the institutional level
3. Linkages with the profession and with industry- the joint meetings described are positive; the need for a lecture series is acknowledged but not met.
4. Leadership and management-the steps taken with respect to leadership are positive and convincing
5. Mission and goals statement- a review of mission and goal statements for both programs seems timely and productive
6. Framework for curriculum development- this response contains very positive steps toward curriculum review and renewal. The decision concerning "structure" (the European or American models) will be decisive, but alliance with one or the other would seem to be secondary to the Faculty's sense of its own academic mission. As is stated by the School, this is a decision that affects all of the programs in Israel, suggesting that the CHE take part in these discussions.
7. Studio structure- these revisions to the studio sequence seem very positive, even if they are ongoing.
8. Awareness of other architecture curricula – the discussions between the schools, the CHE, and the Registrar are obviously crucial for the future of architectural education in Israel. That the Dean of the Technion is heading a task force that will address this issue is very good. The outcome of the meetings that have been described will greatly affect this school and the others. A conflict of expectations between the schools and the Registrar cannot be allowed to continue. A common core – with respect to "competencies" rather than teaching methods – seems to be a good aspiration. Core, in this sense however, should not be

envisaged as rudimentary subject matter, but kinds of knowledge all parties agree are essential in the training of architects intending professional practice.

8. Experimental courses -the initiatives described under this heading seem very positive, insofar as the first promises to give amplitude to the educational program, and the second will tie it to surrounding community.

9. Specific topics -as noted above, the recruitment efforts are very positive. All impediments to success in these efforts should be removed, particularly any impediments that limit the recruitment of the best talent in and outside Israel.

10. Computing - the initiatives with respect to computing seem well conceived, comprehensive, and likely to overcome the deficiencies noted by the EC.

11. Quality of teaching -what is meant by “placing a premium on student evaluation” is unclear. Does this mean that student evaluations are taken into consideration when decisions about appointment renewal, promotions, and compensation are made?

12. Staff re-development plan - as noted in the EC report, this issue is decisive for the School. The appointment of the Dean from within the discipline was a very good step in the right direction. The agreement to increase the faculty from 30 (22 currently filled) to 40 positions is also an important step forward. As noted above, the net should be cast widely and the candidates with the best preparation and greatest likelihood of making significant contributions to the School and discipline should be appointed, regardless of other issues (nationality, religion, etc; although diversity and gender balance are always important issues in the shaping of faculties).

13. Promotion and tenure criteria -this response to the report is very positive. The CHE should consider asking the Technion if these proposals could be shared with the other schools, with a view to shared adoption.

14. Leadership and management- that the Dean was appointed for 4 years seems a very wise decision.

15. Teaching load - in addition to this positive step, the next might be to formalize the different combinations of seminar, lecture, and studio courses that could constitute a full-time load, and shared with the appropriate faculty, for purposes of planning different career paths.

16. Research- the agenda for research is very positive. A corresponding growth in scholarship might be a good parallel initiative.

17. Students and learning- acknowledging the long-term nature of this issue shows a realistic grasp of what is at stake. The steps that have been taken indicate a good approach.

18. Studio space- the restatement of the problems with studio space indicates clear awareness of the challenge. The desire for a large space suitable for an entire

class is understandable, but it should be remembered that many European programs run studios that happily exist in a number of relatively small rooms. Communication is key, but so is the identity of single studios or studio sections. The removal of partitions seems to be a good partial solution.

19. Workshops- the improvement of workshops is very positive and should have a significant impact on student learning and faculty research.

20. General- the EC's recommendation on this point was for *consideration*. The metaphor of "blurring" disciplinary boundaries is common, but hardly clear. The key issue is the combination of the necessary level and degree of disciplinary identity and the appropriate level (or possibilities) of interdisciplinary opportunities. The EC's recommendation that a structure be devised to achieve both ends seems still useful.

In consideration of the observations set out above, in two years an expert in the field should reexamine the implementation of the recommendations that have not been followed.

Submitted by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Leatherbarrow".

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