STEM DESIGNATION FOR M.ARCH. PROGRAMS

We are pleased to announce that as of Spring 2019, UVA School of Architecture's Master of Architecture program (Path 2, Path 2.5, and Path 3) will be STEM-designated.

The Master of Architecture program at UVA, consistent with other Schools of Architecture nation-wide, includes curricular content that is essential to the comprehensive design and construction of buildings. It teaches students to use advanced constructional, simulation and performance modeling technologies that are employed as an integral part of the structural, environmental, and material design and performance of buildings. The program's STEM-designation (and associated new CIP code: 04.0902) allows our international M Arch graduates to apply for the Department of Homeland Security's optional practical training (OPT) extension program for F-1 students with STEM degrees.

STEM OPT EXTENSION

The STEM OPT Extension program affords eligible international students holding F-1 visas, upon completion of a STEM-designated degree, the opportunity to extend their stay in the United States by 24 months (allowing for a maximum of 36 months total) to obtain advanced training in their field – enhancing our students' overall educational experience and helping to bridge their experience between academia and practice.

ARCHITECTURE AS A GLOBAL PRACTICE

As Schools of Architecture have continued to evolve their curriculum, looking to the future of the profession, the recognition of architecture as a global and networked practice has become even more paramount. UVA School of Architecture is strongly committed to providing an expansive, diverse, and global experience for all of its students – through its international research projects, studios, and programs and its international community of faculty, students, and alumni. Our recent STEM-designation also supports our students in opening up critical opportunities for practical and professional experiences. We believe these opportunities will not only positively impact our own students, but also the field of architecture more holistically through the direct promotion of cultural diversity and appreciation.

International students are an essential cohort to the vitality of our architecture program and our community more broadly. The majority of other peer architecture programs are also STEM-designated, in recognition of the value this designation affords to its student body. Specifically, 21 of the top 25 nationally-ranked programs of architecture (*source: ranking from Design Intelligence's "Top 25 Programs 2017-18 According to Hiring Professionals"*) have this designation and we are happy to announce that UVA's Master of Architecture program is now the 22nd within this list of top schools.

OPT + STEM OPT EXTENSION DETAILS

The OPT + STEM OPT Extension application process for students and employers is facilitated through UVA's **International Studies Office**.

ISO's F-1 Optional Practical Training (OPT) Overview + Details

ISO's F-1 24-Month Stem OPT Extension Overview + Details