What can I do with a major in architecture?

Most students who major in architecture plan to design buildings as architects, but some may go on to other related careers in urban planning, interior design, historic preservation, construction management, or landscape architecture. In order to work as a professional architect, students will need to become licensed, which requires three steps: earn an architecture degree that is accredited by the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB), complete an internship, and pass a state examination. Bachelor’s degree programs that are accredited by the NAAB are available in many states; some take 5 years to complete. In Washington State, the only accredited programs are at the master’s level. Completing an unaccredited bachelor’s degree in architecture or architectural studies, however, can shorten the time needed to earn the accredited master’s degree.

How can I prepare at Seattle Central for a major in architecture?

Students planning to major in architecture at a baccalaureate institution may take courses in art history, design, drawing, calculus, algebra, and physics, as well as general education requirements, to prepare to transfer. Many universities may require specific classes from their architecture program as prerequisites. Specific requirements vary according to the transfer university, so it is STRONGLY recommended that students work with an advisor at Seattle Central as well as advisors at the universities where they are considering transferring to ensure they take the appropriate classes to be prepared to enter the major when they transfer. It may be necessary to take the prerequisites at the university as a non-matriculated student, or transfer before completing 90 credits.

Students planning to major in architecture should consider working toward the Associate of Arts – DTA degree to prepare to transfer.

Tips for Success as an Architecture Major

- Many architecture undergraduate programs will require at least some calculus. If your math skills are weak or it has been some time since you took math, do not put off getting started! Depending on your placement scores, you may need to take math for several quarters before you are ready to start calculus.
• Check prerequisites, admission requirements, and GPA requirements at your intended transfer university early so you can be well-prepared to transfer.
• Architecture is not a commonly offered major. Make sure that the universities you apply to offer architecture, and if you want to be able to work as a practicing architect after your bachelor’s degree, check that the programs you apply to are accredited by the NAAB at the bachelor’s level. You may want to explore both bachelor’s and master’s programs so that you have a good sense of what is available and how best to prepare.
• Check both university admission and graduation requirements at your preferred transfer university as a guide to choosing your classes. Some universities, for example, may require a year of foreign language as a graduation requirement. It may be much easier (and cheaper!) to meet that requirement at Seattle Central rather than waiting until later.

Where can I earn a bachelor’s degree in architecture in Washington?

The only universities in Washington State that offer degrees in architecture are the University of Washington, Seattle, and Washington State University.

University of Washington – Bachelor of Arts in Architecture (liberal arts program), Bachelor of Arts in Architectural Design (pre-professional program)  
Washington State University - Bachelor of Science in Architectural Studies (pre-professional program)

Bachelor’s degrees in architecture that are accredited by the NAAB are offered by the University of Oregon and a number of universities in California, as well as other universities around the country. You can use the College Navigator search engine found at http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/ to find architecture programs in other states around the country.

Next Steps:

• Research the universities you are interested in attending and the prerequisite classes they require for your major. Contact the programs you are interested in to find out if you can take the required prerequisites at a community college or if it will be necessary to transfer early.
• Research the admissions requirements for architecture programs and begin working on a portfolio of your drawing and design work, if necessary.
• Meet with an advisor to choose a transfer degree, discuss prerequisites, and plan what classes you need to take in the next quarter or two.
• Explore the professional organizations in your area of interest for more information about education and career options.