

## **“Architectural Education in this Age of Globalization”**

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## Introduction

There are different facts that have characterized this age of globalization that differ from other eras. To experts, globalization would have been for societies from the past, trade in their known world, as well as other aspects such as military and cultural control among others. But as of today, this phenomenon of globalization may have very different ways to define and to explain its possible roles. It seems that most of the definitions would center in worldwide trade and finance, although to others, the social aspects of interdependencies, connections between the local and the distant, and a great number of other aspects should also be included, but always insisting in its universal influence.<sup>2</sup> In the case of our study, the financial and trade aspects would be appropriate, but the cultural aspects of architecture cannot be left out.

In this globalizing process, the free trade agreements among countries from the different continents of the world, as well as other type of international economic cooperation agreements have become a strong factor that make possible for products to be commercialized within them. In this same manner, professional services are also taken into account since there are many opportunities for this segment to participate in economic enterprises in different parts of the world. In this case, architecture is considered as one of the professional services in free trade agreements, becoming a very important part of the globalization process throughout the world.

The effects of this process of globalization is positive in certain ways, but they are also negative aspects that must be considered. Some of the important aspects of these processes that should be mentioned are:

- Immense scientific and technological advances throughout the world that are within reach for professionals to use, and that are helpful in solving whatever problem comes upon in their respective fields;

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<sup>2</sup> MacGillivray, Alex *“A brief History of Globalization”*, Ed. Robinson, London, 2006, pag. 5 – 6.

- Great economic transformations at a global scale that have made free trade on commercial products possible, so that these may be acquired by anyone without extra costs.
- Professional services are also considered in this open age of free trade, giving competency a new value to open possibilities for cross border activities;
- But due to this, there may be serious affectations in professional, cultural and environmental issues, that must be considered by all, in a way that these processes become an opportunity to enhance, advance and to grow positively, and not become problems for the lack of guidelines and control in all necessary aspects;
- Cultural homogenization, since sometimes globalization is considered as a way to uniform systems and processes instead of a way to participate actively in modern enterprise without losing its own identities;
- If willing to participate, it may require the implementation or modification on codes, revision of regulations and the development of systems, so that the accepted processes may comply;
- In the case architects, the implantation of new design and construction concepts should also be considered.

As a result, many are the concerns, activities and studies going on to permit the mobility of architects in a respectful and legal manner. For this the governments and/or the representative architectural organizations that are willing to accept these processes, work together with their counterparts of other countries and economies to fulfill all requirements into international cooperation and/or Mutual recognition agreements for architects. The main concerns in this case are the quality of architectural education and professional expertise of foreign architects that may be given legal recognition if they comply accordingly.

The professional requirements in this case are a need for the awareness of different and higher levels of national and international competencies that give the possibilities for international mobility. Ideal characteristics on professional knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes in architecture, must be considered, not only at the educational level, but also in continuing education programs for graduates and professionals. And to give the public the confidence they need, with the consolidation of internal accreditation/validation/recognition systems for architectural programs, and register/license/certification processes for persons that are competent in providing professional services.

Architecture is not excluded from the globalizing process, it is actually a very important part of it. More and more we see works of architectural design and construction that are becoming important landmarks wherever they are built. The increase of city’s competitiveness is sometimes due to architecture. For this, there is an interest for quality architecture and urban design, but also the participation in sustainable projects according to the particular needs of each region, and with this the inclusion of architects from all over the world that have specialized in fields needed elsewhere.

But there may also be some setbacks with the creation of buildings that promote different life styles that attend more to image than to social or functional issues. Or growing homogenization and intercultural mixtures, with the loss of regional identities that are giving way to ambiguous global tendencies. These are just two aspects that must be discussed and taken into account in schools of architecture and by architectural organizations to provide guidelines to decrease their possible negative impacts.

## International Guidelines

The International Union of Architects (UIA), to establish international guidelines for the criteria needed, has worked on different issues through its commissions and the results are very important documents that are used to establish parameters to be considered by professional organizations and schools that have architectural programs. Of these documents, the *UNESCO/UIA Charter for Architectural Education* and the *UIA Accord on Recommended International Standards of Professionalism in Architectural Practice* are probably the cornerstones in each of its specific areas.

In the case of the *UNESCO/UIA Charter for Architectural Education*, many are the concepts that have to be highlighted to understand the way that university level architectural programs are being evaluated and in most cases modified to meet the standards established. To help us along in this line of work, some of the important international criteria noted in this document are included as specific quotes and discussed briefly:<sup>3</sup>

- It is preamble, there is a specific concern “... *for the future qualitative development of the built environment in a fast changing world*”, establishing the need “... *for the improvement of the education and training of future*

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<sup>3</sup> UNESCO/UIA Charter for Architectural Education, Revised Version 2005.

*architects to enable them to meet the expectations of XXIst Century societies worldwide for sustainable human settlements in every cultural heritage.”* These quotes enable us to understand the meaning and main objectives and intensions for which the Charter has been created.

- Its preamble also makes a noteworthy closing remark to work on “... *the creation of a global network of architectural education within which individual achievements can be shared by all and that it will enhance the understanding that architectural education constitutes some of the most significant environmental and professional challenges of the contemporary world.*” This invitation has been accepted by many universities that are now having exchange programs that are being used by students, professors and researchers.
- In its General Considerations, it established the need to “...*prepare architects to formulate new solutions for the present and the future in this new era, ...*”, for which it accepts methods of education and training to be varied “... *in order to develop a cultural richness and allow for flexibility in the development of the curriculum to respond to the changing demands and requirements (including methods of project delivery) of the client, the users, the construction industry and the architectural profession, ...*”
- In its item 4 of the General Considerations, it establishes a “*recognition of the importance of regional and cultural customs and practices and the need for differences in curriculum to accommodate these variations*”, taking note that it is possible through these differences to “... *enable countries, architecture schools and professional organizations to evaluate and improve the education given to future architects.*”
- The “... *increasing mobility of architects between different countries...*” is acknowledged, making a statement for the need “... *for mutual recognition or validation of individual degrees, diplomas, certificates and other evidence of formal qualification.*”, that will facilitate the portability and acceptance of this kind of documents. But it also clarifies that this kind of evidence “... *of formal qualification to practice in the field of architecture has to be based on objective criteria, guaranteeing that holders of such qualifications have received and continue to maintain the kind of education and training called for in this Charter.*”
- The objectives of architectural education stated involves the acquisition of capabilities in Design, Knowledge (that includes Cultural and Artistic

Studies, Social Studies, Environmental Studies, Technical Studies, Design Studies, and Professional Studies) and Skill.

- And to be able to obtain *“... the balanced acquisition of subjects and capabilities cited ..... requires a period of not less than five years of full-time studies in a university or an equivalent institution, plus in order to be registered/licensed/certified not less than two years internship in a suitable practice setting, of which one year may be obtained prior to the conclusion of academic studies.”*
- In order to achieve the objectives mentioned, it is necessary to take into account certain conditions and requirements for schools to be accredited, one of which notes the importance to raise the level of architecture education with *“... the creation of a network, on a worldwide basis for the exchange of information, teachers and senior students is as necessary as a regional network to promote an understanding of diverse climate, materials, vernacular practices and culture.”*
- *“The use of external examiners is a recognized method of achieving and maintaining comparable national and global standards.”* This as part of the suggested creation of *“... systems for self-evaluation and peer review conducted at regular intervals”* that should include *“experienced educators from other schools or other countries and practising architects”*. This type of processes may be based on the approved UNESCO-UIA Validation System or of accreditation.
- *“That in order to benefit from the wide variety of teaching methods, including distance learning, exchange programmes for teachers, and students at advanced levels are desirable. Final projects could be shared among architecture schools as a means of facilitating comparison between results and self-evaluation of teaching establishments, through a system of international awards, exhibitions and publications on the internet web site.”*
- It concludes that the *“.... Charter was created on the initiative of UNESCO and the UIA to be applied internationally to architectural education and needs the guarantee of protection, development and urgent action.”*
- *“The Charter constitutes a framework providing orientation and guidance to students and teachers of all establishments involved in education and training in architecture and planning. It is conceived as a “dynamic” document which will be regularly revised, thus taking into consideration new*

*trends, needs and developments in professional practice, as well as in education systems”.*

Taking note of the international intensions of the Charter, we will be able to discuss how these are taken into account, not only for architectural education throughout the world, but more specifically in the compliance of international standards for professionals that intend to extend their services in other nations. In this case, these concepts are also applicable in mutual agreements between different economies as to the professional formation of the candidates, and for that matter is an important part of the criteria established.

The second document important in pertaining architectural education for globalization matters is the “*UIA Accord on Recommended International Standards of Professionalism in Architectural Practice*”, which also includes many other factors that are helping organizations of architects throughout the world to undertake negotiations between different economies for the mobility of its members.

Although it clearly states that it is not the intention to establish obligatory standards, the Accord is the result of the international community of architects to establish standards and practices that are considered to serve best community interests. To do this, the document undergoes its objectives by including Principles of Professionalism for architects, and Policy Issues that are considered important as international standards for negotiations, and are exposed with the definitions, background and policies that are considered acceptable as the recommended criteria in each case.

For the means of this expositions, the following policy issues are considered important since they may have a direct impact on how architectural education may be considered for the future in this globalized world, and for this reason are included citing textually the definition and policy for each one:<sup>4</sup>

- **Architect** – *The designation “architect” is generally reserved by law or custom to a person who is **professionally and academically qualified** and generally registered/licensed/certified to practice architecture in the jurisdiction in which he or she practices and is responsible for advocating the fair and sustainable development, welfare, and the cultural expression of society’s habitat in terms of space, forms, and historical context.*
  - **Policy** – *That the UIA adopt the definition of an “architect” as stated above for use in developing UIA International Standards.*

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<sup>4</sup> UIA Accord on Recommended International Standards of Professionalism in Architectural Practice, Revised version 2005.

- **Fundamental Requirements of an Architect** – *The fundamental requirements for registration/licensing/certification as an architect as defined above, are the knowledge, skills, and abilities ..... that must be **mastered through recognized education and training**, and demonstrable knowledge, capability, and experience in order to be considered professionally qualified to practice architecture.*
  - **Policy** – *That the UIA adopt a statement of fundamental requirements as set out above as the minimum basis for development of UIA International Standards and seek to ensure that these particular requirements are given adequate emphasis in the architectural curriculum. The UIA will also seek to ensure that the fundamental requirements will be constantly kept under review so that they remain relevant as the architectural profession and society evolve.*
  
- **Education** – *Architectural education should ensure that all graduates have knowledge and ability in architectural design, including technical systems and requirements as well as consideration of health, safety, and ecological balance; that they understand the cultural, intellectual, historical, social, economic, and environmental context for architecture; and that they comprehend thoroughly the architects’ roles and responsibilities in society, which depend on a cultivated, analytical and creative mind.*
  - **Policy** – *In accordance with the UIA/UNESCO Charter for Architectural Education, the UIA advocate that education for architects (apart from practical experience/training/internship) be of no less than 5 years duration, delivered on a full-time basis in an accredited/validated/recognized architectural program in an accredited/validated/recognized university, while allowing variety in their pedagogic approach and in their responses to local contexts, and flexibility for equivalency.*
  
- **Practical Experience/Training/Internship** – *Practical experience/training/internship is a directed and structured activity in the practice of architecture during architectural education and/or following receipt of a professional degree but prior to registration/licensing/certification.*
  - **Policy** – *That graduates of architecture will be required to have completed at least 2 years of acceptable experience/training/internship prior to registration/licensing/certification to practice as an architect (but with the objective of working towards 3 years) while allowing flexibility for equivalency.*
  
- **Accreditation/Validation/Recognition** – *This is the process that establishes that an educational program meets an established standard of achievement. Its purpose is to assure the maintenance and enhancement of an appropriate educational foundation.*

- **Policy** – *That courses must be accredited/validated/recognized by an independent relevant authority, external to the university at reasonable time intervals (usually no more than 5-years), and that the UIA, in association with the relevant national organizations of higher education, develop standards for the content of an architect’s professional education that are academically structured, intellectually coherent, performance-based and outcome-oriented, with procedures that are guided by good practice.*

It is important to make note that many of these suggested international standards are being considered in international documents between architects of different economies, and especially for the mobility of architects, the accreditation/validation processes, or for the evaluation of architectural programs. Some examples of these will be discussed in following pages of this document.

## International Agreements

The UIA includes in its website, examples of many international agreements between countries that vary in many ways, depending on the scopes of required for each region.<sup>5</sup> But for this specific study, only two will be mentioned as examples, not only in their general objectives, but in the way the organization of architects of the specific regions have come with ways of participating, either through Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRA) between them, or through the establishment of mutual recognition of skills and qualifications to facilitate the mobility of architects.

In the case of the Asia – Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), it is considered a forum for facilitating economic growth, cooperation, trade and investment in that particular region.<sup>6</sup> It is based on non-binding commitments that are made through “*open dialogue and equal respect for the views of all participants.*” And as stated in its purpose and goals, “*works to create an environment for the safe and efficient movement of goods, services and people across borders in the region through policy alignment and economic and technical cooperation.*” As of now, it has 21 member economies participating.

The APEC Architect Project is part of this forum working as an initiative of the APEC Human Resources Development Working Group (HRDWG), with the participation of 14 economies, and has established its own Operations Manual for organizational matters as wells as for rules and criteria that underpin its operations. Of these, part of the principles and operational framework for the creation of the

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<sup>5</sup> [http://www.uia-architectes.org/texte/england/COAC/coac\\_temp.html](http://www.uia-architectes.org/texte/england/COAC/coac_temp.html), 2 October, 2010

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.apec.org/apec/about\\_apec.html](http://www.apec.org/apec/about_apec.html), 2 October, 2010.



APEC Architect Register agreed by all participants to provide evidence of the achievement of professional standards for the recognition of architects, is accounted in this study, specifically in the area of the education standards.

The criteria adopted by the Central Council for admission to the APEC Architect Register, and use of the description ‘APEC Architect’, are based on identification of a common sequence and elements in the education, training and assessment of architects as qualified to provide professional architectural services in the home economy. These consist of:<sup>7</sup>

- an accreditation or recognition procedure for education programs in architecture;
- a minimum period of post-graduate practical experience, with specified requisites;
- fulfillment of registration, licensing or other requirements for full professional recognition,
- a minimum period of professional practice as a registered or licensed architect, with specified requisites.

As part of the APEC Architect registration criteria included in the Operations Manual, the education, training and assessment of architects must be identified through “an accreditation or recognition procedure for education programs in architecture”. To deal with this, there is an Educational Benchmark Statement that says:

*“Education as an architect shall comprise at least four years of full time study. The education must be of university level, with architecture the principal component. It must maintain a balance between theoretical and practical aspects of architectural training and lead to the acquisition of the skills and knowledge necessary to underpin the required competence of an APEC Architect. Structured experiential learning, determined by the regulatory authority economy to be the equivalent of full-time architectural study as described above, would also satisfy the APEC Architect education requirements.”<sup>8</sup>*

For which the common elements of Architectural Education Programs included, are the core subjects areas in: Design as the predominant subject category; Technology and Environmental Science; Social, Cultural and Environmental Studies, and Professional Studies; that may include Related Studies and General Education. These principles should be incorporated in the processes to satisfy the accreditation/ recognition criteria for educational programs for an APEC Architect, respecting procedures of each participating economy.

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<sup>7</sup> APEC Architect Operations Manual, 2008.

<sup>8</sup> APEC Architect Operations Manual, 2008, pag. 8 – 9.

Another example, is the North America Free Trade Agreement known as NAFTA, in which the governments of Canada, Mexico and the United States of America (USA) have established a set of rules to make this possible within this particular region. Since the documents result of these negotiations are very extensive due to the enormous amount of aspects that must be specified, in this text only the part that has to do with professional services will be discussed. In this case, annex 1210.5 on Professional Services that precisely states the following on the development of professional standards that are noted.

*“2. The Parties shall encourage the relevant bodies in their respective territories to develop mutually acceptable standards and criteria for licensing and certification of professional service providers and to provide recommendations on mutual recognition to the Commission.*

*3. The standards and criteria referred to in paragraph 2 may be developed with regard to the following matters:*

- a) **education**- accreditation of schools or academic programs;*
- b) **examinations** - qualifying examinations for licensing, including alternative methods of assessment such as oral examinations and interviews;*
- c) **experience** length and nature of experience required for licensing;*
- d) **conduct and ethics** - standards of professional conduct and the nature of disciplinary action for non-conformity with those standards;*
- e) **professional development and re-certification** - continuing education and ongoing requirements to maintain professional certification;*
- f) **scope of practice** - extent of, or limitations on, permissible activities;*
- g) **local knowledge** - requirements for knowledge of such matters as local laws, regulations, language, geography or climate; and*
- h) **consumer protection** - alternatives to residency requirements, including bonding, professional liability insurance and client restitution funds, to provide for the protection of consumers. “*

Because of the importance of each of these aspects, the standards and criteria cited above became an important part of the agenda in the negotiations for the Trilateral Mutual Recognition Agreement on professional services signed by the professional representatives of architect organizations of Canada, Mexico and the United States of America in 2005 and recognized by the Trilateral Committee in 2007. And the aspects that had to do with education, examination and experience were the most widely discussed since they are the most representative of the profession. This MRA established “... *criteria, procedures and measures for the mutual recognition of qualifications that will facilitate the portability of*

*qualifications through reciprocity for the provision of services within the NAFTA countries.”<sup>9</sup>*

Of the acceptable standards included are practice, professionalism and expertise, among others. In the part of expertise, it states that “Architects possess a systematic body of knowledge, skills and theory developed through education, graduate and post-graduate training and experience.”<sup>10</sup> This assurance is based on the discussions, revisions of architectural programs and visitations done by the three parties to different architectural schools of the three countries. Since architectural education was one of the cornerstones of the MRA, the task was not easy, especially because there was no previous experience of this type, reason why it took about fourteen years of negotiations to come to a consensus for its acceptance.

In the documents discussed above, the common ground on education, besides the core subject areas, that are the same as stated in the UIA Charter for Architectural Education, is the importance of the accreditation/validation systems in architectural education. In this sense, the Canberra Accord on Architectural Education is probably the best example set for international standards for the Recognition of Substantial Equivalency between Accreditation/Validation systems in Architectural Educations set by agencies of different countries, and that was signed on the 9<sup>th</sup> of April of 2008. Its framework was designed with the purpose that in the future it “.... will facilitate international mobility of graduates in architecture and contribute to improving the quality of architectural education through benchmarking.”<sup>11</sup> According to this document, its basic fundamentals are the following items selected for this text:

- *The Accord is a transparent (peer review) system for determining substantial equivalence of architecture degree program/mes. It is considered to be reflective of the core principles of the UNESCO-UIA Charter for Architectural Education (Revised Version 2005) and the relevant sections of the UIA Accord on Recommended International Standards on Professionalism in Architectural Practice (Revised Version 2005).*
- *Notwithstanding the differences between their accreditation/validation systems, the signatories to this Accord agree that their systems are substantially equivalent. This being the case, academic qualifications in architecture accredited/validated by one of the*

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<sup>9</sup> Tri-National Mutual Recognition Agreement for International Practice, Oaxaca, Mexico, October 7, 2005. Pag. 4.

<sup>10</sup> Op. Cit. Pag. 4

<sup>11</sup> Canberra Accord on Architectural Education, Recognition on Substantial Equivalency of Accreditation/Validation Systems in Architectural Education, 9 April, 2008. Pag. 2

*signatories should be accepted as having substantial equivalency and recommended for recognition by all signatories, subject to additional imposed by local regulations.*

- *The term “substantial equivalency” identifies a program/me as comparable in educational outcomes in all significant aspects, and indicates that it provides an educational experience meeting acceptable standards, even though such a program/me may differ in format or method of delivery. Substantial equivalency is not accreditation or validation.*
- *The signatories recognize the substantial equivalence of their systems in terms of accrediting/validating the academic requirements for the practice of architecture at the professional level.*
- *It is the academic qualifications accredited/validated by the named signatories that are covered by the Accord, not the territories within which the signatories are based or operate.*
- *The Canberra Accord recognizes the substantial equivalency of accreditation/validation systems in architectural education of the following agencies or organizations:*
  - *Commonwealth Association of Architects (CAA)*
  - *Canadian Architectural Certification Board/Conseil canadien de certification en architecture (CACB-CCCA)*
  - *Consejo Mexicano de Acreditacion de Ensenanza de la Arquitectura/Comite para la Practica Internacional de la Arquitectura (COMAEA/COMPIAR)*
  - *Korea Architecture Accrediting Board (KAAB)*
  - *National Architecture Accrediting Board (NAAB) (U.S.)*
  - *The National Board of Architectural Accreditation of China (NBAA)*
  - *The Royal Australian Institute of Architects (RAIA)*

The Canberra Accord establishes that as of 1 January 2010 academic qualifications in architecture accredited/validated by the signatories stated above will be considered substantially equivalent by those agencies with the intension to facilitate the portability of these educational credentials between the countries. It is important to note that the degrees, or qualifications, awarded prior to 1 January 2010 are not included in the agreement, and that it does address matters related to professional registration or licensure. But it is an important step towards these goals for future young architects living in a globalized era.

## Globalization of Architectural Education

According to information from UIA, based on research made through the International Relations Department of the Architect’s Institute of Catalonia (COAC - Col·legi d’Arquitectes de Catalunya) there are three levels of regulatory requirements for the portability of legal documents and furthermore mobility of architects, based on

its international guidelines.<sup>12</sup> In the Academic level, the recognized qualification is of 5 years. In the level for the professional level it would be: experience of 2 years; in some countries an examination; to have a clean track record based on ethics and/or legal matters, and; Continuing Professional Development, only required in some countries. And in the third level would be the Financial, Immigration and Labor laws that include business Visa, Customs regulations (for documents, materials and models), establishing business presence, transfer of profits out of country and tax policies and regulations.

The information included in this research about Architectural Education, indicates that there are around 1,400 schools/universities with accreditation or validation, either through a State controlled system, a Profession control system (Anglo/Saxon model), or the 2002 UNESCO/UIA Validation System. It is expected that there will be international mobility and recognition of qualifications in the world in the near future, thanks to these processes and their acceptance. Especially since there is search for harmonization in architectural education with the requirements stated in the UNESCO/UIA Charter and the UIA Accord on Recommended International Standards of Professionalism in Architectural Practice. It is expected in this case, that schools that are outside of the minimal required may have trouble in the future for their graduates, since they may not be able to have the same mobility possibilities of others schools that comply with accreditation/validation processes. This may be the reason why 70% of the world population of architects and students are from developing countries.

Schools of architecture in order to prepare their students with the competencies required in this globalized era, must take note of the requirements that architects must comply with, that are stated in international agreements so they may obtain recognition. In this case, the APEC Architect Project requires architectural practice and experience in Preliminary studies and preparation of brief, Design, Contract documentation and administration.<sup>13</sup> The Operations Manual also states that the APEC Architect must be competent in the following aspects:<sup>14</sup>

***To create architectural designs that: satisfy both aesthetic and technical requirements; are informed by the history and theories of architecture and the related arts, technologies and human sciences; demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between people and buildings, and between buildings and their***

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<sup>12</sup> Col·legi d'Arquitectes de Catalunya (COAC - Architects' Institute of Catalonia), “*Architectural Practice Around the World*”, 2005.

<sup>13</sup> APEC Architect Operations Manual, 2008, pag. 9

<sup>14</sup> Op. Cit. Pag. 11 – 12.

*environment, and the need to relate buildings and the spaces between them to human needs and scale; respond to environmental concerns and address sustainability issues; show skill in land-use planning and the planning process; take account of cultural and social factors and demonstrate an understanding of the responsibility of an architect to society;*

***To translate a design concept into built form and be able to:*** *investigate and interpret design objectives and relevant issues and prepare the brief for a design project; advise on project evaluations, feasibility studies and programs; evaluate and determine structural, constructional and engineering elements of a building design and integrate the advice and design of specialist disciplines into a building project; assess the physical influences on buildings and the technologies associated with providing internal conditions of comfort and protection against the climate, and coordinate and integrate services systems to control them; meet building users' requirements within the constraints imposed by cost factors and building regulations; provide advice on issues of construction, procurement and contract administration; generate the documentation and information needed to translate a design concept into a building; manage the procurement of buildings, administer contractual arrangements and monitor their construction.*

***In the practice of architecture and:*** *observe legal and regulatory obligations related to the planning and construction of buildings; have adequate knowledge of the industries, organisations and procedures involved in the management and realisation of a design project as a building; observe the standards of conduct expected of a professional by the community; maintain competence in relevant aspects of the practice of architecture.*

Another possibility for schools of architecture to help their students, teachers and researchers, to have contact and experience in this age, are international exchange programs between them and schools/universities of other countries. These are becoming an important part of their curriculum, that gives a different type of preparation to those that take advantage of the programs. It gives new ways to see what is going on in different parts of the world, valuable for the future outcome of students.

Information from the exchange program from the University of Guadalajara (UdeG) is used here to illustrate how this is becoming an important part of the curriculum of universities, to make possible for students, teachers and researchers to have different views of their particular disciplines in a globalized world.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> University of Guadalajara, Institutional Numeralia, Information on Basic Indicators, 31 August, 2010.

209,466	<i>Total students in the University of Guadalajara 2009-2010</i>
13,715	<i>Total Academic Personnel</i>
10,113	<i>Total Administrative Personnel</i>
1,512	<i>Total Researchers</i>
88	<i>Educational Programs accredited by recognized organisms</i>
2,023	<i>Full Time Teachers with Recognized Desired Profile registered in PROMEP<sup>16</sup></i>
359	<i>Academic Research Teams registered in PROMEP</i>
631	<i>Members of SNI (National System of Investigators)</i>
834	<i>Agreements with other universities</i>
516	<i>International Agreements</i>
70	<i>Collaboration with associations and networks in which U. de G. Participates</i>
17	<i>International Associations</i>
44	<i>International Collaboration Networks</i>
407	<i>Students that have participated in mobility actions coming from external institutions.</i>
241	<i>Students from UdeG that have participated in mobility actions going to external institutions.</i>
47	<i>Professors that have participated in mobility actions coming from external institutions.</i>
91	<i>Professors from U. de G. that have participated in mobility actions going to external institutions.</i>

As this table may show, international exchange program agreements for students, teachers and researchers are now becoming an important part of the curriculum of the UdeG. These agreements have been signed with Schools, Universities and Institutes from more than 20 countries from North America, Europe, Latin America, and the Asia – Pacific Region. According to the national indicators, UdeG is in first place in many aspects due to the possibilities given through these and other programs to maintain their obtained recognitions, and to improve teaching and research methods that later are used to the advantage of students.

## Conclusions

Many activities are going on throughout the world due to concerns in Architectural Education and Professional practice that have to do with mobility in this age of globalization. The challenge and goal is that architect, not only have the opportunity to participate, but that they be recognized as such by doing it legally and respectfully according to the agreements signed. This shows there is willingness of governments, professional architectural organizations and

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<sup>16</sup> PROMEP (Programa de Mejoramiento de Profesores) is a National Program that seeks the improvement of teachers, and when and Academic has earned sufficient indicators as teacher and researcher he is given a National Recognition for obtaining the desired profile called PROMEP Profile.

schools/universities that understand that it is better be part of the process, than to see it pass by.

If we are willing to participate, then we can say that Globalization in this age gives as an opportunity for the exchange of experiences, cultural and professional diversity, local respect, to elevate levels of competency and professional associations. In education we would seek quality through accreditation/validation processes, that contemplate international competency requirements and opportunity for our young students. In professional practice, long term planning to take advantage of the times, defense of our profession, continuing professional development to maintain competencies, ethical performance and guild participation through our professional organizations.

This text may conclude with the words of Arq. Xavier Cortes Rocha, Mexico’s long time Executive Coordinator of the Mexican Committee for International Practice (COMPIAR) that made possible many of its international agreements between architects of Mexico and architects of Europe, North America and Asia – Pacific.

*The threats, challenges and opportunities are to conserve our vital values to conquer our own being inside globalization, to assume an ethical responsibility in which the result of our professional practice will be the consequences of our own actions, and the opportunity to expose, compare and to share experiences and knowledge. To promote a respectful interchange over subjects that have to do with architectural education and practice with the objective to make them better.*

*Architectural education and professional practice should respect the natural and built environment, the urban landscape, cultural heritage, idiosyncrasy, traditions and beliefs. To offer a professional practice that is ethical, integral and responsible.*

*Today’s phenomenon of globalization opens an opportunity to explore other latitudes y to dialogue with the exterior world without forgetting what is ours.<sup>17</sup>*

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<sup>17</sup> Cortes Rocha, Xavier – Presentation to members of Federacion de Colegios de Arquitectos de la Republica Mexicana (FCARM – Federation of Architect Colegios of the Mexican Republic) of advances in International Agreements by COMPIAR in 2003.



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