

As of 2004, the NAAB (National Architecture Accreditation Board) has adopted a new degree entitled D.Arch (Doctorate of Architecture). The new degree is structured similar to existing 3.5 year M.Arch degree programs, where a student completes a 4 year pre-professional or non-architecture degree and then applies for the 3-4 year professional architecture tract. Many in the profession foresee that the new D.Arch title and structure will replace all of the current accredited architecture degree tracts.

Currently, the M.Arch is considered a terminal, first-professional degree on par with the MD in Medicine or the JD (Juris Doctorate) in Law. However, no other professions outside art or architecture understand the meaning of a “terminal master’s degree”. As a result, M.Arch graduates are consistently under-compensated in practice relative to other professional fields and often disregarded in academia by other programs that grant professional doctorates or PhD’s. The M.Arch degree has been severely deflated in status due to a matter of semantics. The D.Arch can remedy this obstacle by giving architects a richer degree and title that demonstrates the extremely high level of achievement not indicated by the masters’ nomenclature.

Architecture programs are currently eligible to change their degree programs and/or titles to the D.Arch system. The D.Arch can and should be offered retroactively to former M.Arch graduates. In fact, 3.5 year M.Arch programs actually exceed the minimum requirements for the D.Arch set by the NAAB. As a precedent, law programs went through such a change in the first half of the 20th century, upgrading the LL.B degrees to JD. The doctoral distinction is a necessary component for architecture graduates to be adequately compensated financially and to obtain the proper stature in their desired career path. More information and a petition can be found at [www.marchtodarch.com](http://www.marchtodarch.com). Thank you.

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