What’s the purpose of an Intermediate Studio Gate?
Design studios sit at the heart of our program’s curriculum. They carry the most credit hours and are the place where students integrate and apply knowledge gained in subject area courses. We want to set students up for success as they enter these rigorous learning environments by making sure they are adequately prepared.

The purpose of an Intermediate Studio Entrance Evaluation is to gauge the level of preparedness for moving into the ARCH 484 studio sequence. Intermediate studios are vertical, mixing undergraduate and graduate students, who are encouraged to draw from their own abilities and experiences. Compared to introductory studios, students must be prepared with the basic skills and knowledge to engage in a more individually driven design process while being strong contributors in peer-to-peer exchanges.

Do I have to participate in an Intermediate Studio Gate?
An Intermediate Gate is required if a student receives a grade of NP (No Pass) or MP (Marginal Pass) in either ARCH 383 or 384. Marginal and Non-Passing grades in the introductory sequence can be indicators that a student may not be ready to advance to the next phase of the studio sequence. Students are not eligible to enter ARCH 4/584 studios before an evaluation is completed and continuation is recommended. The full policy for determining when a Gate review is required can be found on the departmental blog for current architecture students.

How will I be evaluated?
The Intermediate Studio Entrance Evaluation Gate is a review process by a committee of architecture faculty to determine if a student is ready to continue to the intermediate ARCH 484 design studio sequence. This evaluation includes a review of your studio work and final evaluation forms from ARCH 283, 284, 383 and 384. Additionally, you are invited to meet with the committee to offer your perspective on your development in the program.

What happens during the Gate meeting?
The meetings are typically held over Zoom and last about 30-40 minutes. Therefore, you’ll need to find a reasonably quiet space with a reliable internet connection to participate. After introductions, we’ll ask you to share your screen and show us some of the work from your previous design studios with emphasis on ARCH 383 and 384. The meeting is not meant to mimic a final studio critique. Therefore, it won’t be necessary to explain each project in detail and faculty won’t provide feedback on your work. Instead, we’ll ask you to use the time to briefly give us the highlights by touching on a few of your overarching design goals for each project that images alone might not convey. We also want to hear your assessment of the strengths and areas of improvement you’ve come to identify in your work. Throughout the meeting, we may ask a few clarifying questions, but we’ll mostly listen during that time. This may feel a little unusual—you are probably very accustomed to faculty talking a lot. However, in this meeting our primary goal is to see the work and hear your perspective on your own development. At the conclusion of the meeting, you will have the opportunity to ask any follow-up questions and to share any information you deem is relevant that may have impacted your experience as a design student.
When will I know the outcome of the review?
A determination will not be made in the meeting as the committee will need an opportunity for discussion and deliberation. A follow-up memo will be sent to the you and your academic advisors usually within a week that explains the determination and any recommendations or conditions for moving forward.

When will the Intermediate Studio Gate meeting occur? How should I prepare?
Intermediate Entrance Evaluation Gates will typically occur during the latter half of Week 11 (Final Exam week) in the Spring term immediately following completion of ARCH 384. Students who need a Gate Review can expect an email from the Director of Undergraduate Studies around Week 8 of the Spring term to schedule a time for meeting in Week 11. You will also be asked to send a PDF or a link to a folder of your prior work in ARCH 283, 284, 383, and 384, with an emphasis on the work produced in 383 and 384. Samples of the work should be organized by studio, but it does not have to be graphically designed in the format of a portfolio. In most cases, simple images labeled by studio and assignment are best.

If I earned a marginal pass in 383 but passed 384 without one, will I still have to have a Gate Review?
Based on departmental policy, students who earn a Marginal Pass in ARCH 383 and continue to ARCH 384 to earn a Pass or Pass with Commendation will still be required to participate in an Intermediate Studio Entrance Evaluation Gate. However, you should congratulate yourself for this progress! Demonstrating a significant level of improvement from 383 to 384 is the absolute best-case scenario for any student that will participate in an Intermediate Gate review.

What to do in the meantime?
Although the meeting is a ways away, we want to make sure that you are aware of the process and feel completely prepared. Between now and then, we encourage you to take the time to reflect on your previous studio experience and hopefully enter 384 with a strong sense of purpose around improving the skills, habits, or behaviors identified in your 383 final evaluation form and exit interview. You may even consider how the subject area classes you’re taking this term might provide opportunities to continue to do so. As previously mentioned, the most ideal scenario is that the issues that led to a Marginal Pass in 383 are corrected in 384. Then, the gate review process becomes a formal opportunity to confirm, acknowledge and celebrate that progress.

We also recognize that for some students a Marginal Pass or Non-Passing grade may signal the need to reflect on whether your current course of study still aligns with your personal and academic goals. We encourage you to meet with a College of Design advisor to help you build a schedule of classes that will best support your ongoing development. This may include exploring interests and coursework in other fields of study as you confirm your desire to pursue architecture as a major.