

First architecture students graduate with new Real Estate degree

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This spring, the Bachelor of Science in Real Estate program held its final review session for its Design + Development II Studio. (Photo provided by Tulane School of Architecture)

Less than a year ago, the new undergraduate real estate degree officially began at [Tulane School of Architecture](#), but this fast-growing program is already graduating its first class in 2021.

Sixteen students will graduate in May with the [Bachelor of Science in Real Estate](#) (BSRE) major. Many of the graduates joined the program after previously taking real estate courses through the school's Real Estate Summer Minor Program, which started in 2015.

"I took the summer real estate minor and absolutely fell in love with the content and the professors," said Cole Sonshein, who is also graduating with a Bachelor of Science in Architecture (BSA). "I knew that real estate was what I wanted to do once I graduated, so when they introduced the full major, it was an obvious decision get the BSRE."

For fellow graduate Maddison Wells, the additional real estate major has opened opportunities for her career in the future.

"Learning about real estate has heavily informed what and how I design," said Wells, whose primary degree is the five-year professional Bachelor of Architecture.

"Knowing the value of the land the built environment rests on has not only given me a greater understanding of why inequity and spatial injustice persists, but also on potential solutions for reparation. The BSRE has gone beyond mentioning the variety of issues associated with real estate; it has prompted me to attempt to solve them, and I will continue to do so throughout my career."

"The new Bachelor of Science in Real Estate program is designed to prepare students for the complex issues that make practicing real estate development difficult," said [John Huppi](#), assistant director of the [Real Estate Development program](#) at the School of Architecture. "The program introduces students to the traditional academic spheres for real estate, including finance, law, economics and management. However, the program's strategic housing in the School of Architecture also pushes students to think and communicate spatially since real estate is a tangible asset, and a mastery of topics such as zoning, building programming and master planning are critical to success in the industry."

The program is already garnering interest with the incoming first-year class, with 16 students selecting BSRE as their primary major and 24 students indicating it as their

secondary major. Another 29 current students have declared the major.

“I think the department did a great job of picking knowledgeable professors who have a lot of real-life work experience,” said graduate Jessica Buggy, who will work as an associate project manager at JLL in Chicago after graduation. “The combination of my BSA and BSRE majors made me stand out when I was applying for jobs in commercial real estate.”

One of the most unique characteristics of the new degree is its emphasis on sustainability.

“Our coursework is also at the front line of discussing the impacts of climate change and other natural disasters on real estate decisions,” said Huppi. “We expect our alumni to play a significant role in shaping a better built environment for the future.”