

Designer's Responsibilities

There are certain aspects of all projects we consider to be the Designer's responsibility including those listed below. The following are descriptions of some of the items. The descriptions are what the Owner's would expect if the project is rather large scale, and the Owner is aware that the descriptions do not apply in total for each project. How much of the description applies in what specific manner will be outlined in the Scope or by written communication from the Project Manager (PM). The responsibilities listed in this section are not inclusive and do not remove the obligation for both the Owner and the Designer to adhere to the terms of the contract.

1. Establishment of Lead Designer:
One individual from Designer's firm should be designated as Lead Designer. The Owner expects the Lead Designer to be fully cognizant of the requirements of the Owner/Designer (O/D) Agreement, performance schedule, the Campus Master Plan document, and contents of this publication. The Lead Designer will work directly with the PM.
2. Project Communication:
The Owner expects the Designer to take the lead in communicating the project status, questions, problematic situations, etc. The Program and/or contract may delineate a minimum communication frequency and means (e-mail, telephone, etc.). Bear in mind that this is only a minimum frequency. Additional communication, when needed, is encouraged.

All communication will go through the PM or as directed by the PM. Instructions or requests from a University faculty or staff member not directly approved by the Project Manager will not be valid. When the Designer receives a verbal direction from a member of the PM team, it is always best to follow it up with e-mail to the PM. To avoid confusion, reduce all verbal communication to written format within 10 business days from verbal correspondence.

3. Master Plan and Design Guidelines:
The Designer shall review and be familiar with the current UA Campus Master Plan and UA Design Guidelines. Compliance with these standards will be required of the Designer for the project's design.

Quick Web Links:

[UA Campus Master Plan](#)

[UA Design Guidelines](#)

4. Pre-Design Conference:
A pre-design conference chaired by the PM will be held at the University to introduce all team members and to familiarize the team with the design process and project. The meeting will include:
 - a. Outlining the design process
 - b. Team Introductions
 - c. Discussing team objectives
 - d. Discussing project goals and objectives
 - e. Developing the schedule of events
 - f. Gathering available organizational, site, and other existing information; discussing the unique aspects of the project.
 - g. Familiarizing the team with the site



5. Meeting Minutes and Transcripts:
The Owner expects the Designer to prepare minutes of all conferences, meetings, and telephone conversations in connection with the project. The Designer needs to distribute copies of the minutes to all parties in attendance and the PM (even if the PM was not in attendance). A copy of all minutes should be inserted in the Design File.
6. Professional Quality Work in Preparing the Deliverables:
The Owner will review the Designer's work to the extent necessary to assure compliance with University standards and applicable codes. **The Owner will not undertake a detailed technical review of the Designer's work.** It is the Designer's responsibility to ensure code compliance, completeness, and correctness of the design, cost estimate, and all engineering concepts and details of the work. This responsibility includes the coordination of the various architectural, civil, structural, mechanical, electrical, and other subdivisions with each other and with the specifications. Adherence to Facilities Planning Design Deliverable requirements is expected.

Since the University design staff will review the submittals; the Designer should expect a more thorough review than that given by a 'typical' client. Even so, the University's review, approval or acceptance of, and payment for the design services cannot be construed as a waiver of any rights under the design agreement.

If the PM determines that a design submittal is unacceptable, a re-submittal will be required. If that were to happen, the University expects the Designer to send representatives to meet with the PM at the University, at no additional cost, to the University to resolve the problems with the design.

7. Maintenance of Project Scope, Schedule, and Budget:

Scope: The Owner expects the Designer to design the project in line with the Scope, Limitations, and Project Description in the Program. In general, the Scope may not be exceeded without written approval of the PM; however, minor deviations in the Scope of supporting items may be made to suit field conditions. The Designer's responsibility is directly to the PM and any deviation from the Scope must be brought to the attention of the PM. During the progress of the work, the Designer may expect minor changes in criteria within the general Scope of the Project and should make necessary adjustments accordingly. Major changes in the Scope will necessitate appropriate modification to the O/D Agreement.

Schedule: The schedule for, and required number of, design submissions will be established either in the Program, or at the pre-design meeting. *Meeting established submittal schedules is essential* since late submissions may jeopardize project funding, construction contract award, or user need dates. Please submit the required number of copies directly to the PM.

Budget: The Designer is responsible for designing the project so the Owner can award a construction contract within the Budget using customary contracting procedures. The Designer may need to structure the construction contract documents with a base bid and additive alternates so as to have a base bid low enough to maximize changes of awarding the construction contract. That being said, the design still needs to include all essential features necessary to satisfy the project requirements and to provide a complete and usable facility.

It should be stressed that University construction budgets are a fixed maximum. For this reason it is imperative that throughout the design process attempts are made to keep the developing design within budget. At the completion of each phase of design, an estimate will be prepared and, in the event the estimate exceeds the budget, modifications to the design will be made prior to authorization to proceed to the next phase of design. In addition, projects estimated to be within budget, but also within a reasonable margin of error, will be expected to have additive alternate proposals defined to assure the bidding process will yield an acceptable bid. The Owner and the Designer shall work together to rank the priority of the additive alternates.

8. State Plan Review Submittal:

Capital projects require submittal to the Office of the Alabama Building Commission (ABC) for drawing review/approval. The Designer will need to become familiar with ABC's process and adhere to their submittal procedure in order to not delay the project. UA will pay design review fees to ABC for schematic design and the final review set. A/E will be responsible for cost of any additional reviews if documents do not receive final approval from ABC.

9. Contractor Submittal Review:

In general, the Designer will handle construction contract administration inspection throughout construction. Designer is expected to review and process shop drawings and attend the pre-bid meeting and regularly scheduled construction meetings so as to quickly resolve questions and conflicts when needed.

Contractor submittals are sent to the Owner after the design team has completed their review. The Owner will review the submittals and send their comments to the Designer. The Designer will incorporate all comments into the submittals and return them to the Contractor, with a copy to the Owner. The returned submittals should include the following:

Cover Letter:

A transmittal or cover letter referencing the appropriate Division and Sections should accompany each submittal. The transmittal letter should include:

- a. Project title/UA Project Number
- b. Quantity of each Submittal item
- c. Division/Section number of each Submittal item
- d. Description of each Submittal item
- e. Status of each Submittal item; Approved, Approved as Noted, or Reject and Resubmit
- f. Notes area identifying the reason for Approved as Noted, or Reject and Resubmit

Shop Drawings with the same Division/Section number can be submitted at one time under the same cover letter.

Shop Drawings with the same Division, but different Section, need to be submitted separately with separate cover letters.

Submittal Log:

A submittal log shall be issued shortly before Construction to facilitate processing. The Designer shall coordinate with the Contractor to create a collaborative submittal log that is to be updated bi-weekly, at a minimum.



Endorsement Stamp:

The Designer is required to endorse the Contractor's submittals as being in compliance, or not in compliance by means of a notation on the face of the submission. The signature should be that of a registered architect or engineer as appropriate for the item being reviewed. No particular format is prescribed, but a notation similar to one of the following should be noted on each copy:

- NO EXCEPTIONS TAKEN – Recommend Acceptance
- RECOMMEND ACCEPTANCE WITH CORRECTIONS NOTED
- RESUBMITTAL REQUIRED – Returned For Noted Corrections
- REJECTED – See Remarks

Rejected Shop Drawings are to be sent directly back to the Contractor. A record copy of the transmittal letter concerning the Rejected Shop Drawings is to be sent to the Owner.

10. Attend Pre and Post Bid Meetings:

In general, the Designer handles construction contract administration and construction inspections. The Owner expects the Designer to attend the pre-bid meeting and regularly scheduled construction progress meetings, to review and process shop drawings, to quickly resolve questions and conflicts, and to be available for consultation when needed.

11. Change Order Reviews:

The Designer shall use a "Root Cause Analysis" approach in evaluating change order requests. The Designer shall attach to each change order a signed statement containing the following:

- a. What the change order covers and who instituted the change order and why it is necessary or desired.
- b. The reasons for using the change order method rather than competitive bids.
- c. All prices have been reviewed and found reasonable, fair, and equitable and recommending approval of same.

- End -

