Department of Architecture + Interiors
Architecture Program

Studio Culture Policy

- *The studio environment should support the achievement of architectural excellence and enable the student to develop individually as an architect.*

    The studio is the core of the program that holds the other parts of curriculum together. The faculty expects that learning from other courses and outside interests will be integrated into the design process. Students should be able to use studio projects to pursue architectural ideas that interest them.
    The faculty must articulate the values of good design and encourage the students to achieve them. The faculty should present clear goals about the studio's role in the architectural educational process and what design skills are being taught.
    The students must be willing to suspend the pragmatic understanding of constraints gained in practice in order to acquire a fuller knowledge of how to design places that uplift the spirit, address social issues, and raise the quality of life. It is the students´ responsibility to be motivated to improve the quality of their design efforts by exploring emerging technologies and architectural intentions.

- *The studio culture should create a climate of respect in which ideas and feedback may be freely exchanged among students and faculty.*

    The culture must foster respect for the faculty's and students´ diverse backgrounds, educational and professional experiences, and approaches to design. The studio and reviews should encourage a constructive and respectful exchange of ideas among students, faculty, and reviewers.
    The students should expect that they will be treated by the faculty and other students with the respect that one gives to other professionals and be regarded as a contributing member of the studio. Each student should realize that one has the responsibility to contribute to the class and fellow students.
    The instructor ought to treat each student as an individual with particular needs and strengths. The instructor expects that each student will respect the time and effort that the faculty member gives as being valuable. This respect requires that each student will participate in class discussions in an active, not passive manner.
    Students should realize that each instructor brings an individual approach to design and education that contributes to student's development.

- *Preparedness and enthusiasm are the key ingredients to gaining the maximum benefits from having studio one evening a week.*

    An exciting studio begins with the faculty and students expressing their commitment to good design. The educational process relies on each member of the studio to be prepared.
    Students have the right to expect that the instructors will be prepared for each session and will convey their understanding of good design. The instructor should devote studio time to the needs of each student while engaging other members of the section in the discussion. Critiques and reviews must be succinct, providing the student with clear ideas of how to proceed.
    Faculty has the right to insist that students to be committed and prepared for each class with sufficient work to clearly present their ideas. Students have the responsibility to complete all required work according to the project's weekly schedule so that studio discussions can be focused on pertinent issues. Instructors expect that students attend all studio sessions and reviews and be involved for the entire studio period. A student whose work is incomplete or late should not assume the right to present work in class or at reviews.

- *The studio should be an exciting learning environment derived from collaboration and sharing of ideas and concepts among the group.*

    While students approach the studio as an endeavor in which they have to compete individually to excel, they should realize that architectural design is a collaborative act that involves a wealth of ideas that come from others including faculty critiques, peer learning, and individual scholarship outside of the studio.

    The faculty expects the students to come to the studio to learn. To accomplish this, the student must be willing to express ideas in discussion, ask questions to clarify issues, and to value the opinions of classmates. The student has the responsibility to research architectural ideas and theories outside the studio.

    The students have the right to expect that instructors will share their knowledge and experience in a manner that encourages them to integrate it with their own ideas. The faculty should facilitate the learning experience by directing the students to others who can help the student and to the literature and other resources that will expand the student's understanding of architecture.

- *The studio is the place where creativity and exploration should be encouraged.*
    Design innovation goes beyond doing something different and novel; it entails making an improvement.

    Both the faculty and students should realize that the studio provides the sole opportunity by which the student can explore the possibilities of architectural design without the pragmatic concerns of practice. The faculty needs to encourage students to think beyond the practical demands of their office experiences, to be aware of the issues of current architectural thinking, and to take risks in attempting design. Students must be willing to investigate and critically think about design from outside their own first-hand experiences.

    The faculty expects the students to be willing to explore design issues, to take design risks, and to develop inventive solutions. The faculty anticipates that students will listen, consider the validity of faculty comments, and incorporate appropriate ideas into their design.

    The students have the right to expect that the instructors will encourage students to develop their own ideas about the design process and architectural concepts. Students should demand that instructors not insist on a single design approach but rather guide each student to understand and develop one's own design process.

- *An effective studio experience requires that the value of time be appreciated.*

    The faculty should be sensitive to the demands placed on the student by other coursework, work, and other responsibilities. Students have the right to expect that each faculty member will value their time by establishing fair, reasonable schedules and project requirements.

    The faculty anticipates that each student will endeavor to meet course expectations and be prepared for each class.

    In order to be prepared for each studio students need to develop efficient time management skills to produce reasonable products for effective reviews.

- *An innovative, vibrant studio environment should have a fair and reasonable grading system that explains what is expected to achieve each grade level.*

    While all learning needs assessment, the grading system should provide enough breadth and depth to enable the student to understand why one has received the grade. The grading system should consider the student's process, as well as the final product. Evaluations should enable students to learn self-assessment and be critical of their own ideas. Grading should encourage students to take challenging positions rather than doing what the instructor wants.