



2023

AUD SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE, ART, AND DESIGN STUDIO CULTURE 2020

The Design Studio at SAAD / AUD is the space par excellence, where the apprenticeship of architectural design & construction takes place. It is the space where creative, technical, and presentation skills are exercised, nurtured, and honed. It is an engaging and a unique collaborative environment where respect for all ideas, for sharing, and for diversity, all come together to promote optimism for the contributions architecture can make anywhere globally. Safety, health, and wellness of students here are all of the highest priority as is the ecology of materials. It is the space where students can excel as catalysts of innovation and as confident agents of their education.

STUDIO SPACES AND METHODOLOGY

Studio spaces

Studio spaces are physical and virtual platforms for interactively teaching and learning, shared by students, faculty, and administration.

- Freshman, sophomore, and junior students use their dedicated studio spaces located in A building during scheduled studio time and beyond.
- Senior students are entitled to two semester-long dedicated workspace located in the Glass Box.
- Rotunda is an integral part of the studio spaces, the place where all students from freshman to senior gather in the occasion of seminars and special lectures from external parties.
- As a compendium of the studio spaces, dedicated workstations are available in A building, at the use of all students.
- The laptop policy, as outlined in the student manual, is meant to allow for more flexibility and efficiency in the use of the studio spaces.

Studio Design Process

The process is based on “learning by doing” where all the inputs and factors, sometimes coming from different disciplines and fields, lead to the right design-answer to problems.

The design process requires deep and continues constructive discussions between students and faculty as well as among students also involving practitioners.

The design process is based on three main components:

- Field trips for research purposes
- One to one and/or shared desk crits between students and professors
- Studio pin-up reviews with all students, professors, and at times invited professionals.

STUDIO VALUES

Studio values are represented by six mottoes, reflecting and incorporating AUD's ten Values (Whole Person Education, Excellence, Integrity, Service, Diversity, Tolerance, Accountability, Collaboration, Innovation, Best Practice).

Think positive

Studio culture is based on a shared atmosphere of optimism.

The studio is a dynamic learning environment where students and faculty believe in the possibility to improve and acquire better skills to succeed in the future.

All participants in the studio learn, teach, work, discuss and improve being aware of the mission of architecture to create a better environment, and enhance the quality of life, maintaining and respecting diversity.

The continuous incorporation of design competitions is a key aspect to nurture the idea of the profession as a positive mission and the importance of the response of architecture to significant problems.

The studio prepares open-minded students that will be ready for different careers; these include the known paths of the present, but also the unknown possibility of the future to respond to a professional world in constant evolution.

Be Sustainable

The studio is committed to fostering a space of respect for the environment, both within and beyond the campus. Internally, this commitment is evident through the embrace of sustainable practices in studio space; conserving energy, recycling materials, minimizing plastic use, and advocating for paperless critiques through the use of digital devices whenever feasible. Moreover, this dedication to environmental responsibility extends beyond the studio walls. The studio actively promotes sustainable strategies in design through collaborations with other schools, active participation in specialized design competitions, and partnerships with industry practitioners. Additionally, presentations are given by external experts who share insights and knowledge on incorporating eco-friendly approaches into design processes. By engaging with a network of like-minded individuals and institutions, the studio aims to contribute to a broader culture of sustainability within the field of design.

Be Healthy

The studio is a healthy environment where students learn how to manage their time efficiently and challenge themselves without forcing oneself to go beyond reasonable limits.

Faculty and administration, in collaboration with the Health Center, encourage students to exercise regularly, observe a healthy diet and responsibly rest in case of illness.

Students maintain a reasonable balance between studio and non-studio courses and between inside and outside interests, being aware that a vibrant social life is fundamental for the creation of a rounded person able to respond to the difficult challenges architects are called nowadays.

Safety is ensured inside and outside the campus providing construction-site safety kits for the field-trips.

Respect & Collaborate

The studio values respect for all, regardless of ethnicity, gender, ideas, or rank. Students show consideration for diverse opinions, spaces, and work ownership, maintaining respectful behavior towards instructors and peers. External entities and instructors appreciate students' ideas, with juries providing constructive criticism for development and growth. Celebrating diversity as a strength, the studio enhances discussions and fosters critical thinking in both learning and teaching bodies. Active involvement and discussions among students, educators, administrators, practitioners, and alumni underscore positive collaboration, encompassing both horizontal collaboration within the same class and vertical cooperation among students at different levels. Educators and administrators facilitate collaboration within and beyond the architectural discipline, including other disciplines and within the School of Architecture Art and Design, promoting communication skills and engagements beyond the architecture realm.

Be Part of the Community

The studio is a micro-community where students start learning how to serve as leaders and act as good citizens in the outside world. The studio is the first environment where students demonstrate their community engagement and their integrity, to get ready for their future.

Instructors and administration work to bring inside the studio (in real or by simulation) the needs of clients, users, and the society, stimulating students to grow in a sense of community and establishing positive social relationships.

In this vision mentorship of practitioners is a fundamental asset.

Be Innovative

Students are encouraged to explore innovative solutions in their projects, demonstrating their ability as risk-takers. Educators are available to leave their comfort zone to facilitate the students in the exploration of new possibilities.

Educators and administrators apply and explore innovation in pedagogy, to create new and unconventional methods of teaching that are able to engage new generations of learners and to adapt to new required skills.

New technologies are identified and introduced by the collaboration between students, instructors, administration and practitioners to prepare students at best for their future carrier.

STUDIO CULTURE POLICY REVISION AND DISSEMINATION

Studio Culture is revised yearly based on the Department of Architecture policy changes, the evolution of tools and teaching methodologies, discussions among faculty, students, and administration.

The updated Studio Culture Policy is discussed yearly with AIAS and the advisory board and presented to the students at the beginning of each academic year.

The mottoes related to the studio culture values are shown permanently in the studio space.

The full policy is part of the syllabi and also available on the AUD website in the Architecture webpage.

- Code of conduct, as outlined in the Student Handbook, must be observed at all times in the real and virtual environment.