



School of Architecture, Art and Design



DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE

STUDIO CULTURE POLICY

2020

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 spaces also include the Virtual Open Studio available for all students in parallel with the physical studio spaces, where students can move occasionally or permanently (under specific circumstances) in respect of the studio culture policy, conduct and integrity.

Virtual Open Studio & Virtual Teaching

The Virtual Open Studio, shared by all students, is configured as an additional permanent platform to facilitate the peer-to-peer learning process among students of different levels not only in the real but also in the virtual environment.

Studio classes can move fully virtually in cases of unexpected circumstances or complications to prevent students or teachers from being physically present on campus (severe weather conditions, pandemics, governmental restrictions). In this case, the Virtual Open Studio is used in place of the Real Studio, along with the virtual teaching.

- Virtual teaching experience, when necessary, is provided through the use of virtual platforms. The official platform is Blackboard Collaborate, but students, faculty and administration can explore and discuss multiple platforms to be used depending on the tasks and on the users.
- The virtual teaching can be used also occasionally in case of study-tour, make-up classes, guest lectures and seminars.

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 carriers; 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 Respectful

The studio culture is based on the respect of human beings (regardless ethnicity, ideas, rank...) and the respect of the environment by all the collaborating entities. Students respect each other in term of opinion, spaces, work ownership. Students maintain a respectful behavior toward the instructors and other students inside and outside the class. External entities and instructors demonstrate respect for students' ideas; in particular, the role of juries is delivering positive criticism that will help the students to develop and bring forward their ideas, opening new possibilities of growth.

Diversity in both the learning and the teaching body is considered a strength of the studio culture, that enhance discussion and critical thinking.

The studio is also a space of respect for the environment, inside and outside the campus. Inside it is reflected by the adoption of virtuous behaviors in the studio spaces to save energy, recycling material, limiting plastic consumption and using digital devices to run paperless critiques (when possible).

The respect of the environment is also promoted by the cooperation with other schools, the participation in specific design competitions, the collaboration with practitioners and presentations from external experts.

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.

Share & Collaborate

The studio is a place of positive collaboration, not of aggressive competition. Ideas are developed thanks to active participation and discussion of all the parties: students, educators administrators, practitioner, alumni. Horizontal collaboration inside the same class is fundamental, but also vertical cooperation and sharing of ideas and information among students of different levels is a crucial aspect of the studio, that creates patterns of mutual enrichment.

In the studio educators and administrators facilitate collaboration inside the architectural discipline, with other disciplines present inside and outside the university and inside the school of Architecture Art and Design. Students develop communication skills to discuss not only inside the architectural community but also with a broader audience so to make possible discussion, exchange and collaboration even outside 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.