

Studio Culture Guide for the Architecture Program

The Program Mission Statement

The mission for the Architecture Program is to provide the educational foundation for articulate, intellectually aware, self-realizing architecture professionals capable of performing effectively in evolving professions.

INTRODUCTION

It is the goal of this document to provide a framework for a positive and creative studio culture. It has been proposed first as a draft done by students, with a response draft done by a faculty committee and then approved by both faculty and students.

The studio culture framework at UNL establishes a mutually agreed upon set of values that outline standards and expectation for a non-threatening design learning environment.

COLLABORATION

The undergraduate studio needs to incorporate collaborative design activities and procedures into the studio work. At the professional program level strong ties with client groups, practicing professionals and recently graduated interns are encouraged.

INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION

It is to the benefit of all the programs in the college and local professions to exchange ideas and cross-disciplinary best practices. Opportunities should be continuously explored to enrich studio design culture through collaborative projects and interdisciplinary criticism. Developing open communications among programs, program levels, IDP emerging professionals and practicing architects, planners, architectural engineers, landscape architects, interior designers, and other related disciplines is highly suggested. Publications, exhibitions, and shared critiques all enhance interdisciplinary exchange. The coordination and timing of reviews to allow students to participate in other reviews is an excellent way to interconnect.

Members of the architecture faculty should, while respecting each other's time, be willing to participate and share expertise and criticism with other studios at any level. However, the faculty is asked to limit time away from their own studios to a maximum of four studio times per semester.

TIME MANAGEMENT

Students taking studio are entitled to an appropriate balance between design studio and their other curricular and extra-curricular responsibilities. Design studio education should address time management strategies that help students achieve success in all of their endeavors. Coordination between classes within the major should take place whenever possible. This can be achieved through a thoughtful development of syllabi and collaboration amongst the faculty.

DESIGN STUDIO SYLLABUS

The syllabus should outline the scope of the class and the faculty's performance expectations. The syllabus should be seen as a "contract of expectations" so that a student

can plan their schedule accordingly. If studio meetings/lectures outside of scheduled class times are needed, they should be developed collectively with the consent of all members of the studio community and instructors of other courses that may be affected.

At no time should the studio syllabus include *significant* or *chronic* meeting times outside of the scheduled studio time. The studio syllabus is not permitted to extend or change *significant* amounts of scheduled studio time, unless there is 100% agreement between all students enrolled in the studio. The method of agreement, whether positive or negative, should be done anonymously and at the time of the issuance of the syllabus. During the course of the semester there may be the need to extend studio time, this may be unavoidable and is often an important part of the studio experience. These occurrences should be reasonable and flexible for student participation.

In order for students to submit thoughtful and creative projects that meet assignment expectations, the goals and requirements must be clearly stated in the project objectives. Educational objectives for the project and the semester should be outlined in the project objectives and syllabus respectively.

TIMELY ASSESMENTS

Students have the right to expect return assessments in a reasonable and timely manner. Students should be given opportunities to receive written or oral feedback when possible in addition to project and course grades. Individual faculty grading policies should support and follow UNL's grading policy. The grade received at the end of the semester should not be the first time the student receives tangible feedback on their performance in the studio.

INTERACTIVE REVIEWS

Generally, there should be multiple reviews (both interim and final), they should be appropriate to the studio pedagogy, and they ought to include all students within the studio group. Additionally, reviews should be arranged in adherence to the published College Review schedule and take place during scheduled studio time.

Both mid and final reviews serve as learning experiences that explore a range of ideas and quality of solutions for various design questions. Reviews should foster an open dialogue among students and reviewers with academic, professional, and lay viewpoints. When appropriate, studio reviews should attempt to include some form of external review process beyond the individual studio instructor. Students must be given opportunities to present and discuss their work within the studio and in a semi-public context.

Reviewers (both Internal and external) should be informed of pertinent project information prior to entering the critique. To allow for an equal distribution of time and attention amongst all the students, project reviews should be scheduled with the students for a time slot appropriate to the complexity of the project.

STUDIO SELECTION

In order for students to have a well-informed choice of studio faculty, a system for third, fourth and graduate level students has been devised. During registrations, students will

sign up for a studio. Prior to the first day of class, the Department Office will publicize the information on the potential studios. On the first day, studio faculty will give a brief presentation on their project(s). When applicable, expected travel plans should be included into the proposals. Drawn by lottery, student ID numbers will represent the order in which students may then pick their studio for that semester.

HEALTHY WORK ENVIRONMENT

It is essential that studio participants respect the property of their peers and the university and maintain a professional work environment that supports the creative pursuits of all members of the studio. The following are specific expectations of students, faculty, and mutual requirements in order to maintain a healthy work environment.

EXPECTATIONS

Mutual Expectations:

Everyone is to participate in an honest and open exchange of ideas. Students and/or faculty members should bring complaints and ethical concerns to the FAC (Faculty Affairs Committee) and/or to the Chair of the department, who will then respond with appropriate action to any violation of these expectations.

- Students and faculty should embrace the mission of the program
- Criticism should be thoughtful, critical, engaging, non-threatening and relevant to work by the student.
- Design studios should strike a dynamic balance between critical positioning and technical competence.

Expectations for Faculty:

- Faculty are expected to take an active role in introducing students to effective studio practices, making an explicit effort to articulate and model expectations of healthy studio culture, and to review and renew studio culture and expectations each semester.
- Faculty members are expected to foster the richest possible dialogue in studio by teaching students how to be both good critics and good listeners. Faculty should teach students critical presentation techniques as well as speaking, graphic and written skills.
- Faculty members are expected to challenge and support students with a wide range of skill levels and educational backgrounds.
- Faculty members are expected to show up on time, use studio time efficiently, and end class on time. At times, there may be exceptions in order to facilitate reviews, important critiques, lectures, and other special events. These activities are encouraged within reason and should be included in the studio syllabus whenever possible.
- If a faculty member needs to miss class time in the fulfillment of their broader academic duties, they should notify the students about any alternative arrangements for their studio time as far in advance as possible.

Expectations for Students:

- Students are to develop their voices in studio not only as future practitioners but as future educators & effective leaders.
- Students are to submit thoughtful faculty evaluations and feedback about teaching style and content.
- Students are to remain in studio during the time in which class is taking place and are expected to focus and produce studio work required for the class.
- Students are expected to show up on time.
- Students are expected to be in attendance and attentive for in-studio pin-ups and reviews.
- Every student is entitled to an exclusive and equal amount of studio space that is conducive to receiving instruction, studying, and production.
- Students should foster a collegial and professional working environment at all times they are present in studio.
- Music or other possible acoustic distractions are to be kept to headphones.
- Conversation should be kept to a moderate level and may not be distracting to other individuals who are working in studio.
- Students should exercise appropriate caution and responsibility for their own safety and well being as well as that of their fellow students.
- Power tools that generate dust and excessive noise are not acceptable in the studio space.
- Taking or using the belongings of others without their permission is not allowed.
- Off gassing materials may only be used in the spray booth.
- Students are responsible for maintaining the overall work environment of the studio space.
- Students are responsible for cleaning out their work spaces and either removing all personal belongings from the studio or storing them as directed by the program administration by the last day of the final examination period of each semester.