

February 10, 2016

Curriculum Report (Sub-Committee reports):

FIRST YEAR:

Members: Steven Temple (rep.), Mark Blizzard, James Dawes, Norma Blizzard, Taeg Nishimoto, Edward Burian

Report: **Notes from meeting Sept 30, 2015** (all participated)

Recent History of First Year:

Since the year 2000 and our push for accreditation, first year has stressed a beginning in hand drawing and hands-on material exploration as a basis for teaching creative thinking about architectural ideas and design process. This methodology of direct experience precedes the use of the computer, a structure that allows for more grounded development of creative thinking and design processes prior to the computer's speed, software algorithms, and the propensity of students to take shortcuts in design thinking that defeat iterative designing. Originally coordinated from 2003-2010, Design 1 has developed into a structure that allows each faculty to develop their course section more freely while following a basic structure. Projects in Design 1 stress 1:1 scale, culminating as much as possible in a collaborative project large enough to experience through one's body through actual occupy of it. Design 2 introduces the use of drawing and model making as primary to development of processes creative design thinking about architecture (thinking through drawings and models) and communication of architectural ideas. Design 2 functions, in many respects, as a second drawing course. Together with IBE and the Great Buildings course at present part of gateway, first year offers students studio focused learning experiences immediately within the in the architectural curriculum sequence.

Committee recommendations:

1. First year should have cold desks.
2. Facilities issues:
 - a. Remove the green/plywood structure – it is largely unused
 - b. Provide acoustic dampening to reduce reverberation in the room, such as acoustic blankets hung in the truss spaces. (The shop needs acoustic treatments too.)
 - c. "dress the room" by providing a red colored strip of wood (like the gallery) above the panels
3. Flex room must always be available to first year.
4. Look at the potential of afternoon classes moving from 1-4 to 2-5 to give more time for meetings between classes [many faculty teach both morning and afternoon, making noon meetings difficult]
5. All materials and supplies costs to first year students should be communicated in summer on admission, including books. Add a circle template(s) to the materials list.
6. Establish text/reference in which one book is added in each of the first four semesters with all previous books being required in each successive studio. This will facilitate student each building a basic reference library that third/fourth year faculty can count on being available for each student. (specific book list requires further discussion)

Design 1	Ching, Architecture Form Space Order
Des Viz	Ching, Design Drawing
Design 2 add	Unwin, Analyzing Architecture

Design 3 add Ching, Building Construction Illustrated

Design 4 add Zumthor, Thinking Architecture

7. Committee also discussed relations of Design 1 to Design 2, IBE and Des Viz and relation of First year to Second year. Architectural building design learning happens largely in the first two years whereas years 3-4 are more varied topics and approaches, sometimes without building design.
 - a. Seek greater coordination between IBE , Design 1, and Design Viz. This was started in fall 2015 pre-semester meetings - David Matiella joined us.
 - b. Coordination of Des 1 with Des Viz happens now in the final comprehensive composite drawing project because each Des Viz faculty teach the course differently. Composite drawing is necessary prior to Des 2 as composite drawing is a large part of Des 2 reiterated in each project.
 - c. Committee recommends a stronger sense of coordination of Design 1 & 2 so that conveyance of specific architectural issues is more even among first year instructors. It is recognized that students can perceive the unity among faculty as well as disharmony, to the detriment of learning and studio culture. Coordination will help facilitate the following:
 1. handouts should have greater commonality about architectural issues (i.e., elements of architecture, organizational principles, etc.) to be addressed in each project and/or exercises - - Generate all architectural issues and terms that all faculty must address in pre-semester meetings. Determine issues that must be covered by all faculty.
 2. more clearly establish clarity of purpose (architectural) in project statements what is specific the architectural lesson addressed?
 - d. Transition to second year happens in the first project – faculty report that 2nd year students say they understand the connectedness to Des 2 and also see the expansion of the scope, issues, and complexity of the projects, as well as increased goals for development of design processes.
8. Faculty should make more connections of (analogous) content in projects to actual architectural examples [i.e., powerpoints of example buildings, students research, walks downtown, etc.]
9. CORE issues in Design 1
 - a. CORE course must be only 3 hours - - cannot be 4 hours - - 1 hour lecture needs to be resolved. First year curriculum I unbalanced – heavier in Fall and lighter in Spring (regarding distribution of architecture courses) Committee suggests moving IBE to the Spring or moving 1 hour lecture to the Spring with Design 2, if the lecture cannot be a stand alone 1 hour course.
 - b. Greater written assessments by students in necessary - - can take the form of written with diagrammatic analysis as part of project presentation requirements and/or integration of the text (Unwin & Ching) into project processes.
10. Faculty recommendations:
 - Barabara Warren; Nathaniel (at Bill Lamberts office)
 - Identify possible former students as they graduate to establish a future pool of possible adjuncts

First Year Interaction w/ Second Year: Notes from meeting Nov 30, 2015

1. Concerns are raised about the lack of learning and application of drawing conventions through the first four semesters, especially with respect to the integration of drawing in design thinking. One course of Design Viz (drawing) is insufficient and only very introductory. Design 2 is taught very unevenly - some present the course with respect to a “second drawing course” while some present no additional design work through

drawing as some faculty use mostly modeling in studio projects. Use of representation as a tool of design thinking AND as a tool of communication is very uneven in second year studios.

2. 1st and 2nd year subcommittees propose changes to the course descriptions to list minimum content. This will move toward defining what is minimally addressed by ALL section instructors. This may mean new course numbers in order to administer second year studio courses – at present, 2nd year only has two studio course numbers simply for the ease of administration so this will have to be resolved. Proposed new course descriptions have been (first) drafted below - subcommittees should talk further about this as a committee of the foundation studios

Design I - (0-6) 3 hours credit. Prerequisite: Completion of or concurrent enrollment in COA 1313.

Introduction to design through a focus on design literacy and the creative conceptualization through direct engagement with materials and processes of making. Introduction to architectural design process, precedents, architectural ideas, and architectural conventions. Projects investigate basic issues fundamental to the design and experience of human environments.

Design II - (0-6) 3 hours credit. Prerequisites: COA 1213 and COA1313.

Introduction to design as a broadly creative process that stresses creative and conceptual development through representational visualization. Explores the role of spatial experience, context, program, architectural form, circulation elements, materials, color, and light in the development of human environments. Introduction to building typologies, space planning, architectural precedents, and critical thought pertaining to design of the built environment.

Second year fall semester studio [still needs to be written for drawing v. digital basis] (0-12) 6 hours credit. Prerequisite: Enrollment as an Architecture major.

Architectural and Interior Design with an emphasis on development of the conceptual thought and design process, and a focus on architectural elements, spatial organization, and structure. Includes introduction to programming, building-site relationships, precedent, and human factors in projects located in non-urban contexts. Special consideration given to topography, spatial experience, spatial relationships, organizational concepts, and detailing.

Second year fall semester studio (still needs to be written for digital v. drawing basis] (0-12) 6 hours credit. Prerequisite: Enrollment as an Architecture major.

Architectural and Interior Design with emphasis on development of conceptual thought and design processes, architectural elements, in projects located in urban contexts. Focus on projects with consideration given to spatial organization, structure, building detail, historical precedents, urban contextual response, architectural theory, architectural ordering systems, and detailing. Introduction to fire and life safety concerns, building codes, ADA accessibility standards, building codes and zoning regulations.

SECOND YEAR:

Members: Mark Blizard, Craig Blount, Jim Dawes (rep.), Curtis Fish, John Webb, Armando Araiza, Robert Mezquiti

Report: Attending: CF, JD, CB, JW (No broad consensus on curriculum or pedagogy)

Areas of partial consensus:

Closely following the current curriculum matrix...

Four Building Projects over the course of two semesters. Recent year examples vary but scope hews closely to these assignments: 1) boat and/or bike rental on Mission Reach.

2) Exhibit space near downtown (following Fort Worth Field Trip). 3) Coffee Shop / Book Store on urban infill site. 4) Urban mid- to hi-rise on downtown full or partial block.

Over the course of two semesters, four building design projects of increasing complexity allow students to develop and apply thinking, drawing and modeling skills (digital or manual) to the task of basic design of buildings (ideation/development of a guiding, unifying idea or concept for a building; formative influence of tectonics, site/climate and program; application of basic design principles (e.g. Ching spatial relationships, organizing principals) to design development.

Digital media (platforms) should be close analogies to manual drawing and modeling methods (sketch-up, rhino, illustrator, photoshop). Form generation potential of digital platforms more appropriate in 3d/4th year studios.

MB AA, RM

First semester begins with a creek overlook “wall” project, finishes with suburban residential project (MB) and a variation on that (AA, RM). Second semester starts with same project scope as first semester, finishes with urban project.

AA, RM - Digital media introduces parametric drawing/modeling as building form generator.

3RD/4TH YEAR STUDIO:

Members: Saadet Beeson, Ian Caine (rep.), Azza Kamal, Rick Lewis, Taeg Nishimoto, Juana Salazar, Sue Ann Pemberton

Report:

Degree to which the current studios are fulfilling curricular goals

Currently the studios appear to be fulfilling the following curricular topics well:

- Building tectonics
- Building materials
- Building enclosure
- Building structure
- Complex programming
- Consideration of the relationship between human activities/arch environments
- Critical response to context

Others topics are receiving significant attention, but are not consistently addressed:

- Appropriate application and performance of the building envelope materials/systems
- Integration of environmental control systems (passive and active)
- Complex programming
- Consideration of the relationship between human activities/architectural environments
- Application of knowledge gained from collateral building technology courses.
- Design informed by architectural theory (sustainability, systems, etc.)
- Introduction to building performance (energy, codes, egress, spatial issues, cost, etc.)
- Parking and building service systems

Some of the studios are focusing on two shorter projects; others on one more complex topic. Instructors indicated the importance of breaking down the longer projects into discrete but related phases.

One opportunity that current curricular guidelines do not allow for involves non-building focused studios, such as urban design or research studios. Several committee members contend that

these studios are critical to the intellectual diversity of the department, and that the guidelines should accommodate these opportunities in some way. One possible mechanism involves the Chair designating one studio each semester (i.e. the “wildcard” studio). This designation would temporarily liberate one faculty member from more conventional studio guidelines.

Discussion of recent vertical integration within 3rd and 4th year studios

Committee members deemed the recent vertical integration of studios an overall success. The general feeling is that the move elevates the performance of 3rd year students without impeding the performance of 4th year students.

All studio instructors agreed that the shift to vertical integration has increased the differential in student skill levels amongst students. Differences in skill, however, do not always correlate directly with experience level. Talent, motivation and maturity also appear to be important factors. Each studio instructor agreed on the importance of calibrating final grades to studio level, so that 4th year students would be held to a higher standard than 3rd year students.

Several studio instructors emphasized the importance of pairing up 3rd and 4th year students during group activities. Other faculty indicated that these decisions are better based on factors such as overall skill level and student preference.

Possibility of themed studios with distribution requirement

There was some discussion regarding the possibility for studio distribution requirements. For example, in any given semester the department might offer a housing studio, urban studio, technology studio, research studio, preservation studio, etc. Students would then be required to take some combination of these studios during their time at UTSA. While there was general support for the idea, logistical issues involving staffing and advising make the idea complicated, and perhaps impractical for the time being. The committee agreed that a general commitment to diversity from the department chair might accomplish many of these objectives.

The committee also agreed that 3rd and 4th year students should avoid taking multiple 4156 studios from the same instructor.

Studio selection process

There was widespread support on the committee for a revised studio selection process, one that would allow students to consider both instructor and topic prior to signing up for a studio. There are likely two ways to accomplish this goal:

A. Lottery: In this scenario, all 3rd and 4th year students sign up for a generic Arc 4156 class, then attend presentations from studio instructors on the first day of class. Students then bid on the studio of their choice. This requires the department to administer the bids and fill out the studio rosters prior to the second day of studio. Some members of the committee expressed a concern that the live presentations created favored more dynamic faculty speakers, thus emphasizing personalities over studio content. Others disagreed, asserting that currently students are left to make decisions solely on the reputation of the faculty, with no knowledge of proposed studio content.

B. Posters: In this scenario, each faculty is required to design and post a studio poster prior to course selection. This takes the issue of personality out of the selection process. It does require, however, faculty to write their studios well in advance of each semester, especially for spring/fall

transition. It also requires the faculty to commit time for poster design. Another concern involves the possibility for a single poster to effectively convey the entire range of studio content.

Physical conditions in the studio

Committee members have received feedback from students about the poor physical condition of studios. Some of the complaints involve:

- a lack of regular janitorial services in the studio spaces (floors are not being cleaned, trash and recycling are not always removed)
- the smell of mold in the HVAC system
- loudness of the HVAC system
- crickets and bugs in the studio
- a lack of pin-up space
- extraneous furniture (junk) in the studios

The committee believes it's important to discuss comprehensive solutions for these topics.

Discussion of work in spring in conjunction with the all school exhibition

Assistant Professor Caine plans to install the second annual all school exhibition this spring. This presents an excellent opportunity for faculty to have a more comprehensive discussion of undergraduate curriculum. The department might consider scheduling a curriculum retreat during this time period.

TECHNOLOGY:

Members: Hazem Rashed-Ali (rep.), Saadet Beeson, Rahman Azari, Jae Yong Suk
Report:

I had two items only, the first was the proposal Rahman developed for an end-of-year sustainable design award.

The second was for restructuring the offerings of the undergraduate ES (and potentially structures) courses so that each course is offered only once in each long semester (twice in each academic year instead of three). The objective of this is to allow the technology faculty (Rahman, Jae and Saadet) to offer more graduate electives and teach more design studios. In this model, each faculty would teach one required course and one additional course (elective or studio) per semester. For the ES faculty, this will mean at least one sustainability-focused studio and one graduate elective will be available each semester for the students. As I mentioned, this proposal came from Rahman and Jae, while Saadet did not show strong interest in it. However, I believe it can be very helpful to her as well. However, this would require changing those course from MWF to TR so that they don't conflict with studios.

HISTORY:

Members: John Alexander (rep.), Shelley Roff, Angela Lombardi, Darryl Ohlenbusch
Report:

THEORY & CRITICISM:

Members: Robert Baron (rep.), Edward Burian, Ian Caine, Antonio Petrov, Taeg Nishimoto, Stephen Temple
Report:

The Theory and Criticism Curriculum Subcommittee was convened at noon, Friday, October 16th by Robert Baron, Subcommittee Representative. The following members attended: Edward Burian, Ian Caine, Antonio Petrov, and Taeg Nishimoto.

The Subcommittee discussed the role that theory and criticism courses play as an important component within the B.S. Architecture and M. Arch professional degree curricula and identified which courses should be considered within the “theory” designation. The close connection between theory, which concerns architectural ideas, and the design studio was noted as well as the differences between theory and history, which primarily concerns historical ideas.

After reviewing the B.S. Arch list of “theory” courses in the 2012-14 Undergraduate catalogue and the 2015-17 Graduate Catalogue, we recommend that ARC 1513 *Great Building and Cities of the World*, which is currently listed under the course designation “history”, be moved to the “theory” list and ARC 5193 *Principles of Global Architecture*, the new graduate course, which currently listed under “history”, be catalogued under “theory” as well. Therefore, the inventory of theory courses include ARC 1113 *Introduction to the Built Environment*, ARC 1513 *Great Buildings and Cities of the World*, ARC 3433 *Architecture and Thought*, ARC 5173 *Theory and Criticism*, and ARC 5193 *Principles of Global Architecture* be the official “theory” list of courses. Also, we recommend that ARC 5173 course title be changed to “Contemporary Architectural Theories”.

DIGITAL:

Members: Armando Araiza, Curtis Fish, Robert Mezquiti (rep.), Matt Martinez

Report:

Attached at the end of this report

GRADUATE (GPC):

Members: Sedef Doganer, GAR (rep.), All Graduate Faculty (Executive Committee TBA)

Report:

No Report

MASTERS PROJECT:

Members: Sedef Doganer, Antonio Petrov (rep.), Robert Baron, Edward Burian, Taeg Nishimoto

Report:

No Report

INTERIOR DESIGN:

Members: Diane Hays (rep.), Curtis Fish, Ann McGlone, John Webb, Juana Salazar, Analy Diego

Report: *No Report CIDA Prep*

M.S. PROGRAM: Master of Science in Architecture:

Members: Sedef Doganer, GAR (rep.), Hazem Rashed-Ali, Rahman Azari, William Dupont

Report:

No Report

M.ARCH 3 PROGRAM:

Members: Edward Burian (rep.) Mark Blizard, John Webb, Rick Lewis, Armando Araiza,
Report:

1.0 Strengths of Program:

- 1.1 Design Studio content and sequence of design problems is improving and staffing of studios is improved.
- 1.2 Webb and Mark work well together and should continue to do so.
- 1.3 Small scale projects are appropriate and work well
- 1.4 Typically 8 students in program now, and 12 would be ideal for each year's class.
- 1.5 Current intro to computer with Armando with Rhino, Illustrator, Photoshop, and V Ray seems appropriate

2.0 Areas for Program Improvement:

- 2.1 Several people suggested first to have the Technical Studio, then the Digital Studio.
- 2.2 Recommend teaching hand drawing and computer simultaneously.
- 2.3 Several mentioned that recruitment to program needs to improve, and also recommend the vetting prospective students for program with phone interviews.
- 2.4 Student feedback was that initial introduction to structures and technology is too elementary (and should be replaced with a much needed graphics course that should include computer skills, diagramming, and information graphics), while second course in structures is useful.
- 2.5 Throughout the program, continue to emphasize integration of knowledge and skills in various courses to build "knowledge," not merely "information."

HISTORIC PRESERVATION:

Members: William Dupont (rep.), Angela Lombardi, Rick Lewis, Sue Ann Pemberton

Report:

The four members of the Historic Preservation Sub-committee met on 30 November. Discussion findings and recommendations:

Current curriculum:

The absence of Preservation Technology (ARC 6413) is very troubling. Professional demands on graduates and the available talent of our faculty are an ideal match. We must offer the technology course at least 1x per year. The proposed program of study is submitted by the Program Coordinator. See attached program submitted June 2015.

The emphasis on historic urban landscapes (urban contextualism) is appropriate, and a good thing for us to continue. However, we lack an academic program for landscape study, plus the number of available students to support these topics is low. Therefore, course titles related to cultural and urban landscapes need to be offered sporadically. Because we cannot offer a high number of courses, focus needs to stay on the more practical offerings, and on the strongest attributes of our highly talented faculty.

Our summer offerings should not compete with each other for students.

Curricular goals:

The Historic Preservation Graduate Certificate Curriculum should be updated and enhanced to incorporate sustainable design practices. We are already teaching this material. Only the course titles and descriptions are in need of updating.

We reached consensus that Preservation Technology (ARC 6413) can be correctly retitled as Sustainable Preservation Technology, and the Advanced course adjusted accordingly. The term is used this way now in the field of practice, so it's a logical move for us. Additionally, the sub-committee discussed the required courses for the Graduate Certificate, specifically consideration of adding (Sustainable) Preservation Technology as one of the required courses.

Other topics:

Recruitment is key. Marketing is urgent. We need guidance to pursue. Scholarship recruitment has brought us some students from our undergraduate program, but has not been leveraged to attract students from anywhere else.

Rick and Sue Ann plan to make presentations about last summer's field schools to the CACP students, targeted for late January, with collaboration from students who attended.

SUSTAINABLE DESIGN:

Members: Hazem Rashed-Ali (rep.), Vincent Canizaro, Rahman Azari, Jae Yong Suk

Report: No Report

STUDY ABROAD:

Members: Mark Blizzard (rep.), Julius Gribou, Shelley Roff, Curtis Fish, Candid Rogers, John Webb, James Dawes, Darryl Ohlenbusch

Report:

Submitted responses: John Webb (A), Jim Dawes (B), Julius Gribou (C), Mark Blizzard (representative to the DCC) (D)

No submission: Candid Rogers, Shelley Roff, Curtis Fish, Darryl Ohlenbusch (added to task force after return from Barcelona)

The questions: In an effort to gauge the state of the study abroad curriculum and report our findings back to the executive curriculum committee, I have resorted to these few questions as any sort of formal meeting is precluded. Your responses will serve as a prompt for further consideration as needed. Please take a little time to respond with your usual insight and clarity and remember, this is easier than meeting as a committee!

1 From your position, what do you see as the biggest challenge facing the study abroad curriculum currently?

John Webb: From my limited perspective (teaching only 1/2 semester in Urbino and 1/2 semester in Berlin), I see only the number of students attending the Urbino program as a challenge. The 1/2 semester I taught in Urbino included 24 COA students (two sections) and it worked well. I can't say yet that more students than that will pose a problem, but it may pose a challenge. I suppose that this coming spring, and the largest number of students going in a single semester, will help us determine whether the program, and especially our week and day trips, will be as successful as prior semesters have been that have had fewer students attending. Personally, I'd love to see the Berlin summer semester become available again.

Jim Dawes: I'm not sure curriculum in general should be a great challenge. Drawing is drawing and design studio, design studio. Both are based on making observations of and responses to a subject place or object. History/Theory is a bit the exception for new faculty who have not taught history or has no specialty in the place of appointment.

Pairing with local providers or other UTSA faculty with experience in country is essential. A great challenge would be rethinking the whole structure, even if just as a thought experiment.

Julius Gribou: Making sure that the study abroad curriculum utilizes the opportunities offered by the respective locations, while recognizing the need to fit in within the curricular needs of the degree programs.

Mark Blizard: Before going abroad: communication to students and their preparation.

While abroad: maintaining discipline, order, rigor, and course content.

Following their return: exhibitions to the school and connections with their next studio course.

+ the numbers of students

+ the continued involvement of tenured and tenure track faculty

2. What are your thoughts on graduate students and study abroad opportunities?

John Webb: I believe that study abroad for all levels (even teachers) is a valuable experience. If there is room in their graduate curriculum, study abroad for graduate students ought to be offered.

Jim Dawes: Sign 'em up.

Julius Gribou: This is an easy one. The graduate students should have access to the study abroad programs. Also, they should be considered as graduate assistants.

Mark Blizard: Firstly, we need to look at their curriculum and course content and see where a study abroad experience might contribute or fulfill a need, and then tailor, to a certain extent, the program to respond. Perhaps a summer program like the one that I taught in Rome. Clearly there is an interest—we should consider a more consistent approach and institutionalize a program rather than a one-off approach.

3. What sort of benefits to the curriculum or possible changes to the curriculum can we expect from having a director on the ground in Urbino?

Jim Dawes: It depends on the job description that goes with the title “director”. In any case it offers an opportunity for continuity if more first-timers are coming in to the teaching abroad cohort.

Julius Gribou: This position should be able to offer a degree of continuity in the program, but it requires more clarification. I have some very strong opinions about how it could be highly beneficial, if utilized to its full advantage, but I am reluctant to state it at this moment. It's something that should be discussed in a face to face round table discussion.

Mark Blizard: Consistency of content

Connections to local professionals and officials, Coordination with GEV

4. What sort of challenges does the curriculum face with respect to our current structure for the Barcelona program?

Jim Dawes: The structure in Barcelona appears to be the same as the structure in Urbino: History/Theory, Drawing Studio, Design Studio, local and country-wide field trips.

Variations that I can think of are not unlike variations between the way two instructors teach different sections of Drawing or Design Studio in San Antonio.

It has been said that the student population of Barcelona has been limited to one section and one semester because of availability of studio space and/or housing. If so, that seems like something that could be challenged. Maybe there are other reasons, but if we find we are hitting the limit of optimum enrollment for Urbino and Italy field-tripping, I think there are a lot of students who find Barcelona attractive.

Julius Gribou: The current program is drastically different from what I established. My idea was to be more advanced than the Italy program and focused on urban issues. Also, initially it had a full external logistical support, including a dorm and a link to a local university. Now, it appears that the UTSA faculty have a multi faceted role.

5. How can we groom additional faculty to teach study abroad?

John Webb: The first experience of study abroad begins the grooming process. For a faculty there is much to learn and many realizations to make regarding preparations, etc. Every

successive experience of it after that continues to build upon the expertise of a study abroad instructor.

If the question also eludes to how can we get more instructors involved, it boils down to who is able to do it. It is probable that if there were more current instructors available and willing to teach abroad, they would have voiced their availability already.

Jim Dawes: Put 'em in cold, they're ready to play. That's true in a sense. Significantly though, the sketch outings and lead-in presentations on Italy that Mark has been scheduling for the students, and the lead-in work I engaged in with Candid and Shelley and the class prior to departure for Barcelona have been indispensable to me as maiden-voyager. Arriving a week early for Barcelona was invaluable preparation for to collecting fifteen fresh faces at the airport and leading them, with the help of local provider/architect Jose Talavera, around our new hometown. I plan to program arrival in Rome so I can get two nights and a full day making my way to a good many of the monuments and places on the field trip venue so I can be a more effective guide when I'm in charge of a dozen or so students there later in the semester. (Let's change the word "groom" to "prepare".)

Julius Gribou: Having dealt with the study abroad programs for 26 years, I found that the best solution is to develop a cohort of faculty who can easily participate in the study abroad programs and are reasonably knowledgeable about the locations. The best way to "groom" a new faculty member is to team up the new faculty with an experience faculty member. The on-site experience with someone who already has been there seems to work very well.

Mark Blizard: Faculty members need to form a "learning community" that collects and transmits knowledge. Our failures are just as important as our successes

6. Does the current structure of ½ semester teaching rotation provide any challenges?

John Webb: The current structure of study abroad (semesters split 1/2 and 1/2 among faculty) poses no curricular challenge for me personally. It's my belief that the students do not mind a 'change-out' of their instructors at the mid semester, and may, in actuality, enjoy a new face, perspective and fresh level of instructor enthusiasm.

The challenge is always in how leaving San Antonio and an operating architectural practice will affect my work schedule, how badly the time away will affect my income and if there might be any negative consequences to my personal and family life. But these are questions and concerns that every study abroad instructor grapples with (perhaps Adjuncts more with regards to income lost during time away), and must base their decision to go or not around.

Jim Dawes: I see it more as an important facilitation. One would be unusually footloose and fancy free to be able to leave relationships and obligations for three months without causing a bit of hardship somewhere back home.

Julius Gribou: It works if the two faculty members prepare the structure of the entire semester before the start of the semester. Probably the most difficult issue is matching the courses of the respective faculty. Watching the COLFA faculty, it appears that they are more effective if they are here for the whole semester. For some reason at TAMU, I had no problems with the faculty staying for the whole semester.

Mark Blizard: I do not enjoy the ½ semester for the following reasons:

Less connection to the students; The impact of immediately jumping into an on-going class upon return—I feel overworked; The lack of time to develop and maintain scholarly work that is connected to the study abroad program or Urbino

The investment of time into preparations for teaching (course development, program structure, etc.) in Urbino and then never being around to see or participate in the results.

I feel like I am being "plugged in" — back to a community college model where the teacher is unimportant and the emphasis is on the class.

I enjoy the ½ semester for the following reason:

Without support for my wife abroad (as a teacher or as a spouse), a full semester is out of the question.

7. How can the study abroad experience effect curricular development and student learning in San Antonio?

Jim Dawes: If broader experience can help, in the same way the experience is life changing for students and for many architects who have done some version of it on their own, everybody brings back more than they left with. As much as I've said teaching design studio etc in San Antonio is sufficient preparation for teaching abroad, there is a sense of creating it anew when the setting is novel.

Julius Gribou: The knowledge gained in the foreign setting should be somehow transferred to the curriculum in SA. Some continuity of the subjects/topics from the study abroad programs could be considered.

Mark Blizard: We need to fashion / institutionalize the return: with what do the students return? How can we celebrate their return? They should be expected to present their discoveries, work, and production—their experience and energy should not be lost. We need to find ways to support this vital link to the state-side curriculum / students.

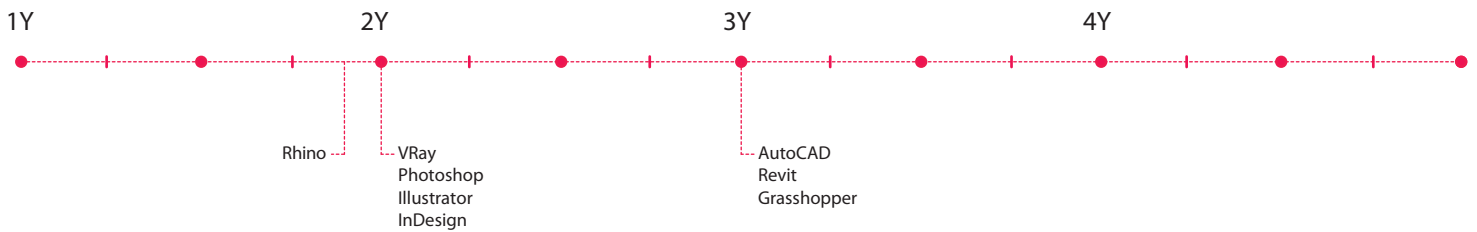
8. Other thoughts

Mark Blizard: There is a difference between the type and reasons for involvement for tenure track/tenured faculty and non-tenure track faculty that needs to be recognized. With 40% of my time focused on scholarly production, the program needs to be structured to support this aspect of teaching. The alternative is a program based solely on ntt teaching in which faculty members “plug-in” and then “un-plug at the end of the semester. Continuity needs to be addressed as well. Originally, the study abroad program had a lot to offer tenured or tenure track faculty, and now it is a pleasurable but weighty burden.

UT San Antonio
College Of
Architecture
Construction
+ Planning

DIGITAL MEDIA REPORT #2

RECOMMENDED SOFTWARE DISTRIBUTION



SOFTWARE "INDUSTRY STANDARD(S)"

The software that the students should acquire will be divided into three categories, based on the notion of "industry standard" (I'm using this generic term for lack of a better one).

Category 1 (Photoshop / Illustrator / InDesign)

As much as we would like to think, not all of the students will continue within the field of architecture/interior design. But, knowing these basic software's, could be applied to many creative fields that students might move onto.

Category 2 (Rhino / VRay / Grasshopper)

For undergrad students who do finish our program, and continue within the field of architecture/interior design, one option for them would be to continue onto graduate school. As advanced design/parametric software, Rhino is a good fit for allowing students to push the limits of their design. Some of our students are getting accepted into the top architecture programs in the nation (Columbia, SCI-Arc, Michigan, Pratt, UPenn, UT Austin, just to name a few). One question that I asked these students was, how beneficial is knowing and using Rhino within your graduate program, or how beneficial was it to getting you into the graduate program. A large majority responded saying that knowing advanced software such as Rhino, both helped them get into the program as well as using the software in some way throughout the program. It's not that using Rhino will make students better designers, but knowing advanced 3D software such as Rhino, Grasshopper, Maya, 3D Max allows students to push their design abilities. Which, graduate schools are looking at students abilities to be able to comprehend complex systems and way of thinking.

Category 3 (AutoCAD / Revit)

Not all of our students will continue onto graduate school. Some of them (I don't know the percentage) will enter the workforce. As we all know, Revit is the number one software of choice that a majority of firms are moving towards. Having knowledge of using Revit within the design workflow will be of a great advantage to our students. But, not all firms are making the switch over to Revit as quickly as we might think. I learned about this after speaking to many of our recent graduates who are working throughout San Antonio. Some firms are making a slow transition to Revit, or some firms are setting Revit aside for now, and relying on what they already know, AutoCAD. As much as larger architecture firms would like our students to know Revit, we must have a balance of other production software's, such as AutoCAD, which is still being used in offices.

In order to progress our program we need to tackle the issue of technology in education and the design field in a very concise way. There are multiple software's available (AutoCAD, Vectorworks, Sketch Up, Revit, Rhino, Maya, 3D Max, Grasshopper, Processing, ZBrush, Digital Software, Solid Works, T-Splines, etc...) but we need to integrate the digital technology with the curriculum, instead of it being a loose unorganized mashup. The first big step has already been taken with the introduction of the Digital/Analog studios, but we need to unify the undergrad program as a whole. We need to take the route of UT Austin and SCI-Arc. UT Austin purged all software and is only using specific software per level and class. SCI-Arc teaches all students the same software so that all students are working together without any confusion of having different classes using different software.

GRADUATE LEVEL

The software requirements mentioned in the previous page are meant for the undergrad level. The digital technology for graduates needs to also be restructured.

One graduate student I spoke with mentioned that graduate students are not learning the adequate digital skills needed to complete the work at a successful level. This student mentioned that they learned more as an undergrad in our program, because more digital classes were available to take. This student took as many digital classes as they could take while in our undergrad program, and now that is working against them. Because students can't get credit for taking the same course twice with the same course number, even though it's cross-listed. So they're now left without any advancement in digital courses currently offered.

I mention this scenario because if we plan on using a 'fast track' with certain students, then the school might continue to run into this problem.

ANALOG / DIGITAL STUDIOS

While speaking with current students, one topic came up over and over again, the extreme polarization of the analog and digital studios. A majority of the students that I spoke with, like the idea of having the analog/digital studios, but don't like the idea that it's either only hand drawing or only digital. The students mentioned having a focus on one or the other is great, but still being able to use other forms of thinking through a design would work best.