UTSA. The University of Texas at San Antonio

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Our Studio Culture Policy (DRAFT 2015)

What is studio culture? It is that first big assignment that everyone tries to set their own guidelines as a group instead of every little detail the professor requests. It is the constant getting up and sitting down to go and critique your peers. It is the support and guidance your professor establishes with you. It is the dialogue between the department and the needs of the students and its staff. It is the long sleepless nights and those 4 am conversations. It is the drive and passion in which every student should exude from their being. It is the summation of characteristics in your studio that exist within students, faculty and the department and reflect through your studio environment. Individual students should take it upon themselves to not only promote these set of guidelines but also expand upon them. This is a living document, every individual should continue, challenge and promote difference as our community and built environment change.

Today's design studio is a laboratory for experimentation, discovery, and expression that transcends the predicted, in the name of bettering the greater environment and society as a whole. In light of the critical responsibilities that architects must bear in working to improve on the human condition, while striving to lessen the impact that the building industry has on natural resources, the Department of Architecture and the Interior Design program are committed to the following tenets of an efficient, productive, and appropriate studio culture.

Studio Culture Policy Tenets:

Students:
- Students are part of a contributing / positive **community** that shares the responsibility of being respectful and encouraging of individuals and their creative abilities.
- Students are encouraged to view the entire faculty, as not simply their individual studio instructors, but as resources and **mentors** in pursuit of a varied education.
- Students are encouraged to influence the faculty to think differently, to not only give them the norm to discuss but also new innovative ideas.
- **Interactions** between students in separate studios and year levels are likewise encouraged in the belief that students have much to learn from one another and that everyone can be a teacher.
- Architectural education requires students to think, form opinions, and make sound judgments that can be well demonstrated in the student's abilities to write, discuss, represent, and produce relative to design convictions.
- Students are expected to maintain an **open-minded** attitude toward constructive criticism and guidance from instructors and peers
- Students should discipline themselves to:
    - work hard,
    - establish self-designed and maintained deadlines to ensure the development of **time management** skills,
    - focus on the production of high quality work, and
    - adapt to different studio atmospheres and faculty teaching methods.
- When students are in the studio it is expected of them to have good manners by maintaining the physical quality of the studio space, while respecting others, their work, work space and work materials.
- Students are encouraged to consider that all failures from which one learns lead inevitably to future success.
- The studio should be an environment in which multiple facets of the student's formal education are brought into discourse with one another
- Every student's work has the capacity to rise to an innovative level of influencing the ever-evolving development of the discipline and profession of **Architecture**. Engaged in high ideas as a student, it is

our intention and hope that a trajectory of inquiry and commitment to quality professionalism (established while attending University) will be sustained by its graduates over the course of their lives.

Faculty:
- Along with the students, faculty are expected to be a part of a contributing / positive community based on mutual respect and which fosters the encouragement of individuals and their creative abilities.
- Faculty are expected to recognize the value of decisions made by students in their design process, and that this manner of learning through design is as important as the final products / projects coming out of studios.
- Faculty should **encourage** students to push themselves beyond their design abilities and critical thinking skills so as to bring forward the best of their work.
- Faculty are expected to serve as mentors to students in both the architecture and interior design programs as a whole, not simply those assigned to their current studio or course.

Department:
- The Department recognizes the need to allocate adequate time and resources to allow students and faculty to commit to investigating the inherent issues and complexities of design projects.

Being a commuter campus
- Students should understand that the studio is not only a place to attend during design class, but also a place to begin a new community with peers having the same interests. Therefore, all students are encouraged to work in the studios before and after-hours, so as to take advantage of peer criticism that can improve your designs, your design process, your outlook or way of thinking, and which helps foster a community, and a studio culture.