

DUNWOODY ARCHITECTURE | STUDIO CULTURE POLICY

OVERVIEW

The National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB) asks that all schools of architecture have a written policy that describes the culture through "the experiences, habits and patterns found within the architecture design studio". The architecture studio at Dunwoody is the core of a student's educational experience and is shaped by five tenets shared by its students, faculty and administration: balance, collaboration, individual development, constructive criticism, and making.

BALANCE

The program supports a healthy work/ life balance by emphasizing the importance of good time management. The school acknowledges many of its students have part time jobs and a number of classes aside from studio. The faculty strives to coordinate with one another regarding due dates to minimize interference with multiple courses. It is the expectation that students and their professors will attend studio regularly and on time; that any anticipated absences or delays be communicated in advance whenever possible; that studio time be used for studio work; that it is understood that a habit of delaying work and pulling "all-nighters" as a regular practice for doing work leads to poor quality in work and life.

An architecture school's reputation to the outside world and future employers has a very direct link when practicing professionals are both instructors and brought in for guest critiques. The quality of work that students show is immediately evident. By practicing good time management skills students show pride in their work and contribute to the growing reputation of Dunwoody and the desirability of its graduates.

COLLABORATION

Architecture is a collaborative and interdisciplinary act. The studio is a place without right or wrong answers, but rather a constant conversation between students and faculty, where students propose ideas and faculty guide their development. The studio should maintain a spirit of critique and dialogue to ensure constant collaboration between student and faculty. Students value the professional expertise of the faculty and faculty value the perspectives and interests of students. Studios should provide robust opportunities for collaborative team work within each studio and across multiple studios.

Dunwoody College of Technology provides a wealth of opportunity for multi-disciplinary collaboration. The studio should provide, promote and maintain strong collaborative ties to other programs throughout the college, particularly those to the construction, fabrication, manufacturing, and design disciplines. The studio is a distinct community, but it is also part of a larger professional community. Students are encouraged to engage in collaborative efforts with the profession outside the physical studio. Participation in professional events, volunteerism, and community engagement are strongly encouraged as a crucial component to a complete studio experience.

INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT

Students should never have to leave the studio to get work done. The studio should allow each student to "move in" is providing individual dedicated workspace for each student. Further, students should keep their personal workspace in reasonable order and keep common work spaces within the studio dean and accessible. At the end of each semester, students should strive to leave their individual space in better condition than when they moved in. While seemingly in opposition to collaboration, the ability to break away and develop individually is viewed as an essential element of collaboration. The studio should maintain a focused work environment that generates stronger individual work and is free from distraction. While students are encouraged to learn from each other and collaborate, conversations and classroom activity should not distract others from their work.

Also crucial to individual development is the importance of carefully documenting individual work. At the end of each semester, each student is required to submit digital documentation of work from the semester, including, but not limited to: models, mock ups, digital files, hand drawings, sketchbooks, photos of built works, and other works essential to the process and finish. Selected projects will be collected and retained by the Program and may be used for accreditation, marketing or other purposes.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Criticism is seen as one of the most powerful tools to improving student work. As such, the studio welcomes criticism that maintains constructive improvement as its intent. Student to student, the program pushes for students to use each other as tools to succeed; asking for advice and critical feedback. Student to instructor, the program uses the daily desk critique as a one-on-one dialogue between the student and studio instructor to address assigned design problems and discover revisions that can improve the work.

Student to the profession, the program offers formal critiques which invite the profession into the studio to see student work. Students should afford the profession every opportunity to collaborate and provide them with constructive critique. Work should be ready to be presented before the jury arrives. Students should be dressed professionally and greet the jury personally. All students should participate in formal critiques to forward dialog for the betterment of the collective student work. Students are highly encouraged to attend and participate in reviews for studios other than their own, when schedules allow.

MAKING

As the program evolves, it is the shared value of the students, faculty and administration that the architecture studio promotes a strong culture of making. As a hands-on institution, making is a critical element of the design process to any studio and, as such, central to the identity of Dunwoody Architecture. Students should be provided exposure to a wide range of design and building technologies as well as the tools, training, and opportunities to model, mock-up, test, prototype, develop, and represent ideas.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Program will sustain and nurture a studio culture vital to the student experience by continuing to embrace new technologies and new spatial configurations. The policy must continually reflect changes while maintaining the integrity and professionalism that characterize the study and practice of architecture. The Studio Culture Policy will be reviewed and revised on an annual basis, to maintain and further develop working principles for achieving the balance and integration of diverse goals and perspectives of the College, the Department, and the Architecture Program.

This Studio Culture Policy, is a working mechanism. It will undergo annual review and development through a Studio Culture task force composed of faculty, student leaders, and advisory committee members. The task force will work to maintain and develop the Studio Culture Policy through review sessions each year, from which emerge annual recommendations forwarded to the faculty for review and implementation.