Academic/Studio Culture Policy

Overview

The University of Maryland School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation Architecture Program values design studio education and encourages an academic environment conducive to learning made through thoughtful connections between studio and non-studio courses. The design studio, and the studio education model is the foundation of the curriculum. Studio learning encourages critical discourse based on collaboration, creativity, and learning through making. A healthy academic/studio culture engenders an environment where students and faculty come together to ask questions and make proposals, innovate with today's knowledge to address tomorrow's challenges. Studio education provides opportunities for students to develop their critical thinking skills and design process. The design studio offers both an analytic and a synthetic form of education, where critical learning becomes the foundation for developing an understanding of architecture: to improve the quality of the built and natural environments. The academic/studio culture must support and develop respect for the diverse backgrounds of the faculty and students educational and professional experiences, and approaches to design.

Academic/Studio Core Values

• **Balance: Life and Study**– Respect diverse interests and exposures as well as time commitment and time management

• **Design: Process and Product** – the development of a rigorous approach to architectural design which stresses the clarity of communication and the ability to create tangible results from conceptual solutions to a posed problem or condition, embracing design as an opportunity to affect positive change

• **Critique: Engagement and Evaluation** – The measure of student performance transcends letter grading, commitment to public review of work as a means of public engagement and discourse, the value of critique and critical evaluation in respectful dialogues of debate and discussion

• **Communication: Collaboration and Conversation** – The value of intellectual diversity and the inclusion of multiple voices in the classroom and in the discourse between students and faculty

• **Diversity: Respect and Perspective** – The value of mutual respect and the benefits of multiple perspectives of gender, race, sexual orientation, ethnicity, etc. to the making of place in the school

Academic/Studio Culture Policy Goals

• **Nurture** learning environments derived from faculty/student collaboration and the sharing of ideas and concepts through critical discourse

• **Encourage** creativity, exploration, and rigor in pursuit of academic development

• **Appreciate** the value of time

• **Support** the achievement of architectural design excellence and enable the student to develop individually within the discipline of architecture

• **Create** a climate of respect and diversity where ideas may be freely exchanged among students and faculty

• **Require** preparedness and enthusiasm for learning in both the studio and classroom from faculty/students

Student | Faculty | Administration Relationships

Respect and responsibility are the foundation for strong relationships between students, faculty, and administration. In order to cultivate and develop a healthy studio culture, each party must live up to their responsibilities and respect the time and responsibilities of others.   These relationships are strengthened by open communication about expectations and values. Studio/academic culture of our school develops an environment where students work side by side with faculty, fostering unique faculty/student relationships different than ones outside of the this culture. It takes a collaboration of efforts to encourage and ensure clear and open communication, mutual respect and understanding within these relationships to serve our collective academic mission.

Student Development

Students are responsible for their own education. What a student gets out of school is in proportion to the effort and time the student puts into it. Students have a right to receiving the best efforts of their faculty and in return should be giving all classes their best efforts. At any point of a breakdown of compliance, a student's first restitution is open conversation with the party, whether faculty or student, they are having difficulty with. This is in harmony with studio culture's task to foster mature attitudes in providing and receiving critical feedback.

Responsibility of students:
- respect class time
- participate in extra-curricular activities and your surroundings
- prepare for class/studio with assignments and readings and participate in academic discourse
- be open-minded about criticism and engage in healthy discussion and debate
- communicate problems, concerns, and positive actions with faculty and administration
- keep personal and common areas clean
- embrace differences in values, background, and interests of other students and faculty
- engage the community and profession

Faculty Development

Faculty are responsible for educating, inspiring and mentoring students. They are responsible to bring their full passion for architecture and wealth of experience to class and provide attention to each student. Faculty have the right to require academic dedication and critical attention of their students. Faculty is to lead by first practicing the core values of academic/studio culture.

Responsibility of faculty:
- respect class time
- lead by example and embody the ideals of life learning and continuing education
- communicate goals, expectations, and deadlines of the course at the beginning of the semester and as they change throughout the course
- provide documentation of schedule for classes at the beginning of the semester
- facilitate healthy debate and discussion
- respect differences in values, background, and interests of students and other faculty
- engage community and profession

Administrative Development

The Administration is responsible for upholding the vision and direction of the school and engaging faculty and students in decisions about the future of the program. The Administration is also responsible for facilitating the faculty and students living up to their responsibilities.

Responsibility of administration:
- provide a healthy and safe learning and work environment
- maintain condition of building and physical resources
- support a challenging and diverse curriculum (lectures, concerts, gallery events etc.)
- manage resources to provide opportunities for scholarships and study abroad
- respect differences in values, background, and interests of other students and faculty
- communicate expectations to students and faculty
- engage the community and profession

Policy Implementation

The explicit goal of the **Academic/Studio Culture Policy** is to support a positive academic/studio culture. This policy requires the commitment of the school administration, architecture faculty, and architecture students. The **Academic/Studio Culture Policy** must be reviewed annually by the Architecture Program Curriculum Committee, and student representatives from the Student Assembly. This review is intended to ensure that the policy reflects the continuous development of the architecture program to ensure the policy goals are being met. Revisions to the policy will be made as needed and must be ratified by both the faculty and student bodies after each revision. If any party (student, faculty, admin) feels that another party is not operating in accordance with the overview, core values, and policy goals they have the obligation to clarify their position with the other party. The **first step** in clarifying academic/studio policy issues is party to party discussion (faculty to student, student to faculty, students to administration, etc). The **second step**, if necessary, is for both parties to meet in consultation with the Student Assembly Ombudsperson person to resolve the issue through candid discussion. The **third step**, if necessary, is for the parties to discuss the issue in consultation with the Architecture Program Director. If the issue is not resolved through the first three steps, the fourth and final step is to seek resolution of the issue through the policy arbitration system. This fourth and final step is the last of means of resolution for a studio culture policy issue. Any issues related to studio culture policy arbitration system will be heard by an ad-hoc committee convened to act as a **Studio Culture Policy Review Committee**. This committee will be comprised of the following persons: Chair of the Student Affairs Committee, 2 faculty members, Associate Dean of Student Affairs, MAPP Equity Officer, the Student Assembly Ombudsperson, 2 undergraduate student representatives selected by the Student Assembly, 2 graduate student representatives selected by the Student Assembly.

Policy Arbitration Process

If any party to the academic/studio culture relationship structure (individual student, group of students, faculty, administration) feels that another party is not acting in the spirit of the **Academic/Studio Culture Policy** then they are entitled to file an **Arbitration Request** with the Architecture Program Director. The intent of this process is to provide a mechanism for the timely resolution of a academic/studio culture policy related issue within the course of a semester or outside the semester boundaries. Once a request for arbitration has been made a **Academic/Studio Culture Policy Review Committee** must be formed and convene to hear both sides of the issue presented by both parties with five school days of the request being filed with the Architecture Program Director. Once the **Academic/Studio Culture Policy Review Committee** convenes to hear the issue from both parties they have two days to complete a committee report and reconvene a Arbitration Session of the parties involved in the arbitration. The **Academic/Studio Culture Policy Review Committee** will hear both parties explain their point of view on the issue(s) raised in the **Arbitration Request** individually and bring the parties together only after the **Academic/Studio Culture Policy Review Committee** has completed their committee recommendation. The committee recommendation is presented verbally at the Arbitration Session and serves as a guide for both parties to clarify and/or resolve the issue(s) at hand.

Policy Implementation Outline

1. **Step 1: Party to Party Conversation**
2. **Step 2: Both Parties meet with Student Assembly Ombudsperson**
3. **Step 3: Both Parties meet with Architecture Program Director**
4. **File Policy Arbitration Request:** Complete Arbitration Request Form and file with Director of the Architecture Program
5. **Assemble Committee:** Director receives request and assembles Academic/Studio Culture Policy Review Committee within 5 days of Request (or at the discretion of the Director)
6. **Convene First Arbitration Session:** Chair of Student Affairs Committee convenes an Academic/Studio Culture Policy Review Committee Arbitration Session to hear verbal positions presented from both parties.
7. **Meet to compile Report/Recommendation:** Academic/Studio Culture Policy Review Committee meets to complete report and define recommendations
8. **Convene Second Arbitration Session:** Academic/Studio Culture Policy Review Committee reconvenes Arbitration Session within two days (or at the discretion of the Director) of first Arbitration Session to make verbal presentation of recommendation
9. **Process complete**

Academic/Studio   Culture   Policy

Arbitration Request

please check one of the request types below

Request Type

____	individual	(1 student)
____	group	(2 or more students)
____	studio/course	(all enrolled in class/section)
____	class	(Jr, Sr, 1st year grad, thesis, etc.)
____	faculty	
____	administrator	

please list up to five names of those parties filing the request below

Name(s)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

please designate the party you request be reviewed in this process below (circle one)

Student | Faculty | Administrator

_____

Date of Request

_____

*This **Arbitration Request** must be submitted to Architecture Program Director*

Date of Policy Review Arbitration

_____

This date is to be set within five school days of the request

please circle the Core Value(s) or Policy Goal(s) you feel requires review from the list below (circle as many as apply)

Academic/Studio Core Values

- **Balance:** Life and Study
- **Design:** Process and Product
- **Critique:** Engagement and Evaluation
- **Communication:** Collaboration and Conversation
- **Diversity:** Respect and Perspective

Please initial below to confirm first three steps are complete

__ Step 1 complete
__ Step 2 complete
__ Step 3 complete

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- **Support** the achievement of architectural design excellence and enable the student to develop individually within the discipline of architecture
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*please provide a brief description of the issue for review by the **Studio Culture Policy Review Committee***

Issue(s) for Review

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