

Philadelphia University

College of Architecture and the Built Environment Studio Culture Document

This document is intended to create a current and clear description of student and professor expectations, requirements, and responsibilities. Every studio must take a moment at the commencement of the class to review, discuss, sign, and return this document to the Executive Dean's Office, ensuring clear and universal understanding. Copies will be posted in all studio buildings. This is a dynamic document that must be evaluated annually by a committee of students and faculty, with the input of the College Advisory Board. The Philadelphia University Studio Culture Document works in conjunction with Studio Policies, the Philadelphia University Student Handbook, and the Philadelphia University Strategic Plan.

*Studio Culture, which promotes an active learning environment, is the essence of design education. Design students draw from all of their academic courses, life experiences, and extra-curricular activities; the importance of all of these sources should not be diminished. Above all, the fundamental component of our success is **RESPECT**.*

Respect for Ourselves

Faculty are qualified and experienced individuals who bring their skills and dedication to the learning process.

Students bring their immense energy, talent, and dedication to the learning process.

Students learn as much from each other as they do in class; therefore, they are expected to work in studio as frequently as possible.

- An atmosphere of encouragement and positive reinforcement should be upheld.

- Students need to strive to present the best work that they are capable of – only then can they excel.

Students should be empowered to expand their knowledge by taking reasonable and appropriate intellectual risks.

Respect for One Another and Our Craft, both Process and Product

We encourage one another to learn about, respect, and embrace all disciplines, as they bring important perspectives to the educational process.

As part of the professional atmosphere both students and faculty must be punctual and respectful of one another, our schedules, and external obligations.

- While in class our focus and conversation must be pertinent to the class at hand.

- Students and faculty are responsible for coming to class with new work prepared and ready for discussion.

- Critiques and field trips that extend past class time must take into account students' other classes and extra-curricular responsibilities.

Students should be aware that design studios demand a significant financial and time commitment. Professors should mentor students at an appropriate level with respect to managing their time as well as the cost and logistics of acquiring materials.

The course syllabus is like a contract; all parties must be aware of the expectations included in it. It must be clear and encourage equitable standards across sections of the course.

- Project assignments similarly outline expectations. Faculty must explain and document modifications to the syllabus or predominant teaching method, and changes must meet the learning objectives of the course.

- All involved are encouraged to value process (theory, precedent, and research) and final product (both graphic and oral presentations).

Faculty can teach effectively by balancing learning methods, including pin ups, group discussions, one-on-one desk critiques and integrated design charrettes.

Students learn effectively when complementing those methods by keeping a sketchbook to record feedback from class and reviews as well as their own observations outside classtime, which they then can reflect on and use later.

Effective presentation techniques include hand-produced drawings and models, digital media, and well prepared oral presentations, and each should be used appropriately according to the circumstances.

Everyone should abide by sustainable practices, including avoiding waste and reusing and/or recycling materials when possible.

Reviews will be a constructive, interactive, and professional learning experience.

- Faculty should reinforce students' time management skills through suitable means, which could include deadlines, providing students enough time prior to the review to recuperate and prepare (a "Pencils-Down" policy) which fosters more interactive and effective critiques.
- Faculty are encouraged to organize critiques so they enhance discussions and involve all students.
- To promote collaboration and respect, students are required to attend and encouraged to participate in critiques of students in other majors and years.
- In order to make the most of everyone's time, guest jurors should be alerted to relevant project information and given an agenda.

Grading systems will follow the prescribed schedule as outlined in the syllabus.

- Faculty should give verbal or written progress reviews within a reasonable time following each major assignment and should consider using an exit interview as the culmination of the semester.
- Faculty are required to use the Academic Alert system to issue prompt and appropriate notification of unsatisfactory or failing grades.

Respect for Facilities

Studio space has been entrusted to students and faculty in order to advance learning and build an effective studio culture.

- Studios should be treated as a professional work space. Excessive noise and other inappropriate behavior do not belong in studio.
- Studios are a communal area used by many students and should be treated accordingly by adhering to the School Studio Policies.