**BIMStorm OKC - November 7, 2012**

Associate Professor of Construction Science Tamesa McCuen and Associate Professor of Architecture Lee Fithian were approved to lead a Dream Course in fall 2012 by the University of Oklahoma. The course will raise OU’s image as a leader in interdisciplinary collaboration enabled by innovative technology. The Dream Course will provide a unique opportunity for students to work with design and construction professionals on virtual teams. By working with the City of Oklahoma City and industry partners throughout BIMStorm™ OKC, students will further their discipline knowledge and collaborative skills in a project-based learning environment that represents leading-edge technology and innovative project delivery methods for the 21st-century architect, planner and construction manager.

During the course, students will learn virtual design and preconstruction analysis, which is the future of the built environment. Students will participate on interdisciplinary teams and use building information modeling (BIM) as a tool for working in together. A BIM provides a ‘smart’ 3-dimensional model that includes data beyond geometry to data critical to the operations and maintenance of a project across its lifecycle. The ability to assemble a team of architecture, planning, and construction professionals as a virtual team, using the internet, is now a reality in the 21st century construction industry. Virtual teams provide alternatives to traditional methods of teaming that expands the possibility of design and construction teams to a large pool of professionals and consultants. The ability to bring together virtual teams enhances solutions for design and construction of capital projects.

“The opportunity for our students to interface and work with potential national and international firms and designers on a critical project in Oklahoma City is unique to this Dream Course. Without the intensive atmosphere and sophisticated interface provided by the BIMStorm™, this type of exposure would just be too cost prohibitive and linear in nature rather than the interactive venue we will enjoy. It will be a great experience for all faculty, students and professionals,” said Fithian.

Previous events such as BIMStorm™ New Orleans, BIMStorm™ Los Angeles, and BIMStorm™ California Community Colleges have received national exposure at industry events and advanced professionals’ awareness of new methods for collaboration.

BIMStorm™ OKC will bring together students from disciplines such as architecture, construction science, planning, and engineering to join in a partnership with the City of Oklahoma City and industry partners for the virtual BIM event. Students will develop design alternatives that can be tested and analyzed in BIM to verify feasibility and constructability. The industry partners will provide valuable insight to students about real world solutions. The dynamics of students, city officials, and industry partners all working toward one goal has implications for each group with information sharing, problem solving, and solution testing. The virtual team context offers OU students a differentiator and experience uncommon to the majority of students of the built environment.

“The students will gain an exciting and unique experience from the course. The students’ classroom education will be enhanced by their working in interdisciplinary teams and by utilizing BIM to propose solutions for building community and connectivity in a manner that is sustainable for the City of Oklahoma City,” said McCuen.

The dream courses are competitively awarded ($20,000) across the university. Over the last several years, the College of Architecture has been awarded multiple interdisciplinary dream courses including one in Fall 2011 that featured a collaboration between the divisions of Architecture and Interior Design and the School of Art and Art History.

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