

CONTEXT AND AIMS:

“*Learning and Teaching Culture — How the program fosters and ensures a positive and respectful environment that encourages optimism, respect, sharing, engagement, and innovation among its faculty, students, administration, and staff.*”- Excerpt from the 2020 NAAB Conditions for Accreditation

WHO WE ARE & WHAT WE DO:

The American School of Architecture* cultivates designers known for balancing creativity and innovation with resourcefulness and pragmatism. Sensitive to the impacts of climate change, we draw lessons from Oklahoma’s cultural context and natural landscape. Our research and creative practices inspire students and faculty to work together to envision a future where communities are healthy, resilient, and just.

We in the Gibbs College of Architecture (GCA) are currently in a unique position. Gould Hall offers state-of-the-art educational facilities and support. The GCA offers possibilities for transdisciplinary research and creative activities by uniting programs in Architecture, Construction Science, Environmental Design, Interior Design, Landscape Architecture, and Regional and City Planning and Urban Design in one college. Our Creating_Making Lab allows for the discovery and mastery of modern fabrication technologies as we make our designs reality. To foster a creative design environment, we encourage interaction among faculty, students, administration, and staff outside the structured classroom context.

DELIBERATE PRACTICE:

How do we develop expertise or mastery? Research indicates that to develop expertise in nearly any field one must engage in what is known as deliberate practice. **The elements of deliberate practice are:**

- **Well-defined, specific goals.** Developing expertise requires you to set clear and specific goals such as drawing one beautiful sketch each day.
- **Focus.** Studies demonstrate that to improve at a skill or task you must give it your complete attention.
- **Feedback.** To improve at something, you need a mentor, coach or instructor to give you feedback on what you are doing well and where you can improve.
- **Getting out of one's comfort zone.** To continually improve and ultimately develop expertise in a field, we must continually take on greater challenges.

DAILY LIFE IN STUDIO:

What is expected of students:

- **Work in Studio.** All students are expected to work in studio where they may benefit from faculty and their peers. Students should have all required texts and materials as well as their laptop in studio every day.
- **Be Prepared for every class.** Come to each class with new work to share with your instructors. Be prepared for desk crits, impromptu pin-ups, and peer reviews every day.
- **Communicate.** Check your email and the course website daily.
- **Attend Class and Actively Participate.** Students and instructors are required to attend studio and work on studio assignments during class.
- **Avoid Distractions.** Studio class time is dedicated to focused work on your architectural studies. As such, any distractions such as social media, watching television/videos, etc., are forbidden during class time. Turn all cell phones to vibrate, silent, or off during class. Please step out of class if you need to make or take an important call.
- **Be respectful.** Please respect your classmates’ and instructors’ needs for a quiet, supportive, and academic environment. Be professional in all communications with your peers and faculty. Visitors are not permitted in the design studio during class hours unless previously discussed and approved by the instructor. Faculty consent is required for audio or video recordings of class lectures or discussions.
- **Maintain a Sketchbook.** Keep a sketchbook for note taking during lectures and to document the design process.
- **Document your work and maintain your portfolio.** Take photographs and/or digitally scan your work throughout the semester to ensure you have documentation of your design process.
- **Submit your work.** Submit your work per assignment requirements.
- **Studio Clean-up.** Students are required to attend and participate in the studio cleanup, which is held during the exam period scheduled by the University. Any student not in attendance will have their semester grade dropped by one letter.
- **Be Honest.** Grant credit to the designers, authors, and creators whose work inspires and educates you. If using photos found online be certain to include a credit or citation. Cite all written sources whether quoted directly or paraphrased. Penalties for serious offenses include a zero on the assignment and egregious offenses can even result in expulsion from the university, so it is important to understand expectations. The most serious offenses can often be avoided by citing sources — when in doubt, cite it!
- **Write about your work.** Writing is an important portion of design. You will be expected to express your design intent and process in written form throughout the semester.
- **Previous Instruction.** Your education is cumulative. You are expected to use and build upon previous instruction, understanding, and ability to date.
- **Plan your time to account for coursework outside of class time.** Plan to allow twice the number of credit hours per week for working on assignments outside class time. For example, a three-credit course typically requires six hours of work outside of class time. Some assignments and/or courses might require more time.

What is expected of instructors:

- To prioritize creating a sense of belonging for every student by being kind and encouraging as they seek to provide feedback and instruction.
- To continually improve by bringing new knowledge from their field into the classroom and continually improving their teaching.
- To remember that research on student motivation indicates is heavily influenced by three factors: a supportive learning environment; an understanding of the value of assignments or activities; and a sense of efficacy, which is a student’s belief in their own ability to complete the work.
- To begin and conclude class on time.
- To reply to correspondence within 48 hours.
- To provide feedback or grades on assignments within two weeks of submission.
- To assign projects and assignments that meet learning objectives of the course while adhering to time expectations relative to the number of credit hours.

EXPERIENCING CONFLICT?

Stay calm and remember to be respectful in the situation, while communicating your feelings clearly. By working together, we can maintain a supportive learning environment. If a disagreement cannot be resolved promptly, seek a neutral third party, such as a member of the faculty or staff, to mediate.

OVERWHELMED OR NEED HELP?

It is recommended that a student first go to their advisor or professor to express their concern. If a student ever feels overwhelmed on a grander scale, it is recommended that they seek help from the counseling center at Goddard Health Center (405.325.2700). The following is a list of relevant hotlines:

Goddard Health Center	405.325.2700
Accessibility and Disability Resource Center	405.325.3852
OUPD Emergency	405.325.1911
OUPD Non-Emergency	405.325.1717
Number Nyne (Crisis Line)	405.325.NYNE
Sexual Misconduct	405.325.2215
Norman Sexual Violence Crisis Line	405.701.5660
Norman Rape Crisis Center	405.701.5550
OU Advocates (SART)	405.615.0013
OU Behavior Intervention Team (BIT)	405.325.7700
SafeRide	405.325.RIDE
SafeWalk	405.325.WALK

*Learn more about the American School at architecture.ou.edu/the-american-school/

The University of Oklahoma is an equal opportunity institution. For accomodations, contact Camille Germany at germany@ou.edu