

## **Studio Culture Policy**

### **Ethos / Overview**

Enrollment in the Master of Architecture Program studio environment privilege is granted to students majoring in our Program. As such, each student is bound to uphold this standard, through personal performance as well as in concert with others. The term “studio” refers to a series of specific, uniquely structured courses as well as a physical place founded on the educational ideals and the belief in an environment that fosters critical thinking, explorative forming and testing of ideas, and professional development. Interwoven into these ideals is that sustainability is a fundamental requirement of all building design and operation, and architects are positioned to propel and ensure the highest quality outcomes of sustainable design, materials and construction, and - by proclamation in this studio policy - studio operation and use. Overall, our Program is grounded in these ideals and underscores the following essential values (referenced from the AIAS Studio Task Force Report, [https://my.academyart.edu/content/dam/assets/pdf/AIAS-Toward-an-Evolution-of-Studio-Culture\\_2008.pdf](https://my.academyart.edu/content/dam/assets/pdf/AIAS-Toward-an-Evolution-of-Studio-Culture_2008.pdf)):

- A Culture of Optimism – Hopeful that architecture will make a difference to society, and confident that success within the profession or related discipline is possible.
- A Culture of Respect – Respect for the individual, the community, ideas, diversity and the physical space.
- A Culture of Sharing – Collaboration, interdisciplinary connections and successful oral and written communication are embraced.
- A Culture of Engagement – Promoting leadership to foster engagement within communities, among clients and users, and around social issues.
- A Culture of Innovation – Encouraging critical thinking, fostering risk taking, and promoting creativity.

### **Criteria / Standards / Principles**

The model studio environs go much further than merely to establish a place of inspiration and collegiality. It upholds a mutual attitude of respect and tolerance among faculty and students; embracing diversity and understanding that cooperation between, and discourse among diverse perspectives within the Program is one of our greatest assets. Our working model asserts a culture of respect and innovation within the Program by allowing ideas, processes, and products to develop freely.

1. Students must conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times and show consideration for fellow studio residents and faculty. The RIT Code of Student Conduct (<https://www.rit.edu/studentaffairs/studentconduct/>) shall be adhered to.
2. Students should remain alert and mentally attentive.
3. Students must respect the work, materials and work areas of fellow students by maintaining clean, orderly and organized commons areas and not interfering with work areas belonging to

others. This includes the respect of shared and common areas. Common areas are to remain the exclusive use for common work and engagement and not for individual use. In addition, use of the commonly shared desktop computers shall be limited in length to be respectful of others for access when necessary.

4. Students must observe the principles of good citizenship by being active and contributing participants; and being respectful of the contributions and perspectives by others.
5. Collaboration, discussion of diverse opinions, critical thinking, creative inquiry and expression around design are encouraged to promote a culture of innovation, exploration, and discovery.
6. In instances of conflict, the highest standards of ethical, professional behavior – as outlined in the RIT Code of Student Conduct – will guide any conflict resolution. All issues will be handled in a constructive manner with respect, discretion, and humility.
7. Students must maintain a healthy lifestyle to contribute to a healthy and productive studio environment. It is the instructor's responsibility to distribute an equitable and balanced workload throughout the semester, while being mindful of a student's overall academic, professional and personal growth and development. It is the student's responsibility to develop, adopt and employ personal time-management skills to meet responsibilities in and beyond the classroom.
8. Students recognize and understand that under no circumstances is smoking allowed within or around the exterior of the studio environs. RIT has a "restricted use" policy governing smoking on campus, limiting smoking to six designated areas only.

## **Operation**

### **Overview**

1. All RIT tools and equipment must remain accessible to students for use in class and the studio.
2. Substantive changes to the physical studio layout, changing space assignments, or moving furniture to other locations is not permissible without the consent of the department head or a studio instructor.
3. In a regular and routine manner, student groups using common work areas must clean up when finished and return tools and equipment to their proper storage locations.
4. Behavior in studio should follow a model of respectful collaboration providing each student and faculty the opportunity of a pleasant and productive work environment. It is each student's right to have workspace setting conducive to a healthy learning environment.
5. Plotting and work preparation should be done well in advance of routine desk crits or presentations.
6. Attendance and participation in all assigned reviews is required. Active dialogue is encouraged among critics, professors, and students with the common goal of discovery and invention. In order to benefit from reviews, students and faculty must be considerate of each other's time by participating in thoughtful discussions specific to the topic.

## **Safety**

1. Students must observe all safety criteria and regulations as outlined and enforced by RIT Facilities Management and Occupational Health and Safety (<https://www.rit.edu/fa/grms/ehs/>).

## **Security**

1. All students registered for design studios will have swipe card access. Open access by others not officially a part of our Program is prohibited.

## **Storage**

1. Care of drawings, models and all other work through proper storage on or in desks, or in assigned areas for long term storage, is required at all times.
2. All academic work shall be thoroughly documented and students shall prepare and submit digital files of all curricular work from the entire year – both from studio and classes – as instructed by respective faculty. In addition, any work identified by faculty as archival or as exhibits for accreditation will be collected by faculty and in consultation with the student, and stored separately for appropriate documentation or preparation.

## **Disposal**

1. Dispose of trash in receptacles rather than on the floor. Practice principles of sustainability on a daily basis. Dispose of and recycle all materials properly, safely and sustainably.
2. Upon completing the studio at the end of each term, students are to leave the studio as clean and as orderly as it originated. Models, drawings, and other material left in studio beyond the due date for their removal at the end of each semester, or summer term, will be discarded.

## **Furniture**

1. *Work Surfaces, Chairs and Drawing Equipment* - Your assigned desk, chair, the walls, partitions and immediate space it occupies – in addition to shared and common elements - is assigned during a school term for your personal use related to academic inquiry and should be treated accordingly. Any theft should be reported to campus security immediately. All students are to have the necessary tools to work at all times. No motorized tools, other than those approved by a studio instructor are allowed in the studio space at any time.

## **Space / Walls**

1. All studio space and wall areas, other than those areas as a part of a studio work station is understood to be common property and use of these areas subject to the determination of the faculty and shall not be used for any other purpose.

## **Faculty, Student and Staff Engagement**

The Studio is the centerpiece of architectural education and the vehicle from which to impart the Program's pedagogy. Studio conduct must therefore be of the highest ethical standard and the instructor must be held as a model of such behavior.

Studios may engage in real projects, but only for the academic benefits of such engagement to both the student and the community and in keeping with all University policies regarding such matters.

Throughout the program where quasi-professional work is often the form of community service and/or assistance, special care should be taken to ensure clarity of purpose for the exercise and identify associated costs and fees, ahead of the service event.

An instructor's engagement in design studio teaching should be selfless pursuit imparting knowledge of architecture and searching collectively for new and time honored ways in which design improves the quality of life, protects the settings where life unfolds and stimulates the universal human desire for beauty.

#### Faculty/Staff Interaction – Student/Staff Interaction –

Faculty and Students understand that staff are often assigned work in conjunction with other faculty, administration and university programs, departments and centers, and shall be respectful of their time and professional duties.

#### Faculty/Student Interaction –

Good judgment in deciding when, where and how to converse, communicate and document information with students regarding sensitive issues should be exercised. All dialogue shall be non - confrontational and professional with wording and communication, and operate within RIT policy and standards.

#### Faculty/Faculty Interaction –

Faculty understand that the university setting is an environment where ideas can be discussed in a courteous and collegial manner, and differences of opinion should be respected.

Faculty Workload Expectations – All faculty are expected to make time outside of class for additional contact time with students through identified office hours.

#### Student/Student Interaction –

As a professional program, it is understood that all students are expected to interact in a professional, respectful and collegial manner, similar to faculty/faculty interaction described above.

### **Enforcement**

Addressing deviations from this policy shall be through professional and collegial dialogue and exchange among participants. Should concerns by students regarding adherence to the items in this document surface, these should first be discussed for resolution between/among the parties involved in a professional and courteous manner. Should concerns remain unresolved, attention should be brought to the course instructor and/or advisor for resolution. Faculty and staff should address concerns with the department head.

At any time, students, faculty, and staff are free to express concerns, either in person and/or in writing, to the department head. Again, as mentioned above, RIT's Code of Student Conduct shall serve as a guide for enforcement and resolution; and as such is incorporated by reference.

**Review**

This document will be reviewed and updated during Spring semesters in even numbered years by a committee representing both faculty and the student body.

**Date Adopted/Updated**

September, 2012 (Adopted)

August, 2014

August, 2016

August, 2018