



Studio Culture Policy

The practices, conditions, and tone of the design studio constitute a “studio culture,” which is actively created by faculty, staff, students, and administrators. The studio culture should uphold a positive, productive, and professional environment that encourages exploration, collaboration, open discussion, and a strong design community. At their core, studios must be healthy, safe, and respectful environments. At their best, they are active incubators of ideas where work is produced and students teach each other.

All parties contribute to a supportive studio culture, which can be achieved through the following:

Faculty shall strive to:

- Teach design as a way of thinking and working that employs graphic, oral, and written skills applied to projects that encourage students to pursue difficult challenges in innovative and collaborative ways,
- Create a professional environment by respecting all students, ensuring equal opportunities while beginning and ending official studio instruction at the designated class times,
- Clearly communicate expectations through syllabi, assignments, and rubrics that are shared in a timely manner and respect the students’ school/life balance,
- Provide timely feedback that centers on the project and never the individual, and
- Respect official university breaks by not assigning work over these designated breaks and refraining from requiring work immediately prior to these times to avoid sleep deprivation before travel.

Students shall strive to:

- Embrace learning as a way of thinking and working that requires practice in graphic, oral, and written skills and engages in innovative and collaborative endeavors that develop leadership, curiosity, and confidence to address difficult challenges,
- Take ownership of their education, expand the realm of inquiry, and seek to move beyond simple solutions, embracing difficult ideas and being empowered to invent new and challenging approaches to their work,
- Act in a professional manner by respecting faculty, staff, and students through professional behavior, including respecting the property of others and not disrupting the studio environment through the actions of one’s self or guests,
- Participate in studio through discussions and critiques that center on the project and never the individual,
- Demonstrate professional standards by crediting sources, whether graphic or written, and communicating in a professional manner with faculty, staff, administrators, and classmates,
- Maintain a safe studio space, free of clutter and shop-related equipment, with clear exit pathways, proper use of electrical outlets, and
- Practice good time management and a good school/life balance to remain physically and mentally well, staying home when ill, and seeking physical and mental health resources as needed.

Recurring problems should be resolved through studio meetings. Changes in assignments and due dates should be discussed and agreed upon by all parties.

This policy is crafted to provide a framework that aids in defining a strong and supportive studio culture. As a working document, it may be revised, with input from students, student organizations, staff, faculty, and administrators, organized through the S|ARC Director’s Council. To suggest additions or revisions to this policy, please speak with your studio representative, a faculty or staff member, or contact the S|ARC Director.