

University of Oklahoma Division of Interior Design - Educational Philosophy

At the University of Oklahoma, our approach to delivering interior design education blends the philosophies of constructivism and connectivism but begins with co-constructivism, where cooperation and collaboration teach students how to effectively communicate with others to solve problems. By using human-centered, evidence-based approaches to solve complex problems with sustainability and resiliency in mind, our goal is to develop students who can seamlessly step into the role of being entry-level interior design practitioners yet realize they must be life-long scholars who are driven to improve interior environments, domestically and internationally.

Students are guided through a sequential 4-year CIDA-accredited undergraduate program or rigorous graduate program, to address the complex physical, psychosocial, cognitive, and emotional needs of people and their relationships with indoor places. Students entering the program begin the shift from being consumers of knowledge to building upon knowledge, logically and experientially. At the end of the second year in the undergraduate program, students participate in the Sophomore Portfolio Review, where all interior design faculty collaborate and engage to broadly understand each student, assess the uniqueness of course content, and discuss the challenges and strengths faced by students, faculty, the College, and industry. A similar review happens at the end of the fourth year, with the Senior Showcase wherein alumni and design professionals assess student portfolios and identify program strengths and areas of improvement. This important feedback provides guidance for our faculty to improve the curriculum each year.

In our division, we remain nimble and sensitive to the changing landscape that students are facing and have the capacity to adjust course content across multiple classes to bridge the gap between theory and application. One approach to remaining flexible yet staying true to our philosophy is to team teach sequential studios, which provides multiple perspectives to help broaden the learning experience. Other ways that support student success are introducing interior design faculty and their research in each classes, participate in studio presentations, and communicating with each other and sharing the state of affairs academically and scholarly, not because we are required to do so, but because we enjoy our co-workers and are genuinely curious about .

Collaboration outside of the division is equally as important and each student can engage with professors and students from other disciplines within the college, as well as alumni, professional organizations, and a variety of design professionals from around the United States. While each student progressively gains the awareness and knowledge to critique their own work, by inviting a variety of people and disciplines into the studios, the students are introduced to ideas and role models outside of the division. This diverse

courses, students are acquainted with emerging technologies, such as software, hardware, lighting, and building technology, and other tools at our innovative laboratories including the Creating_Making Lab, Materials Resource Library and Lighting Lab.

The use of assistive technology is just one aspect of communication that is utilized to arrive at a design solution. By understanding the human