

Studio Professor  
**Henri T. de HAHN**

Studio: Cowgill Hall 4th Floor -parking side  
 MWF 1:00 – 4:50pm  
 Seminars: TBD  
 Office hours: MWF 11:00 – 12:00 or by  
 appointment  
 Contact: Office: 540-231-2680  
 Email: hdehahn@vt.edu



Collage Photography: Henri T. de Hahn

### TEACHING PEDAGOGY

*“...The introduction to design is empirically developed and its content and organization continuously reconsidered and redefined over the years. Basic principles must be defined which are both general and specific, solid and yet open enough to be able to build upon –everyone, student and teacher, should, in the course of further studies, be able to expand, add to, redefine and differentiate between them. The teaching covers the general, not the particular; it considers the rule not the exception. It is not tailored for the outstandingly talented –they can find their own way and will go on beyond the fundamentals; it is for the many who will work as architects alone, steadfastly, solidly and reliably and who should be able to develop themselves further.”*

BERNARD HOESLI

Swiss architect, ETH educator and co-founder of the Texas Rangers

My role in the studio environment will be to act on an individual and collective basis: individually around the desk with the student and collectively during lectures, seminars, or impromptu class discussions. In either setting, I expect substantial progress to have been done and class participation to be dynamic. I will encourage from each of you work that is both daring and consistent by showing honesty and perseverance in the development of your arguments. I will ask students to go beyond the chance event, the sudden flash of inspiration and develop and judge their project on the value of their ideas, not on its pleasing aspect or its shallow pretense.

During studio hours I will review your progress through discussion and sketching directly on your drawings or in your sketchbook. Please have your sketchbook ready at every session. In order to have a productive discussion with each student at least twice a week I would like you to observe the following: During our discussions you must be able to synthesize your progress in a clear and articulate manner through either diagrams or conceptual sketches complemented by a brief verbal presentation. It is essential that you remind me what actions you have taken since we last met, especially those that have led to make substantial changes on your project. In short, I encourage you to begin each discussion with a very brief synopsis of your work since our last meeting. This is also good practice for future formal jury presentations. General evaluation of your

work is done on a weekly basis and during public review sessions with the participation of faculty and guest jurors. Presentation requirements will be posted prior to those reviews.

## **STUDIO POLICIES**

### **Studio and Seminar Attendance**

It is not optional; it is required to be *physically* present during the studio and seminar hours from 1pm. to 4:50pm Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and work specifically on your project. Interaction between your professor and colleagues remains the best reward learning and teaching has to offer. Studio hours are a time to receive direct guidance and feedback on your weekly progress from both your colleagues and instructor. Outside of studio hours, a physical presence in the studio makes it a place where friendships and respect is created. It is a place where students can work together, get encouragement for ideas and share intellectual curiosity. An excellent departure for studio is to exhibit a correct attitude in front of your studio responsibilities, therefore use your studio as a place to learn. It is vital that your participation during studio sessions and discussions is offered on a continuous basis. Your comments are essential to my teaching and nurture interactive, inquiry-based discussions of new and past knowledge. Your class participation will be reflected in your overall mid-term and final grade. Outside of those hours, please continue using the studio as a laboratory.

### **Excused absences**

Acceptable reasons for excuse absences are listed in Hokie Handbook under Student Rights and Responsibilities. If it is impossible for a student to attend studio hours, he or she is required to report to their professor prior to the next class. Your faculty understands that there are events that require you to not be present in studio but it is imperative that I am knowledgeable about your absence. Please visit: <http://www.dsa.vt.edu/students/studentrightsresponsibilities.php>.

### **Undergraduate honor system**

Each student is to respect academic integrity and I invite you to review the Undergraduate Honor System website which includes a list of student rights under the honor Code. Please visit: <http://www.honorsystem.vt.edu>

### **Presentations**

The projects are due on scheduled review dates, and attendance and presentation is required. All work shall be completed. Drawings and models should be of the best quality, legible through any chosen medium if not specified. Your intentions should stand out and pride in craftsmanship should be inherent in your daily way of working. Aside from the required material that may vary from review to review, you are encouraged to bring any other material (texts, sketches, photos, collages, etc....) in order to support your presented argument.

### **Evaluation policy**

The student performance is graded and is achieved through excellence. The grading scale and other grade regulations will be based on the academic requirements set forth in the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University Policy and Procedures –Subject: Undergraduate Grading Policy. Please familiarize yourself with the University policy and particularly the “special marking system” set in place at the College of Architecture. The plus/minus grading system remains in use for the design studio sequence, which ranges from A to F with special grades such I and W. Mid term grades will be given and your progress discussed individually during October. Please visit: <http://www.policies.vt.edu/6800.pdf> and <http://www.undergradcatalog.registrar.vt.edu/0809/acapolicies/grades.html>

Grades will be based on the following points, which are not listed in any order of significance:

1. Quality of your overall design –both as a process and a final solution.

2. A continuous level of personal and collective effort, discussion, involvement and motivation, both at the level of the intellectual, the imaginative and craftsmanship during each semester. This will be an important component of the overall grade. Substantial effort on your project needs to be made from one discussion to the other. It is impossible to achieve excellence without consistent progress.
3. The effort to take calculated risks and experiments in the realm of architectural and design thinking.
4. A comparative judgment of the quality of each work during desk discussions and oral public presentation will be coupled with the subjective evaluation of the jurors.
5. Studio attendance and participation will be recorded during studio contact hours. Three un-excused absences will result in the automatic reduction of one (1) letter grade (i.e. A- to B-).

### **Grading Policy**

The general grading system uses a series of letters, to which are assigned grade-point values. The system includes + and – and is based neither on an absolute numerical system nor on a distribution curve, but on the following descriptions:

#### **A = Excellent**

The presence of this student in the class elevates the standard of all. The student has completed all studio and related course work and has demonstrated excellent craftsmanship and intellectual ability. Class participation and interaction during desk discussions and public presentations are consistent and excellent. Studio work is of unusually superior quality.

A = 4.00 (Excellent)      A- = 3.70

#### **B = Above average**

The student has completed all course work and has demonstrated a good understanding of and intellectual ability to use the course information. Good all-round performance with high quality of work, but not quite excellent. B+ is very good, B is good solid work, and B- is still above average.

B+ = 3.30                      B = 3.00 (Good)                      B- = 2.70

#### **C = Average**

Student has completed all studio and course related work and has demonstrated an adequate understanding of an intellectual ability to use course information. Adequate performance with average quality of work. C is a fair performance, and C- indicates the student has not thoroughly grasped all of the necessary principles.

C+ = 2.30                      C = 2.00 (Fair)                      C- = 1.70

#### **D = Below average**

Student has NOT completed all course work and/or demonstrates some difficulty understanding and utilizing course information. Student has not demonstrated adequate craftsmanship and intellectual ability. Studio work and class participation during desk discussions and public presentations are below average or inappropriate. (Any or all of the below may apply).

D+ = 1.30                      D = 1.00                      D- = .70 (Barely Passing)

#### **F = Failure**

Student has extreme difficulty in completing studio and course related work and/or demonstrates inability to understand and utilize course information. Student has demonstrated very poor craftsmanship and intellectual ability. Class participation during desk discussions and public presentations are poor or inappropriate. Quality of work is inferior and incomplete. (Any of the above may apply)

F: 0.00 (Failure)

**I = Incomplete**

A grade of "I" (incomplete) may be given when the requirements of a course other than the final examination have not been completed due to illness or extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control. The "I" grade is the prerogative of the instructor.