

IxD and Technologies Design Studio Culture

Studio culture is everything people in a design studio do that supports the process of making work happen. Culture can create joy, while process can facilitate profit.

– David Sherwin

Optimism & Encouragement

We imagine a culture where students are optimistic about the skills they are learning, hopeful that their work can make a difference to society, and confident that they will succeed.

What teachers do:

- Always give some positive feedback.
- If you give negative feedback, make sure it's constructive.
- Encourage ideas.
- Provide real-life cases of “work that has made a difference”.

Respect

We envision a climate where constructive critique, the value of time, respect for ideas, diversity, and the physical space of studio are all essential in order to enhance the education.

What teachers do:

- Always give constructive feedback, especially if negative.
- Teach/show students how to give constructive critique to each other.
- Encourage ideas although they were not along the lines of what we thought students would do (as long as they keep within the boundaries of the task!).
- Respect students' time: Do not ask for hand-ins that you won't grade or feedback.
- Respect students' time: Do not give assignments not related to earning objectives of some sort.
- Make it clear that students may cooperate and help each other, but that they must always give credit where credit is due.

What students do:

- Listen to each other's ideas and suggestions. Not everything will or should be part of your final design, but every idea deserves at least a quick evaluation.
 - Respect each other's skills and needs.
 - Always give constructive feedback, especially if negative.
 - Respect teachers' time: read instructions for projects and tasks before you ask away.
 - Respect teachers' and other students' time: Don't be late for class, and don't miss deadlines.
 - Give credit where credit is due.
 - Respect the studio as a space and others' working environment. Clean up after yourself. Keep an eye out for others' belongings.
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Sharing

We should be promoting a culture of sharing; studio learning will promote collaboration, interdisciplinary connections, and successful oral and written communication.

What teachers do:

- Support knowledge sessions.
- Point out that sharing is good: no one loses. Everyone can still get the highest grade.
- Create mixed groups.

What students do:

- Teach each other, learn from each other.
- At the start of each project, acknowledge which skills everyone brings to it, but also discuss if there are some skills some of you want to improve, either by experimenting or learning from each other. This might take more studying hours into account, but will also be rewarding in terms of knowledge.

Engagement

We should promote a culture of engagement in both senses: students and teachers should be engaged in the programme, but we should also engage and be engaged by the outside world, e.g. through partnerships with practitioners and experts in related disciplines.

What teachers do:

- Run projects in collaboration with industry
- Invite guest lecturers from other organizations
- Support students' participation in jams, hackathons, contests etc. by giving feedback or helping out in other ways, e.g. by integrating it in teaching.
- Teach ways to "go out in the world" and learn about user needs, e.g. ethnography, and also make students practice this approach.
- Listen to students' feedback on how to improve themselves, the courses and the programme.

What students do:

- Seize the opportunity to learn from industry collaboration and external lecturers.
- Look for inspiring jams, hackathons and contests and GO FOR IT!
- Give teachers constructive feedback on how to improve themselves, the courses and the programme.

Innovation

We must support a culture of innovation, which includes critical thinking and the courage to take risks when needed.

What teachers do:

- Encourage ideas although they were not along the lines of what we thought students would do (as long as they keep within the boundaries of the task!).
- Allow for risk-taking by not grading everything
- Reward successfully taken risks, i.e. very far out but brilliant solutions.

- Do not punish risk-taking gone wrong, if students are clearly aware of what went wrong, how, and alternative ways to fix it.
- Provide examples.
- Provide good literature that gives alternative, critical views on topic.

What students do:

- Allow for getting far-out crazy ideas in the idea generation part.
- Take the risk to explore far out, yet promising ideas.
- Have faith in yourselves and your own vision.
- Always question what you read and hear: can this be seen from some other angle, user perspective, environmental perspective etc? Can this be misused? Do I like this or not? Why?

Diversity

We value that people have different backgrounds, come from different places and have different views on the world.

What teachers do:

- We are all different and we all think that different things are important. By bringing our own perspective to our teaching, sometimes openly disagreeing with each other, we show that there are no absolute truths.
- Try to be open-minded when confronted with new ideas and perspectives
- We create mixed groups.

What students do:

- Try to be open-minded when confronted with new ideas and perspectives.