

# SUMMARY ACADEMIC STATEMENT

## Overview

**Aim:** Throughout my academic career, I have maintained a close link between my teaching, research, and scholarship. My aim has been to render the research comprehensible and beneficial to the students, and keep the content of my courses abreast of new developments in architecture and other fields of study that are of particular interest to me, i.e., Cultural Anthropology, Literary Criticism, Philosophy, and History.

**Scholastic Foundation:** At the root of my academic endeavors to date, including my scholastic focus and teaching pedagogy, is an enduring interest in the why of the way things are. For me, the what of architectural form and composition have been inseparable from the impetus behind a building's production, and the modalities of its use. The latter led me early on to Cultural Anthropology and related disciplines in search of a better understanding of culture to which architecture is inextricably linked.

**Objectives:** As a spatial, formal, and material language, architecture is an indispensable medium that allows a culture to transform its assumptions, beliefs, views, and ideas about the world into a factual, lived experience. Deciphering, understanding, and in turn communicating the modalities of this transformation and the complexities of the interdependent and inexorable dialogue between architecture and culture has been the focus of my academic career as a teacher and a scholar.

## Teaching

**Curriculum Development:** I have had an ongoing engagement with curriculum development from the onset of my academic career. I have been principally involved in major curriculum revisions at the five universities at which I have taught over the years, including a new M.Arch. curriculum at UCD in 2011 and the undergraduate curriculum proposal in 2010.

**Pedagogy:** I have persistently tried to study the broader cultural developments that are likely to require different skill sets from future architects, in order to shape and continually adjust my pedagogy to better prepare students for future professional and academic careers in architecture.

**Challenge:** The current speed and changing modalities of global communication and cross-cultural exchange, fueled by the information revolution and a global economy, require a shift from the traditional emphasis on the acquisition of bodies of knowledge in academia to a greater emphasis on the development of analytical, critical, and creative abilities that are essential to engaging and effectively addressing diverse bodies of knowledge.

**Response:** My overall pedagogic objective has been to instill a spirit of exploration, experimentation, critical engagement, creative thought, and innovation in a new generation of architects who, practicing within a global economy and faced with multiplicity and diversity of cultures and environments would be well prepared to not only respect, but creatively respond and effectively sustain cultural and environmental integrity and diversity, locally and globally.

**Pedagogy and Technology:** I have a long-standing interest in the digital media and its impact on architectural education and pedagogy. I have made every effort to exploit the immense potential of the media to affect better communication with students in lecture and seminar classes, as well as online. I have also addressed the curricular dimension of the digital media's impact on architecture in a number of referred publications.

**History/Theory Courses:** I have developed and taught a wide range of history and theory courses, trying all the while not to assume the traditional divide between these two modes of inquiry in architecture. My courses have ranged from very large

freshmen and sophomore undergraduate lecture classes on the history of architecture, to doctoral seminars on the history of theoretical discourse on architecture. I have also taught both medium and small size undergraduate and graduate lecture and seminar courses covering various periods in the history and theory of architecture from the Renaissance to the present.

**Studio Courses:** My studio pedagogy is based on extensive research and critical analysis of the language of architecture, the role architecture plays within its broader cultural context, and a keen awareness of the interdependence of theory and practice. My intention has been to open both the theory and the practice of architecture to critical scrutiny and reevaluation, and thereby pave the way for new directions and different courses of action. Over the years, I have taught studio courses at virtually every level of the curriculum, from the second, third, fourth, and fifth-Year undergraduate to second and third year graduate studios, at six different institutions. I have also developed and taught M.Arch. thesis research and thesis design classes as well as B.Arch. thesis studios. In addition, I have supervised numerous theses, as primary advisor.

## Research

**Thrust:** To probe and better understand the complexities of the dialogue between architecture and culture my research and scholarship have been interdisciplinary in nature, integrating new approaches and analytical methods from other fields of study, including Cultural Anthropology, Literary Criticism, Philosophy, and History.

- I. **Research on the history of architectural theory and criticism:** In various publications to date, I have charted and discussed theory and criticisms' covert roles as requisite vehicles of cultural appropriation and regulation of architecture since the Renaissance.
  - I. I have tried to demonstrate how the discursive and critical strategies and modes of self-validation in theoretical discourse on architecture are deeply rooted in western metaphysics and a broader humanist attempt to give that metaphysics the aura of physics and to culture the guise of nature.
  - II. My intent has been to make room for different critical trajectories and other formative possibilities than those the discourse on architecture has traditionally allowed.
  - III. I have tried to articulate a mode of architectural criticism that does not seek to supplant one ideology with another, but acts as a force of resistance to the hegemony of any one particular worldview or ideational perspective.
- II. **Research on the history and genealogy of secular building types:** I have pursued a parallel interest in the history of secular building types and the institutions they serve.
  - a. I have focused on the genealogy of building types that shelter various forms of representation, e.g., museums, libraries, cinemas, and theaters, and outlined the historic link between their formal and experiential properties and western ideational stance on representation.
  - b. I have explored the contribution of each institutional building-type to fabrication and perpetuation of a logocentric worldview, including the presumption of a hierarchical relationship between such familiar dichotomies as authenticity and imitation, real and virtual, original and copy, memory and mimesis, etc.
- III. **Research on architecture pedagogy:** Concurrent with the research areas outlined above, I have done extensive research on Architecture pedagogy. Topics have included:
  - a. The pedagogical challenges of globalization to architectural education.
  - b. The place and role of architectural history and historiography in design education.
  - c. The pedagogical challenges of the digital media to architectural education.

d. The place and role of design thesis in architectural education.

IV. **Dissemination of Research:** Given the interdisciplinary nature of my research, I have tried to cross the disciplinary divides to seek publication venues and attend conferences in the arts and the humanities, as well as architecture. To date, I have over 55 blind-referred publications in highly selective venues that cross multiple disciplines. These include a forthcoming book, a book-chapter, 16 journal articles, 29 proceedings, including 18 ACSA national and international conferences, and numerous other presentations.

## Service

I have constantly searched for opportunities in service that are likely to make a lasting and positive contribution to the academic life of the faculty and the students. To date, I have served the academic community in a multitude of position, at every level in the university, and at six different academic institutions.

- I. **Administrative Leadership:** I served as Department Chair for two years and as Director of Undergraduate Program in Architecture for four years. These were very valuable experiences that gave me the opportunity to implement important changes and make many positive contributions to the academic life of the department, the faculty, and the students, ranging from curriculum changes, to facilities improvements, to technology initiatives, and so on.
- II. **Administrative Service:** I have played an active and, in most instances, a leading role as Chair in numerous committees at the departmental, college, and university levels. These have ranged from serving on the Faculty Advisory Council to the university president, the University Faculty Senate, College Assemblies, numerous faculty searches, promotion and tenure, accreditation, and curriculum committees. My recent contributions as committee chair include developing multiple modes of teaching evaluations for architecture faculty, and writing the department bylaws.
- III. **Curriculum Revisions:** In 2011, I undertook a comprehensive revision of the M.Arch. curriculum, incorporating recent changes to National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB) requirements. This revision shared the same curriculum vision and structure I developed for a new undergraduate degree program in architecture at UCD in 2010. These proposals build on a long-standing engagement with curriculum design and development that goes back to early years of my academic career. In addition to curriculum work at UCD, I feel fortunate for having had the opportunity to develop and implement major curriculum revisions at four other academic institutions.
- IV. **Curriculum Resource Development:** As an extension of my ongoing interest in curriculum development, I have invested an immense amount of time and energy collecting visual data for the use of the faculty and the students at the various universities I have served. The *Arch.ive* project, that first begun in slide format, was transformed into digital, and lately QTVR format, is a comprehensive digital visual database covering key monuments in the history of architecture.
- V. **Academic and Community Service**
  - a. **Professional Organizations:** I have served as Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture Faculty Representative and as the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture Representative on National Architectural Accrediting Board Visiting Teams.
  - b. **Reviews:** I have reviewed numerous articles for peer-reviewed publications and conferences, chaired sessions at various conferences, attended design reviews and given lectures at various academic institutions nationwide. I edited, designed, compiled, and published the Proceedings of the 18<sup>th</sup> National Conference on the Beginning Design Student: *The Predicament of Beginning*.

- c. **Exhibits:** I have organized, designed, and built a number of installations and exhibits of students' work in Portland, Seattle, New York, and Philadelphia.
- d. **Lecture series:** Lastly, I have organized a number of lecture series, covering a host of contemporary topics addressed by academics and accomplished designers invited from across the nation and Europe.