Online Design Studio Teaching
Experience and lessons learned from the EPMA urban design studio

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**SHARING CITY**

Smart, future, shared lifestyle in the modern city: Guomao

Data, Smart and Future for DESIGN

Studio for international architecture graduate students (Year 1)

Twice a week, 8 weeks in total, 3 hours each, 2 credits (FINISHED already)

17 Students in 16 countries across the world (six continents, Columbia & Mexico)

Last year one from Ecuador

Studio instructors: Prof ZHANG Yue, Dr HUANG He, Dr LONG Ying, Mr Martijn de Geus (TA)
Site: The Beijing CBD (Guomao) with an area of 4 km²
Preparation of Materials

Clockwise

Satellite Images
SketchUp Model
Street View Images
Urban Big Data

Multi-forms (images, online mapping, raw data)
Conducting Online Studio Sessions

Yes, we use Zoom

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• A pad/tablet is important (e.g. Wacom or Microsoft Surface)

Annotation functions allowing various participants to simultaneously draw and comment on the shared screen
To avoid misunderstanding, the design tutors sent a summary of combined comments and sketches in our WeChat group, immediately after our online session.

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Facilitating students outside studio sessions

We had aimed to tackle this by having our students work in small groups of 4-5 students, in relatively similar time zones so that interaction would be easy and consistent.

We guided students to find their own methods of online teamwork, through Google Docs for PowerPoint presentation work, and Dropbox file sharing.

We also encouraged students to schedule video based discussions outside of studio-hours.
Feedbacks from students

Kathrine Huang, based in New Zealand mentioned how through “the lack of interaction and physical presence, we may tend to lose our drive and be less productive, as it creates a sense of isolation”.

Tsunxian Lee, based in Malaysia, agreed that, “without the physical meeting and normally intensive studio discussion, we tend to lose drive, become lazy, and eventually underperform, no matter how good we are”. 
Thomas Mellergaard: “… we have turned the situation around, into a good learning experience. We are almost able to work a 24/7 work cycle, due to being in 3 different time zones, when we need to make a deadline.” He adds that, “all together, I believe this situation is teaching us things beyond architecture. We’re learning to be more independent, to plan and organize, communicate with each other and understand the situation we each face …
Tips for Design Studio Teaching in the Age of COVID-19

Written by Martin de Gaus about 12 hours ago

Since the recent COVID-19 quarantine restrictions were enforced, social media has been filled with images of employees working from home, students transitioning to home-school learning, and friends and family socializing via Skype calls and Zoom meetings. With the outward signs of how to work from home, and how to keep a regular routine during these uncertain times, many people are questioning how to create a long-term plan for online studio design instruction.

This article aims to provide some practical tips to schools and students around the globe based on our experience with online design studio teaching in the Master program of Tsinghua University’s School of Architecture since February.

Our studio is a 2-2 week long design studio that is broken up in two parts, an 8-week urban design component, and a 4-week green building design task based on the output of the first 8 weeks. Consisting of a group of 17 students based in 14 countries on 6 continents, and a tutor based in Beijing, our studio set out to investigate the spatial impact of technology and a changing lifestyles in the modern city of the heart of Beijing.

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Thanks for your attention

Part of content is from the ArchDaily report.

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