

# ACSA Distinguished Professor

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2014-2015 Winner: Submission Materials

MICHAEL FIFIELD  
University of Oregon

## Supporting Material

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ACSA Distinguished Professor Nominee:

**Michael Fifield, FAIA, AICP**  
Professor and Interim Department Head  
Department of Architecture  
University of Oregon, Eugene and Portland

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***Candidate's Statement***

As an educator, I advance design excellence through teaching, administration, mentorship, applied research, writing, lecturing, architecture and urban design practice, and service and leadership to the university, community and the profession.

***Summary of achievements / notable contributions***

I have aspired to provide leadership for the university, profession, and the community. In all of these endeavors, education has been a primary focus – not only in terms of providing information and knowledge, but more importantly, in stimulating intellectual growth and development regarding important aspects of the value of meaningful design in the built environment. As recognized by multiple university teaching awards, I have been a major proponent for significant design through 30 years of formal teaching at various architectural institutions, and through leadership in university administration. I have been tenured at three architectural schools, appointed as a full professor at two, held significant administrative positions at all three, and as a result of teaching in three geographical regions (i.e., Northwest, Southwest, and Northeast) hopefully have had a national impact, not only on students and faculty, but on the profession and on communities.

At Arizona State University, I served as Director of Graduate Architectural Programs and furthered innovation as Director of the Joint Urban Design Program; at Penn State University while serving as Department Head, I tried to provide inspiration for all students and faculty; and at the University of Oregon, where I continue to teach, I also served as Department Head for six years. I am now serving in the same position on an interim basis. In my career I have focused on the formation of students as critical thinkers and future leaders of the profession. In academic positions, I extended my educational role beyond the university classroom to provide design assistance in various forms to a wide range of governmental organizations and communities such as two national AIA Search for Shelter Projects, two R/UDAT's (one as a member, one as director), and as director for numerous other notable community design projects and charrettes, including the National Endowment for the Arts sponsored "*Metropolitan Canals: A Regional Design Framework*." This project's success has been documented with numerous local, state, and national awards, including a Progressive Architecture Research Award Citation in 1995.

My teaching, research, and service, has focused on urban/community design and housing. I bring my award-winning housing practice, applied research, and work with communities into the classroom to help educate students with real-world experiences. As Co-Director of the Housing Concentration in the University of Oregon Department of Architecture, I developed a focus that not only addresses meaningful housing design, but also smart growth and compact design, all of which have contributed to the U of O B.Arch. Degree Program being rated as one of the top schools nationally in sustainable design education. My focus in housing education has resulted in numerous invitations to speak nationally and internationally, and to direct a national housing competition that served as a tremendous educational tool for designers and communities alike. I have served as a national GSA Peer Reviewer and as a key member of numerous accreditation teams for programs abroad (Cyprus). I was recruited by Architects Without Borders to conduct housing need assessments in Sri Lanka after the tsunami. As a recent President of AIA-Southwestern Oregon, I have continued to promote the value of good design. All of these service endeavors contribute to educating students, the academy, the profession and the public.

In 2011, I was elevated to the College of Fellows in the American Institute of Architects in the category of Education. Of the ten educators honored as new AIA Fellows that year, my nomination package was the only one cited as a "Best Example" in the Education category.

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### **Educational Philosophy:**

I became a better architect and urban designer when I started teaching. Critiquing student work requires identifying first, what the criteria for evaluation actually are. I tell my students that, for me, the main criteria are how well designers understand the uniqueness or essence of a project, how they develop a meaningful set of intentions, and then how they translate those intentions into appropriate, meaningful designs. The practice of architecture therefore should not be arbitrary, self-referential or subjective. I use the same criteria when reviewing professional work as a member of various design review committees (e.g., as a GSA Peer Reviewer, a campus planning committee facilitator, or for AIA design awards). Thus, by demanding a strong statement of intentions from others, I find my own work, as a practicing professional, as an applied researcher, or in my writing, is much stronger.

Every course I teach emphasizes the need to develop strong intentions after thoroughly analyzing the program, site, client's needs, codes, precedents, building type, costs, etc. I stress to students the need to understand the difference between data collection and actual analysis. I ask my students to extract the most important aspects of the data, digest it, and determine how it will inform one's design. This approach is used not only in design studios, but also in almost all of the subject area courses I have taught, from Environmental Analysis, to all of my housing courses such as Housing Environments, Housing Prototypes, Community Design, and Minimal Dwelling. How have others been successful in developing meaningful projects? My professional background and education in architecture and urban design, with a considerable amount of work in housing, as well as prior experience in residential construction and as a residential building inspector, have all contributed to real-world experiences that have been brought into the studio. My background as a city planner working on residential site plan reviews has also contributed to my understanding of housing and community design as a holistic endeavor that includes not only building design, but understanding site design, social issues and addressing community values. And by working with communities (either as a consultant, as Director of the Joint Urban Design Program at ASU, or with students on community design studio projects), I have given students a view of architecture that is, hopefully, extremely valuable.

I emphasize design process and encourage my students to not only design great buildings, but also to be able to verbally and in writing, communicate their design intentions.

### **Educating Students:**

As a teacher, and as a Department Head at both Penn State University and the University of Oregon, I have placed less emphasis on architecture as a vocation, and more on producing critical thinkers who will aspire to leadership positions in the profession. This is not to say that the nuts and bolts of architecture are not important, in fact the University of Oregon has one of the highest pass rates on the ARE exam of any school of architecture in the country. But what is important is producing leaders in the profession and the community. My work on housing for low-income communities, Indian Reservations in New Mexico, and in foreign countries such as Sri Lanka, have all provided, by example, how a professional architect can have a positive influence our communities and the built environment beyond the more traditional role of architecture we have seen in the past. I believe I was doing exactly what the Boyer Report, *Building Community*, espoused for a decade before the report was published in 1996. Former students have gone on to become Rose Architecture Fellows working with local non-profit housing agencies, have received AIA sponsored traveling fellowships to foreign countries to conduct research, or have joined the Peace Corps to work on community development projects. In addition, as a Faculty Minority Mentor in architecture at Arizona State University, I was instrumental in mentoring minority students by assisting them in their efforts to achieve admission to graduate school. One such student initially had very little support from other faculty members but I helped my colleagues understand his potential. He was admitted, completed his degree, and has been an activist on behalf of his East Los Angeles community.

I have pursued this work by teaching students in individual classes, but also through administrative leadership by providing programs that bring together a variety of complementary opportunities for learning. At Penn State, I initiated the Thursday Night Madness Program that exposed all students in the department to guest lecturers, symposiums, discussions on design, and studio reviews, so that all students could learn outside of the classroom. I also initiated a highly successful Summer Internship Program, placing students in offices throughout the Northeast.

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At the University of Oregon, as Department Head and AIAS Faculty Advisor, I developed a Visiting Firm Day program that resulted in many state and west coast firms attending, each contributing much needed funding where part of the funding went directly to the AIAS chapter. Not only did this experience enrich the students, but also the two Co-Presidents, were awarded the national AIA Student Chapter President of the Year Award in 2003 for programs they developed.

Also at the University of Oregon, I concentrated on developing a housing and community design concentration in the department where students interested in this area could always find a variety of courses to take. This has been very successful and many of these courses (e.g., Community Design, with 70 students in it, taught by me and which also counts as a required applied elective in sustainability for students in the Environmental Studies Program) have contributed, in addition to the many UO technology courses in sustainability, to the UO Department of Architecture being ranked as one of the top three architecture schools in the nation in sustainable design.

### **Supporting Faculty:**

As Department Head at both Penn State and Oregon, I provided leadership by example. I encouraged faculty members to do their best and provided junior faculty members with teaching guidance, opportunities to develop new courses, and adequate release time to conduct research. This helped them become outstanding teachers and productive researchers. Leadership by example has also resulted in a number of former faculty members becoming leaders in architectural education administration, such as Michael Jemtrud, who became Director at McGill University, and Caleb Crawford, who became Director at Mississippi State University. At both institutions I helped raise faculty salaries, particularly for women junior faculty members who were disproportionately underpaid. My recent reappointment as Department Head, on an interim basis, demonstrates the value the faculty and administration place on my leadership.

### **Promoting Public Understanding of the Value of Good Design:**

Throughout my career, I have worked to raise the public's awareness about the value of design excellence in our built environment. My work as both Director of the Joint Urban Design Program at Arizona State University, and at the same time as Chair of the AIA-Rio Salado Chapter Urban Design Committee, resulted in numerous projects, many award winning, that helped to not only change the physical form of the Phoenix Metropolitan area, but helped to develop a culture about good community design. Through many design charrettes for communities, my leadership in Urban Design Assistance Team projects, AIA Search for Shelter Projects, and numerous funded community design projects, including funding by HUD, the DOE and the NEA, all resulted in increasing the public awareness of the value of good design.

My participation in campus planning, both at Penn State and the University of Oregon, has been considerable and influenced students, faculty, and administrations. At Penn State I helped change the culture of architect selection and increased the number of campus buildings designed by nationally acclaimed firms. As the University Faculty Representative to the Campus Master Planning process, I was active in working closely with the campus planning consultants to insure the best possible campus master plan. At the University of Oregon, I have continued in a similar role as Chair of the Campus Planning Committee and chair at one time or another, of all the campus planning committee sub-committees. At a campus where organic growth is seen as a model, my involvement in campus planning has helped raise the university community's awareness of the many attributes of the original master plan of axes and quads and why the design integrity of these campus elements should be retained. I have argued that Christopher Alexander's *Oregon Experiment* was being interpreted inappropriately thereby slowly eroding away the design legibility of the campus, and advocated to retain the intentions of the original plan. I was subsequently hired by the President of the University of Oregon as a consultant to conduct a study on "Best Practices in Campus Design" and provide recommendations for possible changes in the campus planning practices and procedures..

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### **Advancing the Profession:**

Serving in a variety of AIA positions over the years (e.g., AIA Board Member at four different local chapters, chairing a local AIA Urban Design Committee, AIA-Southwest Oregon Chapter President, Board Member of the Center for Architecture in Portland, Board Member and President of the AIA non-profit Architects Building Community), I have had an opportunity to continue the discussion about the value of good design. As AIA Chapter President, I focused on issues of design excellence, bringing in nationally known architects and designers to discuss their work. Doing this with no or little budget has been challenging at times, but many of the monthly chapter featured speakers were professional colleagues of mine who accepted our invitations at minimal costs to the chapter. For example, the featured speaker in one chapter meeting was Jonathan Segal, FAIA, from San Diego. I taught Jonathan during my first year on the faculty at the University of Idaho. He assisted me with a presentation drawing for a national housing design competition in 1984 for which I received some recognition. All the monthly speakers and programs emphasized the value of design. As a result, the monthly attendance at chapter meetings was the highest it has ever been and the chapter membership actually increased during a time while many chapters' membership numbers declined.

This discussion of the value of design continued at the 2010 AIA Northwest and Pacific Region Conference (including Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, Hawaii, Alaska, Japan, Hong Kong, and Guam). Speakers included Clark Manus, FAIA, Donlyn Lyndon, FAIA, Ed Feiner, FAIA, David Lake, FAIA, David Miller, FAIA, Don Stastny, FAIA, Julie Eizenberg, AIA, Shelley Poticha, Director of Sustainable Communities at HUD, Thom Mayne, FAIA, and many others. I was one of three invited discussants, along with Thom Mayne and Judge Michael Hogan, at the Thursday night dinner program at the US Federal Courthouse in Eugene (I was the GSA Peer Reviewer for the project as well as the chair of the design jury that included Bill Pederson, FAIA, and Robert Ivy, FAIA). This opportunity to discuss the value of design examined the influence of GSA's Design Excellence Program.

Also at the Regional Conference, I moderated a panel of architecture school administrators on "The Future of Architectural Education" where AIA members and educators in the audience engaged in discussions regarding the role of the academy in the profession and the role of the profession in providing education in a rapidly changing world and profession.

In collaboration with a junior colleague, Professor Mark Gillem, we received a commission through my professional office (Fifield Architecture + Urban Design) to run a national design competition, "The Portland Courtyard Housing Design Competition." The competition was structured to emphasize the need to develop design principles and diagrams as the basis for design solutions. We extracted the best design principles and reworked them to form the basis of the catalog of winning entries in an attempt to provide greater value to future designers, potential clients, and planning departments – not just a brochure of the winning designs. Thus, the final competition brochure is a tool for developing courtyard housing. This may be the first time this type of approach was used in a national design competition. In this type of work, I advance the profession and serve communities by promoting discussion of good design.

### **My Academic, Professional and Public Contributions:**

As a professor of architecture my contributions include teaching students, supporting faculty colleagues, promoting community dialog and the advancing the profession. It is particularly rewarding to see the influence of my work lead to the career achievements of others, and extend beyond those directly affected, as former students, colleagues and collaborators go on to educate, practice and advocate. I have attempted to do this for over 30 years, and hopefully, this influence has been noteworthy.

ACSA Distinguished Professor Nominee: **Michael Fifield, FAIA, AICP**

School	Arizona State University
Project Title	“Phoenix Downtown Housing Studio” Graduate Urban Design Studio
Completion Date	June 1985
Role of Nominee	Studio Professor / Project Director of \$10,000 Grant
Publications	written up in various newspaper articles and discussed on the local radio and TV

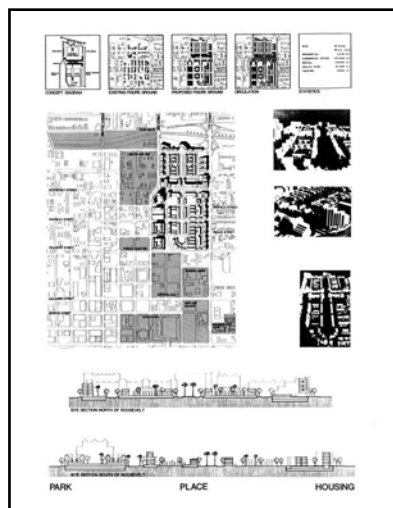
**The Phoenix Downtown Housing Studio**

This is one of the first design studios taught by Professor Fifield in his teaching career and the first urban design studio. Sponsored with a \$10,000 grant from the Phoenix Community Alliance (a quasi public community design organization), the studio developed a mixed-use urban design scheme on a fifty-acre site near downtown Phoenix. Working with seven graduate students, the studio developed an overall master plan with Professor Fifield acting as the master plan design coordinator, and then each student developed a separate section of the overall scheme in more detail, to the level of schematic architectural design. Money from the grant was used to travel to visit other mixed-use housing projects as well as to produce large posters of the overall scheme and individual areas of the master plan. In addition, a large massing model was made that became the centerpiece of the Phoenix Community Alliance’s offices as a marketing tool to encourage meaningful housing near the downtown. Considerable local press was given to this project due to its attempt to provide a legible and memorable plan for the area that would act as a demonstration project for future development.

The project demonstrated how you could achieve a relatively high density of 55 d.u. / acre with a variety of housing types and commercial uses.

This is an excellent example of not only educating students, but educating the community and the profession at the same time.

This project also was instrumental in establishing a precedent of funding for projects in the future.



ACSA Distinguished Professor Nominee: **Michael Fifield, FAIA, AICP**

School	University of Oregon
Project Title	2010 Terminal Studio Projects
Completion Date	June 2010
Role of Nominee	Studio Professor
Publications	Studio Brochure (summary of all studio projects in one brochure)


**The HIP (Housing Innovations Project) Terminal Studio**

This is a summary documentation of the projects which emerged from a Winter / Spring 2010 Terminal Studio under the direction of Professor Michael Fifield. The theme of the studio was to address the meaningful design of housing with options for designing on different sites and with different programs.

All students enrolled in the studio were required to have some background in housing prior to the beginning of the studio, either the instructor's Housing Prototypes course offered in the Fall of 2009, or the equivalent offered from another instructor. During a field trip to San Francisco at the beginning of Winter Term, the studio visited various architectural firms as well as touring a variety of built housing projects. Students developed their own programs and chose their own sites. Sites chosen were mostly on the west coast (e.g., San Francisco, Portland, Seattle, San Diego, northern California) but also included Detroit and Denver. Each student had to work within existing zoning and applicable building codes, but the ultimate program was determined by the students based on density expectations and their own analysis of the needs of the neighborhood and specific user group intended for their project.

To assist the students with another level of professional guidance, each student had an outside "consultant," typically a practicing architect dealing with housing design who assisted in reviewing various phases of the project. Consultants included Jonathan Segal, FAIA, Mike Pyatok, FAIA, William Leddy, FAIA, Ron Van der Veen, Marsha Maytum, FAIA and many others.

Following are just a few summary samples from the brochure:




**Mission Hill**  
A MULTIFAMILY URBAN HABITAT

**ROBERT WAXMAN**

LOCATION: MISSION BAY SOUTH, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA  
 TYPE: PODIUM, MOSTLY MARKET RATE MULTIFAMILY HOUSING  
 UNITS: STACKED TOWNHOUSES AND FLATS  
 PROGRAM: RESIDENTIAL: 83 UNITS - 132,250 FT<sup>2</sup> INCLUDING GARAGE AND STORAGE  
 SITE: 48,400 FT<sup>2</sup>  
 D.U.A.: 76 UNITS/ACRE

*Can people of all ages share a habitat that responds to the social and environmental challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century? In the new neighborhood of Mission Bay in San Francisco at the intersection between public/private and outdoor/inside realms, Mission Hill provides an eclectic assortment of housing for a variety of needs, tastes and budgets. Every unit is either immediately accessible from the street or from the building's courtyard. Most units feature exposure in two complimentary directions, optimizing ventilation and daylight. Strategies for shade and water retention are not simply technological features but are an integral and visible part of the environment. Units accessible to the street are convertible to nonresidential uses in the future. Residents share outdoor spaces that are functional and serendipitous. At Mission Hill, nature, neighbors and the world at large are never more than a step away. The future is at our feet.*




**Sonoma County Co-Housing**  
INTER-GENERATIONAL GREEN SUBURBAN LIVING

**JILLIAN KLASSEN**

LOCATION: OLD REDWOOD HWY /// SANTA ROSA, CA  
 TYPE: SUBURBAN CO-HOUSING  
 UNITS: SINGLE FAMILY AND LOFTS  
 PROGRAM: RESIDENTIAL: 56 UNITS - 66,250 FT<sup>2</sup>;  
 COMMON HOUSE: 3,000 FT<sup>2</sup>; RETAIL: 9,500 FT<sup>2</sup>  
 SITE: 2.8 ACRE  
 D.U.A.: 20 UNITS/ACRE

Sonoma County Co-housing takes another look into the unsustainable planning of suburbia. Subdivision homes by definition are unsustainable through poor land use these developments become destination homes rather than integrating with their community. Typically suburban dwellers prefer a sense of ownership of their home and property, safety, open outdoor spaces, and a sense of smaller community sometimes lacking in city life.

Co-Housing provides residents with their individual unit while providing open outdoor spaces to encourage interaction with community gardens, play areas and common house. The Common house allows for community gatherings as well as provides flexible space for the residents daily activities. Co-Housing provides the opportunity to layer spaces from private, common to public, giving its occupants a sense of security, safety, community and privacy!



**Sauvignon Block**  
SOPHISTICATED, FRESH AND GRASSY URBAN LIVING

**MICHAEL OBER**

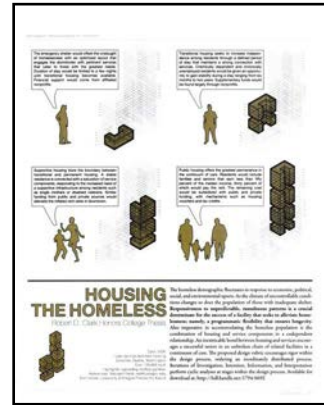
LOCATION: UNIVERSITY DISTRICT, PORTLAND, OR  
 TYPE: MIXED USE  
 UNITS: STUDIOS, 1BD, 2BD, 3BD, TOWNHOUSES  
 PROGRAM: APARTMENTS: 151 UNITS - 120,790 FT<sup>2</sup>  
 TOWNHOUSES: 32 UNITS  
 RETAIL: 19,200 FT<sup>2</sup>; PARKING: 100 STALLS - 40,000 FT<sup>2</sup>  
 SITE: 0.92 ACRES  
 D.U.A.: 177 UNITS/ACRE

Sauvignon Block combines the best of the city and the not-so-city in the University District of Portland. The Bar Building typology gives residents the option of view-filled affordable and compact apartment living, or exceptionally private townhouses. As such, Sauvignon Block is designed to accommodate a wide demographic of urban enthusiasts, and offers varying gradients of privacy and community. Residents who live in the city to lead a more sustainable lifestyle will appreciate the rooftop garden plots, parking-level bike storage, on-site electricity and hot water generation, and prevalence of green space throughout the building. Grass-filled terraces on multiple levels ensure that residents are never more than a few floors from green space.



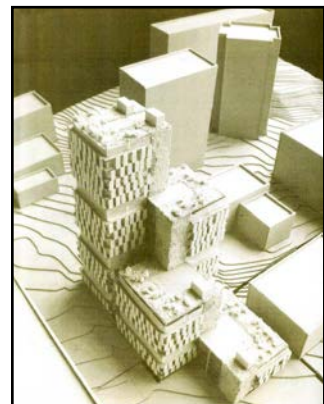
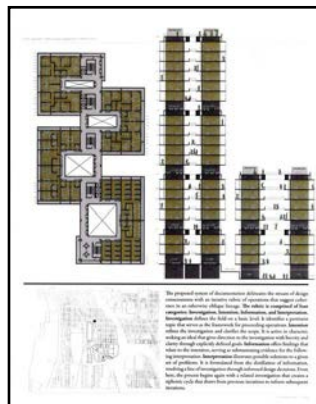
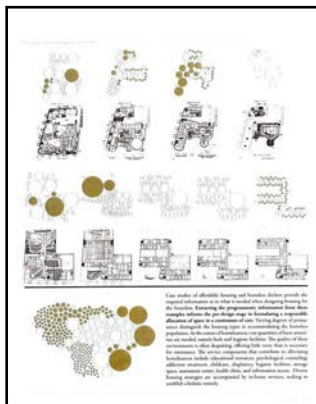
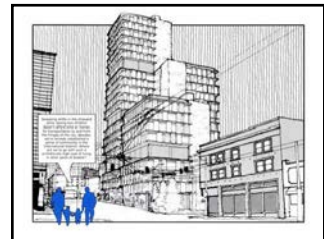
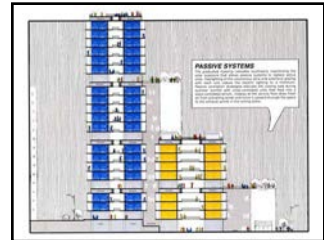
ACSA Distinguished Professor Nominee: **Michael Fifield, FAIA, AICP**

School University of Oregon.  
 Student: Brent Sturlaugson  
 Project Title "Housing the Homeless"  
 2008 Housing Terminal Studio  
 Completion Date June 2008  
 Role of Nominee Studio Professor /  
 Honors College Thesis Committee Chair  
 Publications Final Design Brochure and Honors College  
 Thesis Publication  
 Awards President's Award for Best Thesis in the UO  
 Honors College  
 Studio Award for Best Project in the studio



**Housing the Homeless**  
 Mapping the Design Process of Service-Enriched Housing

Students in this final comprehensive design studio were allowed to choose their own sites and develop their own programs. However the studio focused on housing in Seattle, Washington after the studio conducted a field trip visiting sites and also various firms (e.g., MITHUN) and projects. All students were either required to have taken a previous housing course such as Professor Fifield's Housing Prototypes course, or one from someone else. In addition, all students were paired with an outside consultant from various firms on the west coast, thus insuring that their final designs, including details and costs estimates in some cases, were seen by another set of professional "eyes." In Brent's project, he also developed a very thorough written thesis as part of his Honor College thesis project (one of two Honors College students in the studio). Brent developed a truly outstanding project that examined the various transitions from homelessness to permanent housing. All reviewers agreed this was a significant approach to addressing a much-needed societal issue and went far beyond the typical terminal studio project.



ACSA Distinguished Professor Nominee: **Michael Fifield, FAIA, AICP**

School University of Oregon  
 Project Title "Housing Prototypes" Lecture Course  
 Completion Date Every Fall Term  
 Role of Nominee Professor / 80+ students

**Housing Prototypes**

An examination of modern housing prototypes (1920s - present) with an emphasis on understanding the many and varied factors involved in the production of quality housing.

**Course Evaluations** (sample of student comments):

**Please comment on the instructor's strengths and areas for possible improvement.:**

"Michael Fifield knows housing...he is an incredible resource on all things housing and his lectures were very informative. The class was excellent preparation for terminals." -- Michael Ober

**Comment on the long range value of the class.:**

"This class is an eye opener to how our society handles environmental issues and why we handle the issues the way we do. Before this class I knew that we needed to change our ways for the good of our planet and the future generation. Now I have a deeper understanding of the social impact on these issues, which is even more disturbing. I am really glad I took this class, it has deepened my understanding and got me thinking even more." -- Natasha Owens

**Please comment on the strengths and areas of possible improvement for the course as a whole.:**

"This is a great class. I found it to be well structured and well presented." -- Natasha Owens

**Please comment on the instructor's strengths and areas for possible improvement.:**

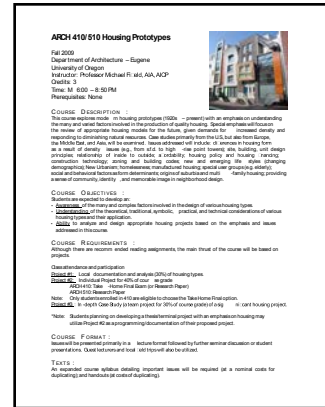
"Michael Fifield knows housing, it is his strength, he is very clear and thorough. i cant imagine what he could possibly improve" -- Shayan Saghari

**Please comment on the instructor's strengths and areas for possible improvement.:**

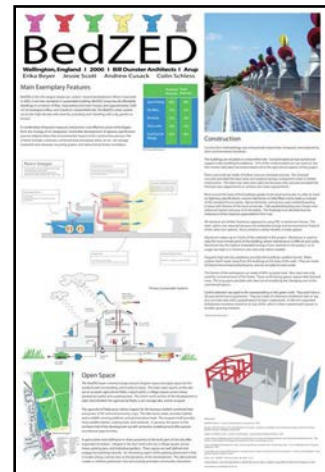
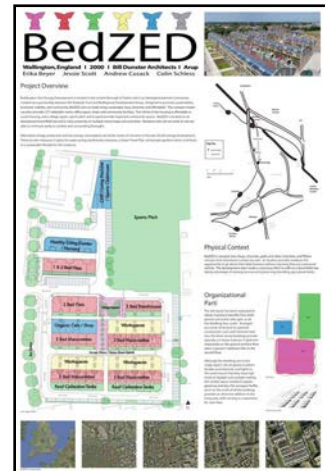
"Michael Fifield organized this course very effectively and was a very intellectually stimulating lecturer. Rather than just teaching us the facts, he really emphasized the importance of analyzing the past and present models of housing. We were given a great deal of freedom in the types of projects we wished to present, as well as in our personal choice for the final." -- Mackenzie Neitling

**Comment on the long range value of the class.:**

"This class has been very helpful in opening my eyes to the various forms of housing. I feel that it will be very helpful in my comprehensive thesis project, for I am designing an elderly care community, and will need to investigate the various forms of elderly housing. This course has given me new ideas and insight. " -- Mackenzie Neitling



Course Description



Example of Student Case Study Project

ACSA Distinguished Professor Nominee: **Michael Fifield, FAIA, AICP**

School University of Oregon  
 Project Title "Community Design" Lecture Course  
 Completion Date Every other Winter Term  
 Role of Nominee Professor / 50+ students

**Community Design**

Multidisciplinary examination of the history, theory and practice in the design and development of meaningful and sustainable neighborhoods.

This is a course, developed by Professor Fifield, in the Housing Concentration, coordinated by Professor Fifield, of the Department of Architecture that addresses issues of *smart growth* and makes an argument for more compact and sustainable neighborhoods. It typically attracts students from architecture, landscape architecture, and planning. Thus it helps to educate not just future architects, but others in the co-lateral professions.



Course Description

**Course Evaluations** (sample of student comments):

**Please comment on the instructor's strengths and areas for possible improvement.:**

"Great teacher, engaging, interesting." -- David Vu

**Please comment on the instructor's strengths and areas for possible improvement.:**

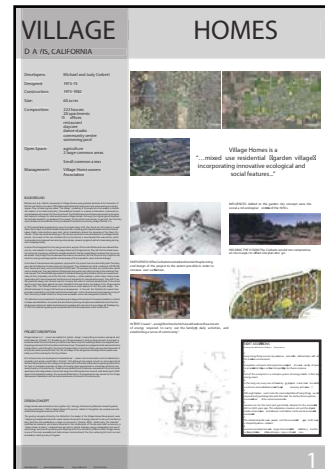
"Michael is very knowledgeable about the topic of community design and has valuable connections as well as interesting stories to relate class topics to." -- Serena Coltrane-Briscoe

**Please comment on the instructor's strengths and areas for possible improvement.:**

"Excellent and engaging lectures. Michael is the best kind of instructor: incredibly knowledgeable and very approachable. Oh, and the reading list on the syllabus is worth the price of admission alone. Michael has loads of experience and anecdotes to draw from...so therefore my only beef was that he did not lecture every single class (though the guest lecturers were not without merit)." -- Michael Ober

**Other comments::**

"I have recommend this course to first year planning students for next year. Planning students are often interested in design, yet the PPM Department does not teach design. It took me a while to figure out I could walk down to Lawrence to learn about design. I would encourage you to continue to advertise your classes to planners. You're really good at teaching how planning and design relate to each other." -- Larisa Varela



Example of Student Case Study Project

ACSA Distinguished Professor Nominee: Michael Fifield, FAIA, AICP

School	University of Oregon
Project Title	"Minimal Dwelling" Lecture / Workshop Course
Completion Date	Every other Winter Term
Role of Nominee	Professor / 30-45 students

**Minimal Dwelling**

Examination of the design of small dwelling units for a variety of user groups and special situations.

This is a course, developed by Professor Fifield, in the Housing Concentration, coordinated by Professor Fifield, which alternates each winter term with the Community Design course. It is an examination of small unit design at higher densities as a strategy to deal with compact growth and affordability. In addition, shelters for the homeless, disaster relief housing, migrant farm worker housing, S.R.O. hotels, capsule hotels, manufactured/mobile homes, are examined.



Course Description

**Course Evaluations** (sample of student comments... verbatim, w/ spelling errors, etc.):

**Please comment on the instructor's strengths and areas for possible improvement.:**

"Amazing Class, One of the best I have ever taken" -- Christopher Murray

**Please comment on the instructor's strengths and areas for possible improvement.:**

"I thought that the instructor was well versed in the subject and was in little or no need of improvement." -- Ian Hoffman

**Please comment on the strengths and areas of possible improvement for the course as a whole.:**

"We were given the ability to research and learn about topics we were interested in" -- Shane Harper

**Comment on the long range value of the class.:**

"Great. Learned a whole nother perspective on housing." -- Cara Hiyakumoto

**Other comments.:**

"I wish this could be a year long class" -- Christopher Smith

**Comment on the long range value of the class.:**

"I have taken what I have learned from this class and have applied it to my life as of now. I know that I will use what I have learned in this class to teach others the importance of living efficiently." -- Ian Hoffman

**Comment on the long range value of the class.:**

"As someone who hasn't taken many housing studios, the knowledge about housing I gained in course will no doubt be useful in a variety of contexts in the future." -- Hugh Bitzer

**Comment on the long range value of the class.:**

"Great class covered a lot of material" -- Kent Wu



Example of Student Case Study Project

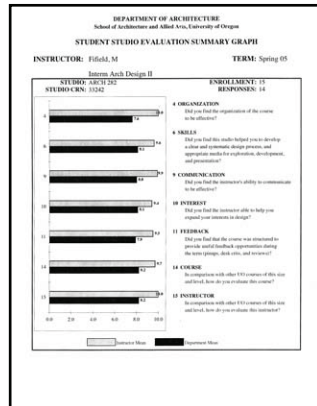
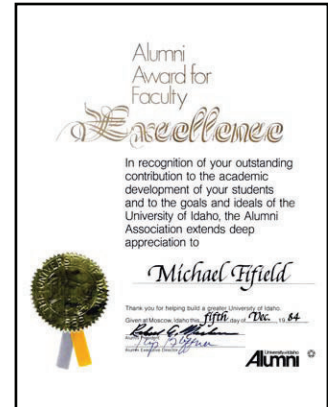
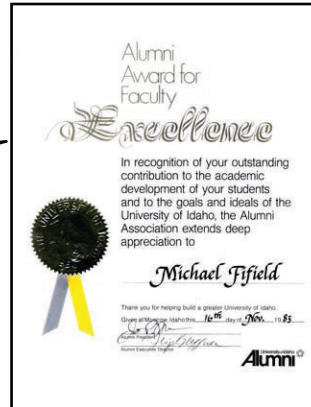


Example of Student Case Study Project

ACSA Distinguished Professor Nominee: **Michael Fifield, FAIA, AICP**

Project Title various examples  
 Completion Date varies  
 Role of Nominee Professor of Architecture

University Teaching Awards



Example of Student Course Evaluation of Studio  
 On a basis of 1 to 10, with 10 being the highest, Professor Fifield received a "10" from every single student in the studio.

"The Students of the Department of Architecture, The Pennsylvania State University, 1997, would like to express our sincere appreciation to you, Michael Fifield. The dedication to the implementation of your vision has produced admirable improvements in the program's structure; the development of the internship program; increase of the visibility of the department; remodeling the studios; addition of a faculty position in the shop; and the "Fifield's Thursday Night Madness." We are confident that you have set a pace that will continue to challenge the students." (Signed by the student body, December 1997)



Portion of unsolicited email from former student in many of Professor Fifield's housing courses. Example of how the role of education is most effective when your former students put your ideas to work.

Subject: On the Value of Design  
 To: Michael Fifield <mef@uoregon.edu>  
 From: James Cody Birkey <jcBirkey@gmail.com>  
 Date: Fri, 24 Sep 2010 08:59:56 -0700  
 Hi Michael -

Hope this finds you well! I stumbled across a piece that you wrote for the Southwestern Oregon AIA not too long ago. I thought to myself, "that Fifield character hasn't changed, still on about a better built environment in places with no money!" In your classes and studios I remember you arguing that we as architects shouldn't just design better, but also smarter. Your story was that our obligations go beyond pretty drawings into an understanding of the built environment that has to include economics, contextual relationships, sustainability, and most importantly--people.

For what its worth, I've recently tried to put a lot of those same ideas of yours on resource-limited design to good use. I'm just now back in the States after spending the better part of a year in northern Rwanda, building a hospital out there... It's been a very inspiring project, working with the kids from the Harvard Medical School, the Clinton Foundation, and local craftspeople to design-build an exceptional hospital that the World Health Organization wants to use as a "new model for sub-saharan Africa." ... And I think the critical thinking on cost and value that you've championed was essential in making that reply true.

The deeper analysis of context that you've also advocated became useful in handling the tricky balancing act between producing a hospital that said "modern" and "first-rate" but at the same time said "local" and "built by us." All the best, Cody

ACSA Distinguished Professor Nominee: **Michael Fifield, FAIA, AICP**

Firm of Record      Fifield Architecture + Urban Design (a sole proprietorship)  
 Project Title        "Minimal Live / Work Studio"  
 Completion Date    July 2007  
 Role of Nominee    Project Architect / Project Designer  
 Awards                Merit Award, AIA SWO / AIA SO Joint Awards Program  
 Publications        2011 Neue Top 100 Häuser by Thomas Drexel; 2011 In-Laws, Outlaws, and Granny Flats by Michael Litchfield; Summer 2010 Annual Housing Issue of Fine Homebuilding Magazine; "Best Small Houses," 9/10 2009 Issue of Residential Architect Magazine; 2009 Summer Annual Housing Issue of Fine Homebuilding Magazine.

### Minimal Live / Work Studio

#### Project Description:

In a world of diminishing natural resources and increasing population, "compact growth" is becoming a critical component of sustainability. In addition to sustainable building design (e.g., materials, construction systems, passive solar design strategies), smaller residential unit design at higher densities can address issues of sustainability far greater than only using green building materials. Providing additional smaller units on residential lots with existing single-family houses, either as accessory dwelling units or other, can provide a much needed housing component (e.g., for an elderly parent, a grown child) or meeting the demographic of an increasing percentage of households made up of single adults.

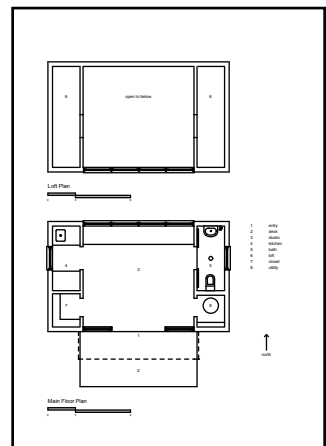
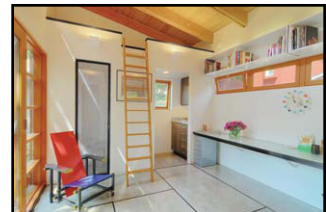
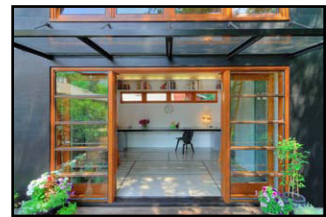
The Minimal Live / Work Studio satisfies a similar need. The client, a Japanese artist who lives and works most of the year near Tokyo, spends a few months each year in Eugene, Oregon, painting and visiting friends and where she also owns a house she rents out. While in Eugene, she works and lives in her studio.

Some of the methods used to achieve a feeling of a much larger space include: engagement with the outdoors, borrowed landscapes, multiple uses of spaces, and rooms designed so views don't stop at a wall but continue into other areas. Windows in the kitchen and bath area allow for views out to neighboring gardens that utilize the concept of borrowed landscapes. The loft areas, which serve as storage and sleeping areas, have short walls to allow views from the workspace to extend to the exterior walls, making the 12' wide studio space feel larger than it is with the sense of the full width of the studio (19'), complemented with a high ceiling and clerestory windows.

It is hoped that this project will serve as model for small accessory building design. The interior floor area, including lofts, is only 269 s.f.

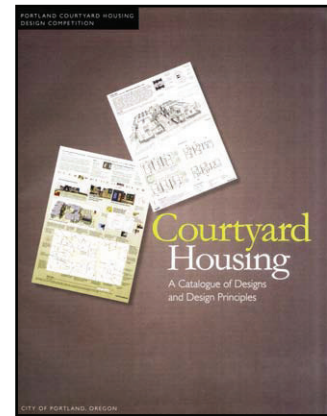
### Practice as an Educational Tool

As an educational tool, this project has served as an excellent example of many of the principles that Professor Fifield addresses in his housing courses, especially his Minimal Dwelling course. Not only does it demonstrate to students how a small dwelling unit may be made to appear much larger than it really is, but class visits to it during construction also were a valuable teaching tool regarding detailing and strategies for sustainability. In addition, small unit design like this also serves to educate the public, the city planning department, and the profession as to the possibilities they might not be aware of.



ACSA Distinguished Professor Nominee: **Michael Fifield, FAIA, AICP**

Firm of Record	Fifield Architecture + Urban Design (a sole proprietorship)
Project Title	The City of Portland Courtyard Housing Competition
Completion Date	2008
Role of Nominee	Project Advisor and Co-Administrator w/ Mark Gillem As competition advisors and co-administrators, Fifield & Gillem were equally and totally responsible for all aspects of the competition.
Awards	Certificate of Merit, Oregon American Planning Association (State Awards Programs for Special Achievement in Planning)
Publications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competition Brochure of Winning Entries and Design Principles</li> <li>• Mentioned in "Housing and Sustainable Communities – The Stone's Warehouse Redevelopment Project for Southeast Raleigh," 2009</li> </ul>
Exhibitions	AIA Center for Architecture / AIA Oregon, Portland, 2009
Invited Lectures	Multiple lectures in various venues, e.g., Portland, Eugene, Raleigh Urban Design Center, Marywood University, Scranton, PA,



Cover of Final Competition Brochure

### City of Portland Courtyard Housing Competition

The City of Portland sponsored the Portland Courtyard Housing Design Competition for two primary reasons: to promote courtyard housing as an additional infill housing type for Portland's neighborhoods, and to explore how courtyard housing might serve as a higher density housing type appropriate for families with children.

Held in 2007, the competition attracted 257 entries from 35 states and 15 foreign countries. Fifield and Gillem, through Fifield's firm, Fifield Architecture + Urban Design, were awarded the contract (\$100,000+) to essentially run the competition, including producing the final brochure, identifying the jury, and working closely with a city staff person, administering all aspects of the competition.



The competition was structured by Fifield and Gillem to emphasize the need to develop design principles and diagrams as the basis for design solutions in the competition.

### Value as an Educational Tool

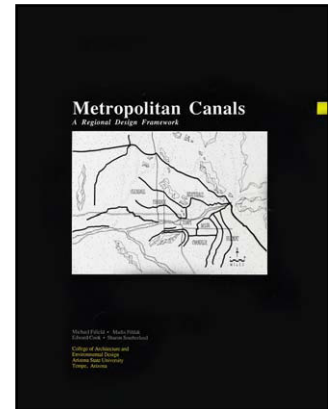
Fifield and Gillem extracted the best design principles and reworked them to form the basis of the catalog of winning entries in an attempt to provide greater value to future designers, potential clients, and planning departments – not just a brochure of the winning designs. Thus, the final competition brochure is meant to act as a teaching tool on how to develop meaningful courtyard housing. This may be the first time this type of approach was used in a national design competition. It is this type of work where Fifield has greatly added to the discussion of good design through education to the profession and community.



One Page of the Design Principles Developed as Recommendations

ACSA Distinguished Professor Nominee: Michael Fifield, FAIA, AICP

- School: College of Architecture and Environmental Design, Arizona State University, Funded by NEA (\$40,000) and various other sponsors (\$55,500)
- Clients: The Salt River Project, the cities of Phoenix, Scottsdale, Tempe, Mesa, Glendale, Chandler, and the town of Gilbert, AZ
- Project Title: "Metropolitan Canals: A Regional Design Framework"
- Completion Date: 1990
- Role of Nominee: Project Director / Principal Co-Investigator w/ Madis Pihlak
- Publications: Final Brochure: "Metropolitan Canals: A Regional Design Framework"; widely referred to in various publications
- Awards:
  - Progressive Architecture Research Award "Citation"
  - Award of Merit, Valley Forward Association, AZ
  - First Place Award, "Best Project" Category, Arizona Planning Association, State APA Awards Program

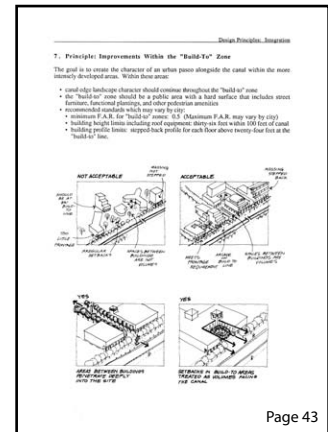


Metropolitan Canals: A Regional Design Framework

The question that this applied research project sought to answer is simple: could the multiple use of an existing system of canals direct and focus future urban form within a low-density suburban area?

Jury Comments (as written in Progressive Architecture Magazine)

"This research is an accumulation of understanding about a specific region, and how an under-utilized element might hold the seeds for responsible growth. The study is a good example of the dialogue between documentation of the built environment and research that produces entirely new knowledge. This is a laudable project for quantifying and looking qualitatively at the built environment."



One Page of 70 Pages in the Project Final Report

Significance of the Results

The study maintains that the preservation, integration, and enhancement of the canal system afford the greatest opportunity to redirect suburban low-density growth, to provide a physical catalyst for improved urban environmental quality, and to offer a compelling opportunity for place making. One of the recommendations stated: All Valley cities should consider demonstration projects providing positive examples of development oriented toward the canal, and meeting established design criteria.

The principles and design guidelines in the report were adopted by all seven major cities in the Phoenix Metropolitan area. The study mentions this will be a long-term project, considering the 181 linear miles of canals. Initial projects were primarily open-space recreation projects sponsored by the Public Art Program of the Phoenix Arts Commission. Slowly, building projects have been implemented adjacent to the canals, based on the published design guidelines. 20 years after the report, Scottsdale, especially, has devoted many projects along the canal banks, including major mixed-use projects by nationally known firms, e.g., Miller Hull Partnership from Seattle.

Value as an Educational Tool

While a tremendous educational tool for architecture and urban design students, this study resulted in informing the community as to the potential negative consequences of suburban sprawl and how that might be offset with infill development along the underutilized canal banks.



From Progressive Architecture Magazine



ACSA Distinguished Professor Nominee: **Michael Fifield, FAIA, AICP**

Firm of Record Michael Fifield, Architect  
 Project Title The New American House National Design Competition  
 Completion Date 1984  
 Role of Nominee Designer, all graphics (with exception of axo by Jonathan Segal)  
 Publications Michael Fifield, "Honorable Mention" in *A New American House*. ISBN 0-9611672-0-3.  
 Awards Honorable Mention Award  
 Exhibitions "A New American House" National Design Competition  
 "A New American House" (funded by NEA), 1984 National Design Competition Traveling Exhibition of Winning Entries: Minneapolis College of Art and Design, 1984; Boston Architectural Center, 1985; Carnegie Mellon University, 1985; EDRA 5 Conference, New York City, 1985; University of California, Los Angeles, 1985; University of Pennsylvania, 1985; Suburbia Re-examined Conference, Hofstra University, 1987.

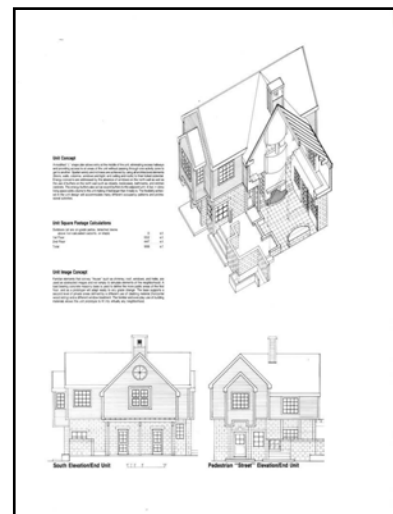
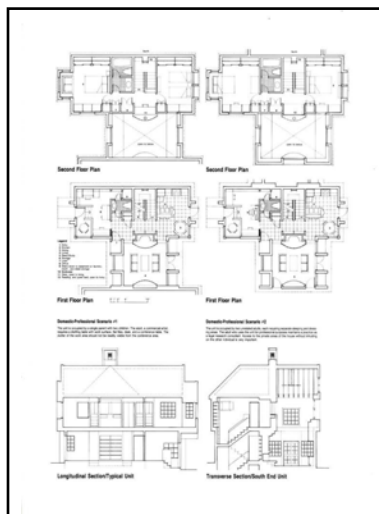
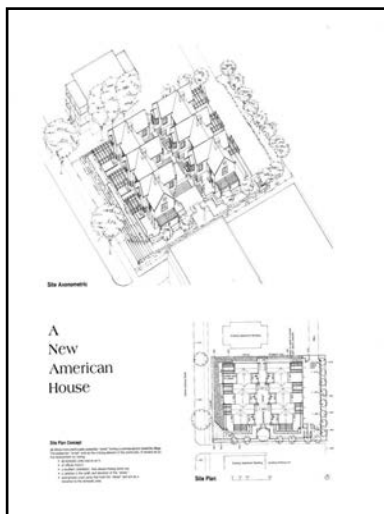


**Competition Summary** (by Dolores Hayden)

“...Three ideas defined the competition: The dramatic change in the number of households that made up the nuclear family, the rising costs of housing, and the need or desire to work at home. From these came the challenge of ‘A New American House’ to design an efficient housing unit, not to exceed 1,000 square feet in area, which would function both as the residence and principal professional workplace for at least one of its occupants. The individual unit served as the basic module for six units on the site in Minneapolis’ Whittier neighborhood....”

**Value to Nominee as an Educational Tool**

This competition helped establish a set of ideas related to housing, smart growth, and compact design that have been the basis of Professor Fifield’s teaching, practice, and writing. His teaching in design studios, and his three subject-area courses (Housing Prototypes, Community Design, and Minimal Dwelling) all owe their success to the ideas established in this competition. This project was instrumental in establishing a teaching and research focus that exist 26 years later. Professor Fifield’s recent professional work, e.g., co-administering the “The Portland Courtyard Housing Competition,” and his award winning built work, “The Minimal Live / Work Studio,” are directly related to ideas first researched in this competition. The competition is still used today in not only Professor Fifield’s teaching, but many others.



ACSA Distinguished Professor Nominee: **Michael Fifield, FAIA, AICP**

School University of Oregon (paper)  
 Firm Studio Domus (Michael Fifield's firm as sole practitioner in AZ)  
 Paper Title "Lessons Learned in Affordable Housing"  
 Completion Date 2000 (paper); built work (1996)  
 Role of Nominee Author, based on built work by nominee  
 Dissemination ACSA West Regional Conference, teaching, presentations

**Lessons Learned in Affordable Housing**

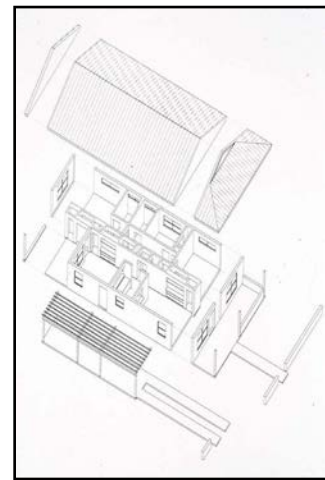
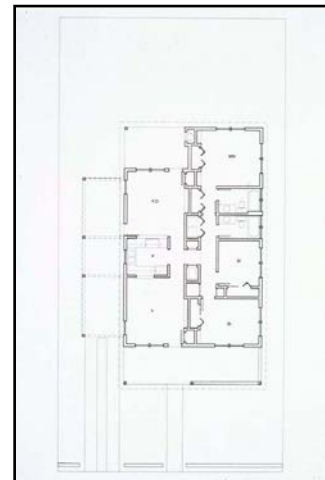
"...Through the use of one case study example – the completion of seven s.f.d. scattered-site houses in the mostly Hispanic-American community of Tolleson, Arizona, 10 miles west of Phoenix – this paper will discuss how programmatic considerations and design intentions were achieved, while other aspirations went unfulfilled. Those design intentions not achieved resulted more from associations with "perceptions" of values of status than from actual costs. Although I tried to maintain as little as possible any degree of behavioral determinism or personal aesthetic as the architect of this project, some of the seemingly thoughtful design considerations were rejected by both potential homeowners, and by the local municipality. However, the vast majority of design considerations were realized, resulting in a product that was not only affordable, but also meaningful... This paper concludes that architecture can make a difference in an area of design in which they have not, historically, provided much leadership. It also suggests that scattered site, s.f.d. affordable housing has the potential, if designed properly, to be considered *architecture* and not simply shelter."

**Project Description and Solution**

Having worked previously with Habitat for Humanity in Phoenix, the non-profit Mercy Housing of Arizona commissioned Fifield to develop meaningful affordable housing in Tolleson, AZ, resulting in seven s.f.d. houses, all with the same design (for affordability) on various infill sites. Thus, a strategy that would accommodate different site and solar orientation conditions was developed. Based on a set of design principles developed specifically for this project, issues of security, community, storage, privacy, identity, engagement with the outdoors, etc., were implemented. Built in 1995-1996, the three-bedroom, two bath, 1,300 s.f. houses were built for \$48,000 each. Working with a Spanish-speaking contractor who had never worked with an architect, the "specs" for this project consisted of photographs of specified items (e.g., lighting fixtures, hardware) and where they were located on which shelves at the local Home Depot.

**Value as an Educational Tool**

While the final design did not meet all of the aesthetic desires of the nominee (Fifield lost the specified corrugated metal roofs similar to other houses in the neighborhood, as well as a tandem parking trellis in favor of a one-car carport), this project was an excellent example of the relationship between theory and practice and resulted in built work, papers and presentations made, and as an excellent example for teaching affordable housing design studios based on sound design principles.



ACSA Distinguished Professor Nominee: **Michael Fifield, FAIA, AICP**

Project Title	Numerous Examples
Completion Date	Varies
Role of Nominee	Author, or written about, or referred to
Publications	Numerous Examples – see CV
Awards	Listed Previously

**Value as an Educational Tool**

Education goes well beyond the classroom to be effective. Strategies and ideas to make a better-built environment must be broadly disseminated in a variety of written forms. This page consist of a variety of examples of published work in with the author either had a major role or his expertise is mentioned in a significant manner. Some are university teaching related, others are professional.



ACSA Distinguished Professor Nominee: **Michael Fifield, FAIA, AICP**

Education doesn't stop in the lecture hall at one's home university. To be truly effective, it means mentoring students beyond the classroom as well as assisting in making other programs better. Educational leadership needs to be demonstrated. It includes professional service where lessons learned can be brought back to the classroom. Professor Fifield has demonstrated national and international leadership in this regard. It also requires being "accessible" so students want to learn.

**In Nicosia, Cyprus, as part of an international team for accreditation of architecture programs. Accreditation criteria required one representative from either the U.S or Great Britain to be on the team. Professor Fifield was that person each year for five years running.**



**As invited community design studio critic at the University of New Mexico**

**On site in 2005 in Sri Lanka after the tsunami of December 26, 2004, conducting housing assessments for Architects Without Borders (AWB) Photo taken of other team members and displaced residents by Professor Fifield**



**On one of many housing fieldtrips – this one in San Francisco with affordable housing expert Sam Davis,**

**The 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Thanksgiving Dinner and Architecture Discussion for students hosted by Professor Fifield (far left)**



**Student and Faculty tribute for Professor Fifield on leaving Penn State University as Department Head and before taking the position as Department Head at the University of Oregon**