

ACSA Creative Achievement Award

2013-2014 Winner: Submission Materials

NotLY: Not Licensed Yet

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NotLY:

Not Licensed Yet in Architecture

ACSA CREATIVE ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

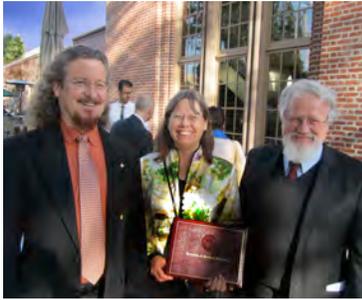
Assistant Professor Karen M. Kensek, Associate AIA
Associate Professor Douglas Noble, FAIA, Ph.D.

ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGIATE
SCHOOLS OF ARCHITECTURE
1735 New York Avenue, NW
Washington DC 20006

September 10, 2013

NotLY: Not Licensed Yet in Architecture

Between 1996 and 2006, while the number of graduates from architecture programs increased, the annual number of newly licensed architecture in California fell by more than half compared to the previous decade. In an attempt to counter this trend, "NotLY" was formed by Karen Kensek and Douglas Noble in 2007 as a support organization for unlicensed individuals. Recognizing the substantial costs and difficulties in becoming licensed, all NotLY programs and events are always free of charge and open to anyone. (Many events are hosted in the classrooms at the University of Southern California, but all events are open to anyone, not just USC alumni). With just under 1500 members, NotLY features:



left to right:
Associate Professor Douglas Noble
Assistant Professor Karen M. Kensek
Vice-Dean Marc Schiler

- the "NotLY number" identification system
- letters of welcome and encouragement
- over 300 free classes in the past 6+ years
- more than 10,000 registrations
- dozens of small study groups formed
- evening and weekend on-campus classes
- evening classes at professional firms
- weekly email with encouragement and advice
- formal removal and welcome to the profession

NotLY: An Organization and a Label

NotLY is the name of the organization and the members in it. A NotLY is someone who is Not Licensed Yet. New members start out with the label "NotLY0," with the zero in the label indicating that they have passed zero exams. As members pass individual exams, their label changes. A member who has passed the Schematic Design exam and the Building Systems exam becomes a "NotLY26." Each of the exams has a number assigned to it:

1. Programming Planning & Practice PPP
2. Schematic Design SD
3. Site Planning & Design SPD
4. Building Design & Construction Systems BD/CS
5. Construction Documents and Services CDS
6. Building Systems BS
7. Structural Systems SS
8. California Supplemental Exam CSE

The NotLY number helps the organizers invite members to the specific events that can help them pass exams that they have not completed. Someone who is a NotLY123457 will only get invitations to the Building Systems Exam and the California Supplemental Exam, since we know that they have already passed the others.

A side benefit of the NotLY Number label is the pride taken by those that are nearing completion and have started to accumulate a lot of NotLY Numbers. At some NotLY events, we use nametags with NotLY Numbers, to give those just starting out a chance to see that others are succeeding.

NotLY: Growing and Shrinking, But We are Winning

The main goal of the NotLY organization is to throw members out. We remove members each week as they pass the exam. Expelled members receive a letter of congratulations from NotLY. In spite of substantial success in achieving this goal, NotLY is currently growing by more than 300 members per year. In the decade prior to the founding of NotLY, California averaged about 420 new architecture licensees each year. Since NotLY started, California has averaged about 513 new architects each year. In 2013, California is on track for well over 600 new licensees. Our goal for 2014 is 1000 new licenses in California. Some people have told us that there are already too many licensed architects and employment numbers do not look good. As we look around at our cities and suburban environments, it is not obvious to us that there are too many architects.

NotLY: Lecture Classes

Since starting the program in 2007, NotLY classes have grown from an average of less than ten people per session to individual classes that now have 150 to 200 people. In the seventh year of the program, NotLY has offered more than 300 classes with more than 10,000 individual registrations. Classes are taught on-campus and at professional firms throughout the Southern California region. The instructors include faculty and professional architects and engineers. Most classes are two or three hours long, though some are four or more hours. Instructors and sessions are evaluated through anonymous on-line "Survey Monkey" surveys. Nearly all the instructors have now taught more than one class, and they often repeat their course annually (with continual improvements).

NotLY: Study Groups

NotLY has organized approximately 50 small study groups. These groups meet either at USC or in the conference rooms of professional offices. Most study groups meet from eight to twelve times before the group members all take the specific exam that they were preparing for. Groups vary from six to 20 members. These study groups do not have an instructor or leader, and rely instead on the preparation and discussion by all of the group members.

2012-2013 NotLY Instructors and Host Firms

Yunnan Allen, Architect	Stuart Baur, AIA
Gregg Brandow, Ph.D.	Jay Clark, AIA
Ron Culver, AIA	Richard Destin, AIA
Kate Diamond, FAIA	Michael Ellars, AIA
Ofelia Fiallos	Pavel Getov, AIA
Jeff Guh, Ph.D.	Seena Hassouna, AIA
Michael Hricak, FAIA	Mike Janas, AIA
James Kelly, AIA	Kareena Killam, EIT
Erin Lemaster, AIA	Don Looney, Architect
Edward Losch, PE, Architect	Len Marvin, AIA, CSI
Juan Minaya	Douglas Noble, FAIA, Ph.D.
Saum Nour, AIA, Ph.D.	Susan Oehme, AIA
Colleen Peach, AIA	Kirk Rose, AIA
Albert Sawano, AIA	Gautam Shenoy
Peter Simmonds, Ph.D.	Daphne Thiele
Tania Van Herle, AIA	John Vaught
Dean Vlahos, FAIA	Eric Weeks, AIA
Warwick Wicksman, AIA	Richard Zapata
Mike Zahn, SE	

2012-2013 HOST FIRMS:

AECOM
Gensler
Harley Ellis Deveraux
HMC Architects
HNTB Architects
HOK Architects
RTKL
Taylor
ZGF Architects

A Sample "Welcome Email" to New Members

Being a NotLY is a lot of work. The architecture licensing exams are difficult, expensive and time-consuming. You are on a difficult path. But you must keep going. It is worth it. You went to architecture school for this. You went to school for five or more years to become an architect. You did not spend all of those years working all-night on studio projects just to get a job. Remember how much work you have already put in to this. When you were in school, you took about 40 or more university courses. Most had a final exam and a midterm. Some had more exams, and more homeworks, and many had studio final presentations. Remembering back, you have already taken more than 100 exams. Some of these exams were three hours long. All of them were tough. You may have failed a few. But you kept going. You have already taken more than 100 exams. To become licensed, you have eight more to go. Some of you have less than eight exams to go. We have met several people recently who had only one exam left. Imagine that. They have already taken 100 to 200 exams, and they have ONE more to go. ONE! You might have a great job. You might work for an architecture firm doing wonderful work. You might never need to have the licensing stamp to sign drawings with. But you still WANT it. You want to be licensed. You have almost earned it. You are getting very close. Just a few exams stand in your way. We think you hate it when people ask what you do and you cannot say "I am an architect." You hate that you have to say "I work in an architecture firm" rather than simply saying "I am an architect." Several people wrote to say thanks for the Study Hall events we hold. We appreciate your thanks, but do not really want them. What we want is for you to send me an email that says: "I am no longer a NotLY. I am newly licensed as an architect. My California License number is C37654. I am not coming to your classes any more. I never liked your little club, and I am outta here. See ya!" Until we get that message, you are a NotLY. This is a club that you will want to work hard to get out of. You do not want to be a NotLY. We do not want you here either. Get out. There is only one way out. Study for your exams. Today. It will be helpful to us if you would tell us what kind of NotLY you are. There are many kinds. In the NotLY scheme, each of the Architecture exams has a number. When you pass an exam, you get that number:

1. Programming Planning & Practice PPP
2. Schematic Design SD
3. Site Planning & Design SPD
4. Building Design & Construction Systems BD/CS
5. Construction Documents and Services CDS
6. Building Systems BS
7. Structural Systems SS
8. California Supplemental Exam CSE

We do not have "membership numbers." We have "NotLY numbers." Everyone already has a NotLY number. Here is how to know yours: If you have not passed any licensing exam, you are a NotLY0. The zero at the end indicates you have passed zero exams. Lots of people in NotLY are 'zeroes.' As soon as you pass an exam, you add the number of that exam to your NotLY number. So, if you have only passed one exam, you list that number. For example, if you have only passed the structural systems (SS) exam, you are a NotLY7. If you have only passed the schematic design (SD) exam, you are a NotLY2. If you have passed Schematic Design and Building Systems, you are a NotLY26. If you have passed Schematic Design and Site Planning and Construction Documents, you are a NotLY235. If you have passed everything but the California Supplemental. You are a NotLY1234567. Every time you pass another exam, your NotLY number gets bigger. The NotLY number helps us know which exams people need. When you email us and tell us your NotLY number, we can see from the numbers that lots of people need us to schedule a specific exam. After you pass all the exams, you are a NotLY12345678. As soon as this happens, you get a real license number from the State of California. These numbers look like "C15655." When you are licensed, we throw you out of NotLY.

NotLY Survey Monkey

After each NotLY event, participants are asked to provide feedback about the session and the instructor, and to provide advice to help improve the NotLY experience. Each session and instructor is rated, and participants are encouraged to provide anonymous comments in the on-line system. While the Notly instructors and sessions regularly receive very high levels of praise, it is the constructive criticism that helps us find ways to improve. Beyond the survey, the NotLY organizers receive enthusiastic email daily from members in all stages of the exam process.

NotLY: Example Event Schedule

ARCHITECTURE LICENSING STUDY HALL
Saturday and Sunday, August 24-25, 2013

University of Southern California, Watt Hall and Harris Hall (Shown as "ARCH" on the map attached). If you come to Watt Hall, you will see us in the courtyard waiting for you. There is no cost for this event, but you must RSVP.



SCHEDULE

Saturday, August 24, 2013

ROOM HAR 101

9:00am to 11:45pm Building Design & Construction Systems BD/CS
Dr. Saum K. Nour, Ph.D., PE Civil, PE Electrical, PE Mechanical, CPD, CIPE, CFP

1:00pm to 3:45pm Construction Documents and Services CDS
Dr. Saum K. Nour, Ph.D., PE Civil, PE Electrical, PE Mechanical, CPD, CIPE, CFP

4:00 to 5:45pm Site Planning and Design SPD
Yunnan Allen and Kate Diamond, FAIA

ROOM: HAR 102

9:00am to 11:45am Construction Documents and Services CDS
Dean J. Vlahos, FAIA, CCCA, LEED, Forensic Architect

1:00pm to 4:45pm Schematic Design SD
Michael Ellars, AIA, LEED AP, CASp, Associate, DLR Group WWCOT

5:00pm to 5:45pm Construction Documents and Services CDS (SPECIFICATIONS)
Richard Destin, AIA, LEED® AP BD+C

ROOM: BECKET BOARDROOM

9:00am to 9:45am California Supplemental Exam CSE
Study Group Meeting - no leader

10:00am to 11:45am California Supplemental Exam CSE
Michael Ellars, AIA, LEED AP, CASp, Associate, DLR Group WWCOT

1:00pm to 2:45am California Supplemental Exam CSE
Ron Culver, AIA

3:00am to 4:45am California Supplemental Exam CSE
Pavel Getov

Sunday, August 25, 2013

ROOM: HAR 101

11:00am to 2:45pm Structural Systems SS
Gregg E. Brandow, PhD, SE

ROOM: Watt One

9:00am to 10:45am Structural Systems
Mike Zahn, SE and Kareena Killam, EIT

11:00am to 11:45pm How to approach the A.R.E. in General
Ben Regalado, AIA, Project Architect, Langdon Wilson International

1:00pm to 2:45pm Building Systems BS (ACOUSTICS)
Matt Wilkinson, Arup

PURPOSE

This event is a study session for the Architect Registration Examinations (ARE). "The Architect Registration Examination assesses candidates for their knowledge, skills, and ability to provide the various services required in the practice of architecture." There are seven exams plus the California Supplemental Exam (CSE). Our group has been offering study hall sessions for many years. We call ourselves "NotLY." NotLY means "Not Licensed Yet."

NotLY has more than one thousand members. There is no membership fee. We offer free events. This is not a business. We do not sell anything. This is a public service group to help the next generation of upcoming architects. We are not happy that so many young people in architecture are not getting licensed, and our goal is to change that. We will not give away or rent your email addresses. We do not give away your names. We arrange for volunteer instructors to teach in donated classrooms. We charge nothing and therefore we give you no coffee or food. All we ask is that you study and take the exams.

PREPARATION

You should have already read the ARE study materials available free online at the NCARB website: <http://www.ncarb.org/are.aspx>

LOCATION

It will be perfect weather outside, but probably colder inside the rooms. Bring a sweater or light jacket. All the rooms are right next to each other, and I will be in the courtyard directing people to the right rooms. Just come to Watt Hall at USC, and you will see us.

SPEAKERS

The speakers for these sessions have taught licensing study sessions many times. Please treat them well and be sure to thank them. They are volunteers, and are giving up their Saturday just to help you. They are not being paid, and they spent many hours preparing the materials that they will use to teach you. They have earned your maximum respect. Please enter and leave the room without disrupting the class or disturbing others. Turn cell phones to vibrate.

TRAVEL AND PARKING

Try not to drive to USC. Parking at USC is \$10. There are several parking structures (marked "P" on the map). It is hard to know what gates will be open. Entrance #1 is usually open. Entrance #5 is almost always open. The closest parking is at the "P" near entrance #6. We never drive to USC. Rather than driving, we prefer to take the EXPO LINE subway or the DASH bus from downtown. The DASH "F" route from downtown goes right to USC and loops all around the campus, but does not start until about 10:00am on the weekends. The DASH bus is 50 cents. The subway "EXPO LINE" just opened a year ago and goes right to USC. It is \$1.50 and runs until about midnight. The closest stop is called "EXPO USC" and is located near the bottom of the map. Please try to use the subway or buses. Architects are supposed to be sustainable.

LUNCH

This is a free event. I have no money. Therefore we are not providing coffee or lunch. There are a couple of fast food places nearby, Consider bringing a lunch with you. There is a Subway sandwich shop and Freebirds burrito place on Figueroa just north of Jefferson (far right edge of map). There is a Burger King on Jefferson just west of Hoover. There is a taco place and Togos sandwich shop near entrance #6. There is a Chipotle burrito place on Figueroa just off the bottom of the map. You will have time to get to these and get back in time if you hurry. Some of the on-campus food places may be open, but I am not sure because classes start on August 26th. Please be sure to clean up after yourselves in our rooms. We promised to clean the rooms ourselves if people left a mess. Please do not make Karen and Doug clean the rooms. We will need these rooms again. You might want to bring extra cookies with you in case the other people in your seating row did not remember to bring their lunch. :)

COMPUTERS AND POWER

Charge your computers before you come. There are never enough power outlets. If you have an extension cord with a multi-outlet head, please consider bringing it so that many people can use one outlet.

IF YOU HAVE OLD STUDY MATERIALS YOU NO LONGER NEED

If you have study guides and study materials for exams you have already completed, please consider donating them to NotLY so that we can give them out to the next group.

NotLY: Example of Weekly Email of Encouragement

This is an example of an email that goes to all of the members of NotLY. This one was sent during the recent exam blackout in July, 2013:

SOME THINGS TO DO WHILE YOU CONTINUE TO STUDY DURING THE EXAM BLACKOUT

-- Start planning your "Licensing Party," also known as your "NotLY Breakout Party." Make a list of who you are going to invite. Make it a big deal. It is a big deal. Tell everyone on the list that you are planning to invite them. Tell them that you heard it was normal for colleagues and friends to get together and buy a memorable gift for this important event. Something that will last forever and can be engraved with your full name and license number. Good choices might include Jefferson Cups made of pewter or silver (Jefferson was an architect), a Leatherman multitool, Maglite Flashlites, Fisher Bullet Spacepen (in titanium or titanium rainbow), wooden fountain pens made by Lanier in California, and map plates from Not Neutral. It does not count unless it is engraved with your name and new license number. Your date of licensure becomes your new "birthday" and you get a party every year.

-- Change your headshot photo in FACEBOOK, LINKED-IN, and any other public social media. Select a more serious photo that makes it look like you already have your license. As you know, licensed architects wear black. Don't get all Hollywood, but do get a good shot. Bonus point if you can name all six of these (hint: one of them is more famous as an administrator rather than an architect):



-- What name will you use on your architecture license? Will you use your full middle name? Do you want to add another middle name and have four? Or a double middle initial? Or use only an initial for your first name and your full middle name?

-- Start practicing your new signature. Great architects often have great signatures. This one belongs to Renzo Piano:



-- Join the American Institute of Architects as an Associate Member. Do it today. You can add "Assoc. AIA" after your name as soon as you join. Join one local AIA committee and attend regularly. There are AIA chapters in Los Angeles, Pasadena, and Orange County, plus others in surrounding communities.

-- Send us an email stating your latest NotLY number. Send a copy of the email to three NotLY colleagues. You should especially do this if you are a NotLY0.

-- Always carry a Ballast or Kaplan study guide with you. Everywhere. Make sure it looks well-used. Add post-it notes and bookmarks sticking out.

-- Order your round architects eyeglasses from Zenni for \$19 (with your prescription). You can get them in clear. Metal or rimless also (on the Zenni website, click full-rim and round.)



-- You will need a bow-tie for the "NotLY breakout party." Pocket Square Clothing has a stylish line designed by former architecture students. They cost more than average, but are made by architecture people. <http://www.pocketsquareclothing.com/>

-- Put up a sign on your mirror in the bathroom. The sign has your NotLY number. Leave room on the sign so you can add numbers as you pass exams. Look at it every day.

-- Start a "to do" list with only ten high-priority items on it. Put "NotLY study" as the first item and list it again the seventh item. Licensing really is important enough to list twice. Put more emphasis on accomplishing the big items on this list rather than the little items.

-- Always be outrageously positive. Attitude is infectious. You WILL pass those exams. No whining.

-- The complete list is not final, but the early results of the global "Occupational Prestige Comparison" are now available. Architects have always scored very highly in this international survey, and they remain firmly in the top-10 of the 2013 list:

1. College President
2. Lawyer
3. Supreme Court Judge
4. Astronaut
5. Doctor
6. College Professor
7. Architect
8. Dentist
- ...
178. Celebrity Impersonator (Hollywood, CA)
- ...
516. Skyscraper Window Washer in Chicago (summer)
- ...
737. Septic Tank Repairman
- ...
1348. WalMart Greeter
- ...
1773. Skyscraper Window Washer in Chicago (winter)
- ...
2456. Unlicensed person working in an architecture office (NotLY)
- ...

OK, we admit we made up the part about #2456, but the first eight are true. Unless you think you have a shot at becoming an astronaut or getting elected to the Supreme Court, we respectfully recommend that you consider studying for the architect registration examination today.