2017-2018 New Faculty Teaching

Dr Danielle Willkens, Assoc. AIA, FRSA, LEED AP BD+C
32733
Architecture [School] in the 21st Century:

New approaches to design education + research

Throughout my own education and involvement with architectural practice, I have been fascinated by the potential of architecture to serve as a cultural record of memory while simultaneously offering creative solutions for sustainable approaches to living and working in a globalized, digitized world. Architects have the rare professional opportunity to reflect on the past and postulate the future, actively curating history through researching and building. With this in mind, I believe that underscoring the instructional and practical intersections between architectural design and architectural history can enrich the learning levels of understanding, application, and synthesis for students. Consequently, research questions and practice-based investigations that blur the lines between design exercises and historical investigations prepare students for careers in the increasingly interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary design world.

I have been fortunate to begin my full-teaching endeavors at Auburn University’s School of Architecture, Landscape Architecture and Planning. In my formative years at Auburn, I led architectural history and studio courses for 1st through 5th year students in the Bachelor of Architecture program. Beyond our college, I have been a participant in the Biggio Center for Teaching and Learning. Additionally, after my first year at Auburn, I was a participant in the cross-disciplinary summer retreat sponsored by the Academic Sustainability Program, Fall Line Projects and Faculty Awards entitled, “Green Curriculum, Green Campus, Green City.” In conjunction, I now serve as the only instructor from our College of Architecture, Design, and Construction for a team-taught, cross-disciplinary Introduction to Sustainability course (SUST 2000).

My own research and design practices strongly guide my teaching philosophy: I am no stranger to long hours in dusty archives or wandering corridors in historic structures with my sketchbook in hand but I am also no stranger to industrial work sites and steel-toed boots. I find power tools as inspiring as arts supplies. Thus far in my career, I have straddled the connected, although many times disparate, disciplines of architectural history and architectural design. I enjoy the balance between writing and making. These interests have formed a diverse, but interconnected, path in my career thus far: design/build Project Manager, digital visualization researcher at a UNESCO World Heritage site, archival explorer of writings and drawings in seven countries, and instructor for a series of original ‘early intervention’ design programs for upper elementary students and teenagers. One of the commonalities that my explorations share is the desire to expand architectural dissemination to diverse audiences. Through individual and collaborative endeavors, I aspire to blur the lines between the traditionally perceived roles of the researcher and practitioner.

Integrated Architectural History

The typical architectural history course in professional schools of architecture needs to be reexamined. Too often, students receive writing assignments that do little to address the concepts of design thinking that dominate their studio-based training and these assignments are rarely revisited. Therefore, students learn the iterative process in the studio but it is seldom reinforced in their requisite architectural history and theory courses: students infrequently analyze and refine their own writing through multiple drafts. In hopes of building a more solid foundation of architectural researchers and writers within a professionally accredited B.Arch program, I am continually developing the

content and curriculum delivery methods for history and theory courses. Exercises in these courses challenge students to read and think critically about key projects across time and projects outside of the established canon. Simultaneously, the assignments examine the references and reasoning found in the students’ own design work. Through established assessment and consistent feedback, students can monitor the course expectations and their progress through the provided rubrics for each assignment.

My courses abandon the typical slide ID test in favor of an analytical approach to testing: students are presented with ‘unknown’ works. They must then identify an architect, movement, style, and/or place and explain their rationale, referencing specific examples. Testing more than skills in short-term memory and recall, this method aids the development of long-term working memory and retrieval. Additionally, an essential aspect of my course development includes the creation of an original research, writing, and graphic design product that, unlike a typical paper produced for an architectural history course, could form a portion of a students’ design portfolio. Semester-long, collaborative projects in self-selected teams of three to four students synthesize course content into an original ‘book’ consisting of text, sourced images, and original graphics. These books have organizing themes and present a series of clear, well-supported arguments.

Applied Research

Thus far, Auburn has been a generative laboratory for creative research. Thus, this teaching portfolio introduces several ongoing projects in collaborative practice, community engagement, and the use of digital documentation and representation for illuminating aspects of both archival research and ‘big data’ spatial analysis. These projects involve students as research assistants, introducing them to new tools, diverse team members, and applied working methodologies.
In this teaching portfolio, the anonymous words of students can be identified in these quotes boxes. All of the quotes come directly from University-sanctioned course evaluations.

Q1: The Instructor(s) encouraged me to think critically.
Q2: The grading techniques were fair.
Q3: The instructor created a conducive atmosphere for learning.
Q4: The instructor explained the course material clearly.
Q1.1: The instructor enhanced my interest in the subject.
Q1.2: The instructor was available and approachable outside of class
Q1.3: The instructor provided timely feedback on graded material
Q1.4: The Instructor’s overall teaching effectiveness was...
Q1.5: Overall, my learning in the class was...
The new, proposed Minor in the History of the Built Environment supports four of the prime institutional priorities. As evidenced by the rising number of federal grants and employment opportunities requiring trained historians of the built environment, this program will enhance student success within their major studies at Auburn and will expand the career prospects of its graduates by broadening their understanding of and skills within research methods, historical interpretation, documentary record, and preservation. This minor will be unique since there are not any similar programs within the state and, as evidenced by adaptive reuse projects in Birmingham as well as available Cultural Resource Management positions, the minor will serve as a regional and national leader in training students of the built environment.

Through collaborative projects and the development of a capstone seminar, resulting in the dissemination of scholarship as well as the production of creative work in the form of drawings, models, and interactive programs. Finally, this program aspires to enhance public engagement through the cultivation of new community history projects that will benefit the campus and the region.

This minor will be composed of a series of established courses and will be mainly housed in School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape Architecture (APLA), with the History Department as a primary partner. As a unique program to both the state and larger region, the Minor will offer students the opportunity to study the history of the built environment within a National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB) accredited School of Architecture.

This new, proposed Minor in the History of the Built Environment in the final stages of University approval
Co-developed with Associate Prof. Carla Keyvanian

Courses taught
Fall 2014 - Fall 2017

- ARCH 1010 Introduction to Architectural Design 1
- ARCH 1060 Visual Communications
- ARCH 1420 Introduction to Digital Media
- ARCH 2010 Studio 1
- ARCH 3010 Studio 3
- ARCH 3020 Studio 4
- ARCH 3110 History of World Architecture 2
- ARCH 3120 History of Modern Architecture
- ARCH 3700 History & Theory Seminar: (re) Visiting the Museum
- ARIA 3020 Studio 4A Interior Architecture
- LAND 5240 History II
- LAND 7900 Independent Study, Master of Integrated Design and Construction
- SUST 2000 Introduction to Sustainability

Contributor to:
- ARCH 4110 History of Urban Architecture
- LAND 5240/6240 History II
In addition to lectures, reading responses, and essay-based quizzes, the students of this requisite architectural history course were asked to create an original dictionary of modern architecture, explaining the key elements of ‘modern’ design through an alphabetic system (e.g. ‘A’ for arch, ‘B’ for brick). Their alphabet could be composed of a mixture of people, places, projects, or ideas; regardless of its framework, this assignment had to distill the exploration of modern architecture into twenty-six thoughtful ‘episodes’ using all letters of the alphabet. Each entry had to be carefully composed textually and graphically: approximately 300-500 words, high quality images (original or manipulated), and a short list of additional resources (e.g. primary and secondary sources that explore the episode’s theme further). In teams of three to four, students spent the semester crafting and refining these dictionaries as professionally composed records of research and critical thought, synthesized through writing, drawing, and graphic design. The text of each entry could be read in isolation as a brief, but rich, introduction to key concepts of architectural history from the Industrial Revolution to the present; however, through the process of revision and careful management of the purview of the entire project, the entries could be carefully contextualized within the study of modern architecture, presenting the reader with a particular narrative on modernism in relation to design thinking, technology, media, or urbanism. The final products were professionally printed and bound with online self-publishing (e.g. Blub).
Danielle's knowledge of the course material was excellent. Furthermore, her knowledge of events and material outside the realm of the course was superb as well. Her overall knowledge not only gave her credibility but it enhanced our learning experience. Being able to call on events and material outside of the curriculum helped us to associate and create parallels to events and movements that were being taught. Danielle’s passion for architecture and history enabled us to build on our own knowledge of history seamlessly. Her teaching style is indicative of her passion. She was always positive, encouraging, and approachable.”

- History of Modern Architecture  
ARCH3120, 2015

“I think that this was an excellent class in terms of the material we covered and the way that it was taught. Creating the dictionary was a useful tool for continued research into elements of modern architecture that we did not completely delve into during class. It allowed for enhanced knowledge about a number of architects, building, ideas, and movements.”

“The themes of the lectures were sometimes quite offbeat which was pleasant to see architecture through a new lens. I will not be ready to say goodbye to this class, which is something I have never felt before.”
The lectures were engaging, the content was interesting, and the assignments encouraged me to think critically about what I was learning. I probably learned more in this one semester of architectural history than in the other three semesters combined, simply because I was more engaged and the information was much more thorough.

- History of Modern Architecture
ARCH3120, 2015

In conjunction with the School’s Writing Plan, several of my courses involve in-depth research as well as critical revision and discipline-specific writing. My methodology for the advancement of written communication skills relies primarily on two types of writing: short essays (less than 500 words) and collaborative book projects. In both exercises, students develop a clear thesis, demonstrate the use of proper references and citations, and integrate graphics with their textual arguments. Additionally, students revise several drafts, avoiding the ‘submit and forget’ mentality. These initiatives are bolstered by continuing professional development through the Office of University Writing’s WriteBites.

“I am SO sad I won’t have you as a professor again. I LOVED your class. I don’t think I ever even thought of skipping because you made it so fun and enjoyable.”

“The lectures were engaging, the content was interesting, and the assignments encouraged me to think critically about what I was learning. I probably learned more in this one semester of architectural history than in the other three semesters combined, simply because I was more engaged and the information was much more thorough.”

- History of Modern Architecture
ARCH3120, 2015
In addition to lectures, reading responses, and essay-based quizzes, the students of this requisite architectural history course were asked to create a ‘History in Parallel’ book that explored key concepts within the global history of the built environment from the 1400s to the 1900s. The successful completion of this project was hinged on productive collaboration within self-selected teams and the continuous revision of research questions as well as written content and original graphics that supported the team’s central thesis argument.

This 11”x17” book in landscape format needed to address ten to twelve buildings/sites/architects. Through their selected examples, the teams needed to place projects from across the globe and from different time periods in conversation through the development of a thematic essay and the creation of supporting orthographic drawings, executed at the same scale, and original diagrams. The tone of text employed within the books needed to be accessible to someone outside of related architectural professions but in-depth enough to intrigue a practitioner.

“Most knowledgeable professor I’ve ever taken a class from. She knows everything about every subject we covered in class and presented it to us in the best ways possible. I would love to travel the world with her!”

- Global History of Architecture II
ARCH3110, 2016
“BY FAR MY FAVORITE CLASS EVER. No joke. She is very engaging with the class, and she teaches like she is telling a story. I never had a single instance where I was having a hard time paying attention. The book project was hard because of time, but in the end I am glad we did it because it is an incredible piece to keep and have. In addition to architectural history, I have learned a lot about the history of other things, like graphics, and I have learned how to apply those things to my architectural studies.”

- Global History of Architecture II
ARCH 3110, 2016

“Danielle conducted the class flawlessly. She presented large amounts of information in a comprehensible manner. She challenged her students to question why architecture developed the way it did and to consider the responsibility that we as designers have to shape its future.”

The tone of text employed within the books needed to be accessible to someone outside of related architectural professions but in-depth enough to intrigue a practitioner. Each parallel contained a list of resources (e.g. primary and secondary sources, such as articles, books, and legitimate websites) that were referenced during research and could be used to explore the parallel’s theme further.
Summer Option

intensive, artifact-based exercises for students entering the architecture program

ARCH 1010: Intro to Architectural Design I
ARCH 1060: Visual Communications
ARCH1420: Introduction to Digital Media

These courses provide an introduction to the design process as well as the graphic skills needed to communicate of form and ideas in two and three dimensions. By the end of the intensive ARCH 1010 course, administered every weekday for four weeks, students can identify the key issues of a simple architectural design problem, research these issues, visualize alternative solutions using a variety of media and modeling techniques, develop the potential solutions, and clearly articulate why the solution is appropriate and sustainable. The rapid pace of the course requires that students make decisions quickly and with conviction, thereby learning critical organizational skills and working habits for their subsequent endeavors in architectural studios. This page represents work executed during the two summers (2015, 016) that I co-taught summer option studio (35-50 students) with another instructor.

In their final week, students were challenged with the creation of a space of inspiration: a working space (500 sf, double height), a place for rest (100 sf, single height), a stair, a fireplace, and an exterior space partially covered for work or play. The site was a narrow lot with a steep elevation change. The design solution had to address a connection to the water, the landscape, and the road.

“The analysis I received of my work helped me to see my projects, as well as other’s, in new ways and stimulated my creativity and thinking.”
- Intro to Architectural Design I
ARCH 1010, 2015
One of the most important skills required of architects is the ability to design with light. It defines form and space; it creates experiences. It is one of the most elemental mediums found within the work of celebrated architects. Therefore, the inaugural exercise of the summer option studio in 2016 concentrated on the replication of a dramatic study using light as an agent in the experience of a space. Firstly, students researched randomly assigned architects, using printed publications to find a key image of a thoughtful, interior space with a dynamic play of natural light. Students were then given the weekend to reproduce their selected image as an 8” x 8” original rendering in graphite pencil on a half sheet of Arches 140 hotpress paper.

Revisiting an assignment from the earlier portion of the summer 2017 design sequence, students studied light and tonal variation by designing and hand-drafting a surface analytique study of their 3D, folded block walls, a modular construction in Bristol board. The physical layout and rendering of the surface analytique drawing needed to express the wall’s original (or redesigned) geometric underpinnings and ordered system, reflecting light and casting shadows on adjacent modules. In the drawing, the individual modules measured approximately 1” x 1” and the drawing filled 90% of the 22 x 30 sheet. Appropriate line weights were utilized and ink washes were applied to activate the patterns of light and shadow.

“Overall she challenged me in a course that I thought I wasn’t going to make it through and I did and now I have set a standard for myself and what I can do.”

- Visual Communications
ARCH1060, 2017

“Overall she challenged me in a course that I thought I wasn’t going to make it through and I did and now I have set a standard for myself and what I can do.”

- Intro to Digital Media
ARCH1420, 2017
“[She] pushed me past my limits, beyond grateful for it...Danielle was extremely approachable. I appreciate that she helped direct us at the beginning of projects and then gave us room to explore design elements individually as the project progressed.”

- Studio I

ARCH 2010: Studio I

Auburn Print Shop (7 weeks)
In this first project within the architectural studio sequence of the professional degree, students explored their immediate surroundings: downtown Auburn. In order to build observation, survey, and orthogonal drawing skills, the students measured and hand-drafted elevations of the city’s urban core. Identifying the potential for densification, a site was selected within this area and the students proposed the insertion of a live/work print shop. Forwarding their detailing skills and the studio’s integration with ARCH 3320 Materials & Methods I, the students designed the material and sectional properties of their print shop’s façade.

Downtown Auburn Hotel (8 weeks)
Situated on a surface parking lot near the university, this project asked students to design a boutique hotel with a ground floor urban grocery store. In preparation for the design proposal, students completed a collaborative research and analysis project that covered a range of topics: site documentation, program breakdown, repetitive unit buildings, hotel design history and components, structural systems for mixed use buildings, and urban grocers.

Architectural Studio
Design through iterative making; emphasis on craft and the integration of manual and digital representational techniques

ARCH 2010: Studio I
ARCHITECTURE AS SCULPTURE

In response to the history of the site and past visits to Peter Zumthor’s sculpture gardens that once accompanied the Farnsworth building, the new visitor center is an event and site design in one of creating an architectural landscape that enhances the experience. Each new landscape within the experience has a designed view and approach. The resulting visitor is exposed to the Farnsworth building, site, its current location, and in the floodplain area. One in this location among will, some time, become part of the park experience.

The Farnsworth House is a precious landmark that must be protected from the inevitable flooding. A sustainable design for the new visitor center and a practical solution to the threat of flooding are the best way to honor Mies’s masterpiece. Aim is the best way to ensure that the site will be enjoyable for as long as possible. Dialogue between these important elements of its identity is imperative in the design of its new vision.

“Danielle is my favorite studio professor. I have had so far. She is the most approachable and very helpful. She has high standards, which I appreciate, but is realistic about what is achievable for second year students.”
- Studio II

“I cannot say enough good things about Danielle. She challenged me to think about and achieve things that I never thought I would. Extremely helpful and very approachable. 11/10.”

50th Annual Wood Comp: ACSA's 2015-2016 International Student Design Competition
Farnsworth House: New Visitor Experience, Preservation as Provocation (9 weeks)

Students were challenged to create a new Visitor Center and approach experience for the iconic Farnsworth House in Plano, IL by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. As part of this competition, the studio’s teaching team led a five-day field trips to Chicago, IL that included walking tours in the Loop, a tour of Frank Lloyd Wright's House and Studio in Oak Park, significant architectural projects at the University of Chicago and IIT campuses, the Sullivan Auditorium and a day-trip to the Farnsworth House.

In the project, students were particularly challenged to address the troubling, rising waters at the site and this inaugurated key design debates about the power of place and nature of historic preservation, especially for a structure divorced from its original program.
Valley Hostel (4 weeks)
The Langdale Mill (b. 1866) and its adjacent, decommissioned hydroelectric plant (b. 1929) were selected as the sites for the studio’s adaptive reuse project, asking the students to critically question Carl Elefante’s phrase that, “the greenest building is the one already built.” After the conclusion of the project, six of the studio’s thirty-eight students were selected to present their work to Valley’s Mayor, members of the City Council, and the site’s potential developer.

Annual Concrete Competition (8 weeks)
Challenged to create a monastery in a small textile mill town that spans Lanett, Alabama and West Point, Georgia, this adaptive reuse project revitalized an abandoned brick warehouse block (c.1880s-1970s) along the main street corridor running parallel to the Chattahoochee River. The program included a residential component for the monks as well as a refectory, library, and chapel. Students were also challenged to incorporate a community outreach function, such as a soup kitchen or literacy center, into this adaptive reuse project that would be integral to the service mission of the monastic residents. Students were asked to present their work in a final, 3’ x 6’ board and from the thirty-eight submissions, the jury short-listed ten projects for presentation and then presented monetary awards to four students.

“Danielle was fantastic! She is definitely my favorite professor thus far and I would love to have her again for studio and/or for another seminar. She was always very patient and listened to what they had to say and was able to “get into” their project and give effective feedback for students to move forward in the design process. She was very approachable outside of class and her door was always open for students to stop by her office and ask for help. Just like in seminar, she introduced us to new designers and new ways of thinking about design. I am so happy I stayed on campus this semester because I believe I learned a great deal about architecture and design from Danielle that I would have not learned otherwise.”

- Studio III ARIA 3120, 2014
Architecture Studio IV: National Park Service (NPS) Ranger Station (15 weeks)

President Wilson established the NPS in 1916 with the mission of preserving sites of natural and cultural significance around the nation to provide “enjoyment, education, and inspiration.” With a variety of sites, ranging from historical sites and parks to national monuments, battlefields, preserves, and parkways, NPS Rangers serve as resources for visitors and stewards of the built and natural environment. There are tens of thousands of Ranger Stations scattered across the nation, in urban and rural sites, but few of these stations are ecologically responsible, efficient, or intriguing structures that fully respond to their sites or fulfill the needs of the Rangers in terms of operational efficiency or security. Over the course of the semester, the studio carefully examined a single program with two different deployments: a universally applicable Ranger Station prototype for the NPS and a station specifically catered for the most visited site within the purview of the organization, the National Mall in Washington, D.C. The 21st century Ranger Station was a facet of the 2012 Ideas Competition for the National Mall but most of the competition’s entrants focused on other, large-scale planning aspects of the competition so the NPS’s outdated, impermanent, and nostalgic ‘cabins’ have not yet been addressed. In addition to on-site investigations at the Tuskegee National Forest and NPS sites in Tuskegee, this studio consisted of a 5-day field studies in Washington, D.C. where students had a tour of the U.S. Capitol from the Architect of the Capitol, behind-the-scenes site visits with the GSA’s Director of the Office of Federal High Performance Green Buildings, a tour of the LEED Platinum Finnish Embassy, and an architectural tour of the National Building Museum.

“...very personable and understanding of each student’s strengths and weaknesses.” - Studio IV
ARCH3020, 2015
Early intervention design education directly addresses the need for architects to be active members of community programs, advocates for the profession, and practitioners engaged in pre-college educational scaffolds.

Based on extensive experience leading design-centric youth education initiatives, ranging from online platforms with the Duke University’s Talent Identification Program (TIP) to site-based programs in two states as well as Auburn’s Birmingham Design Camp at the Urban Studio, it is clear that the multi-modal delivery used in design education can engage students of various learning types. Furthermore, the student-led discussions and research investigations found in design education cultivate beneficial collaborative skills as well as academic independence.

Geo-location: student participants 2014 - 2017

Parent feedback:

“It was a real eye-opening experience. The course was tougher than we expected - our daughter really had to work hard and even learned a computer drafting/modeling program to complete a number of projects. The instructor was so enthusiastic about Architecture.” (2015)

“He thoroughly enjoyed the course. He worked on the daily projects each day for hours. He is excited to make this field his future. He understands the field of architect a lot more.” (2015)

“She learned a great amount from this class. It gave her an appreciation of design/buildings. This is has expanded her mind and she has shown an interest to take other architecture classes.” (2016)

“She learned to better express herself in front of strangers, a great deal about architecture and a couple of very cool software programs.” (2016)

“I know she [my student] was challenged and this course helped with organization, research, and understanding. She learned so many basics regarding a field she is seeking as a career.” (2017)

“My child and I were very satisfied with this entire program and LOVED the professor. She was very knowledgeable and patient with the students.” (2017)

- Architecture: Design + Reinvention
  Duke TIP eStudies

The phrase ‘early intervention’ is primarily associated with developmental educational studies. However, reports from Georgetown University’s Center on Education1 that name architecture as the worst college major and the torrent of internet articles2 that distort Georgetown’s studies into a series of provocative headlines underscore the importance of design education advocacy and the active cultivation of the next generation of designers, future clients, and conscientious stewards of the built and natural environment.
The College of Architecture, Design and Construction launched a new, innovative summer camp for rising 6th - 8th grade students consisting of two, week-long day camps, hosted in Birmingham at Auburn’s Urban Studio. In 2015 served as lead faculty on the development and execution of the camp, assisted by two faculty members from the School of Industrial and Graphic Design as well as four undergraduate teaching assistants. In 2017, I led the camp with a faculty member from the Landscape Architecture program.

Over the past three years, the camp has welcomed seventy-eight students from the local region as well as neighboring states. Through a series of diverse but interconnected, hands-on exercises, students learned the fundamental principles of design as well as essential skills such as sketching, model making, and select aspects of digital design and fabrication. They were challenged with a number of design and construction exercises in both two and three dimensions, ranging from the creation and development of a personal logo to an urban sketching experiment where they were asked to help redesign the streetscape. Working in both analog and digital methods, students were able to craft models by hand using paper and cardboard, they made a series of cornstarch casts, and they translated their skills into the digital age by eventually designing and producing refined objects using 3D printers.

Taking full advantage of the rich history, built fabric, and creative industries of Birmingham, the city was used as an extended classroom for the camp: students participated in an extensive urban scavenger hunt and analyzed the city through on-site exercises focused on industrial and graphic design, architecture, landscape architecture, and urban planning.
As one of the most significant, extant landmarks associated with the Civil Rights Movement, the National Historic Landmark (2013) of the Edmund Pettus Bridge was the site of the infamous conflict of “Bloody Sunday” on March 7th, 1965. Here, 600 peaceful demonstrators were attacked by Alabama State Troopers, armed with billy clubs and tear gas, as they were attempting to march to Montgomery. Despite the vivid archival material, there is little that addresses the physical context and experiential timeline of “Bloody Sunday”: visitors can still visit the bridge, large portions of the built and natural environment have changed dramatically. In order to address these discrepancies and enhance the public access to interpretive materials on such a critical event in American and social history, a multidisciplinary team has been formed, leveraging research interests as well as their collective experiences with archival investigation, databases, construction technology, and digital modeling to produce a digital representation of the built and natural environment during Bloody Sunday.
Society of Architectural Historians’ H. Allen Brooks Traveling Fellowship
June 2016 - May 2017

My sponsored research, entitled ‘Immersive Islands: sustainable tourism and cultural heritage’, was an in-depth study of the impact of tourism and environmental changes on key historical sites and landscapes through the lens of a select number of island sites: Iceland and the Faroe Islands in the Norwegian Sea, Cuba, and Japan.

The unparalleled fellowship undoubtedly changed the way that I understand architectural history and the experiences have inspired new ideas for teaching the requisite architectural history surveys in professional architecture programs that can move beyond chronology and certain geographic biases (eastern vs. western) to pursue more thematic approaches to history that emphasize parallels across time and place through the lenses of form, building materials, technology, and the exchange of information through travel. Over the course of the fellowship, I learned to travel lightly but nearly half of my ‘kit’ was dedicated to the tools of documentation: sketchbooks, drawing instrument, cameras, and a UAV (unmanned aerial vehicle), testing the limits of architectural record in the 21st century. These methods are, now, informing new initiatives for digital integration and multimedia in studio and heritage documentation.

“Thank you for this surprising, eloquent, and beautifully illustrated report. I never before understood why anyone would visit Iceland, and now I do.”
- SAH Brooks research blog comment
August 7, 2016

“Danielle, thank you for this thoughtful and informative report (it goes without saying that your images contribute tremendously to your words). I have so enjoyed traveling and learning from your thought-provoking posts! As one whose home is in the southern Caribbean, I’ve seen first hand that tourism comes with pluses and minuses...your point about field work for university students with relevant learning is also important; could some of those resident Cubans be sponsored as part of an exchange, both groups sharing ideas and learning with/from each other?”
- SAH Brooks research blog comment
February 23, 2017