Candidate Statement

Schools of Architecture have an important and diverse mission that offers enormous potential for utilizing the power of design thinking to creatively shape the future of our communities. Academic institutions are currently facing numerous challenges and opportunities including shifts in student demographics, rapid technological changes, and pressure to increase revenue, challenges posed by COVID-19, among others. Within this increasingly challenging context, schools of architecture need to objectively demonstrate the significant value they bring to our universities, and to the community at large, through our diverse academic programs, faculty research and scholarship, and direct community engagement activities. My interest in the position of ACSA Second Vice President is based on my strong appreciation of the critical role that ACSA plays in facilitating this potential through serving our faculty, students, schools, and the discipline at large.

As past member of ACSA’s Planning Committee and past Chair of its Research + Scholarship Committee between 2017-2019, I am deeply committed to ACSA’s current strategic initiatives, which I contributed to developing. First, as a faculty member in a Hispanic-Serving Institution, I am acutely aware of the access, equity, and diversity challenges facing our schools, discipline, and profession. I appreciate the continuing need to actively and effectively engage with these important issues and explore how to mitigate their negative impact. Access and equity become even more critical considering the ongoing COVID-19 challenges. It is now clear that these challenges disproportionately affect minority and underserved communities, which typically lack access to needed resources and infrastructure. My strong belief in and commitment to access, equity and diversity is both an intellectual position as well as one that draws from my personal experiences and background. Diversity and inclusion are ethical imperatives and should always be protected and supported.

Second, I consider ACSA’s commitment to enriching architectural pedagogy as a fundamental component of the organization’s mission. I believe ACSA plays an effective role in supporting our schools as they engage with the ongoing need to preserve the core qualities of architectural education while simultaneously contributing to our universities’ response to societal challenges such as climate change, equity and justice, human health and wellbeing, among others. Schools of architecture should also take advantage of the potential offered by online and remote education in certain types of academic programs, while maintaining quality and rigor. Finally, I am strongly committed to ACSA’s objective of enhancing research culture in schools of architecture across the full range of research paradigms that exist in all our schools. I consider this diversity of expertise and interests to be a major strength of our discipline. I am also strongly committed to strengthening collaboration with the profession. As past President of the Architectural Research Centers Consortium (ARCC), I believe I have a deep understanding of the challenges and opportunities for research, scholarship, and creative activities in our schools, and how these important activities can be utilized to increase our impact within our universities and communities.

An architect by training, I started my career with 8 years of professional practice experience in which I worked with the Egyptian Aga Khan Award-winning Architect Abdelhalim Ibrahim. As an educator, I have more than 25 years of teaching experience, in which I taught design studios, environmental systems courses, and specialized graduate seminars in environmental sustainability, building technology, performance simulation, and urban sustainability. I have 26 peer-reviewed journal and conference papers published in a variety of venues, and a strong record of collaborative, interdisciplinary and externally funded projects. This includes participating as PI or Co-PI in externally funded research projects totaling more than $2.5M.

My leadership experience includes serving for four years as Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and Research in UTSA’s College of Architecture, Construction and Planning. I have also been engaged in national level service roles in multiple organizations including ARCC, ACSA, and AIA. Within ACSA, I led the R+S committee to develop two important white papers. The first explored the relationship between architectural education/research and the STEM disciplines, and the second focused on assessing quality in architectural research and scholarship. During my tenure as ARCC President, institutional membership increased by 40% over four years. We also strengthened the quality of ARCC’s annual conferences and awards programs, and developed new programs including a new research funding program aimed at addressing the dearth of national research funding sources in architecture. I currently serve on the AIA’s Higher Education Advisory Team (HEAT), which advises the AIA on the issues, needs, trends, and aspirations of architectural education and educators.

Following in the steps of so many distinguished colleagues, I consider joining ACSA’s leadership team as an honor, a challenge and an opportunity. With your support, I look forward to building on ACSA’s many strengths and successes, and continuing to serve architecture faculty, schools and our discipline.
Abbreviated Curriculum Vitae

EDUCATION

Doctor of Philosophy in Architecture, Texas A&M University 2006
MSc in Architecture, Energy Efficient Building, Oxford Brookes University 1999
BSc in Architecture, Ain Shams University, Egypt 1991

ACADEMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE APPOINTMENTS

Associate Professor, University of Texas at San Antonio 2012 – Present
Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies 2013 – 2017
Assistant Professor 2006 – 2012

PRACTICE

Aga Khan Cultural Services Egypt, Aga Khan Trust for Culture, Cairo, Egypt 1999 – 2001
Community Design Collaborative, Abdelhalim Ibrahim, Cairo, Egypt 1992 – 1998

AWARDS AND HONORS

UTSA Nominee for the UT System Academy of Distinguished Teachers 2019
UT System Regents’ Outstanding Teaching Award, University of Texas System 2014
College of Architecture Faculty Outstanding Research/Scholarship Award, UTSA 2011 & 2012

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS


SELECTED FUNDED GRANTS AND CONTRACTS

National Workshop on Architectural Faculty in Environmental Sustainability Research (WAFES), National Science Foundation (NSF), $52,900, (Co-PI) 2019 - 2020
Hydrology Infrastructure Data Collection and Analysis Services, TX General Land Office (GLO), $1,536,419 (Co-PI) 2019
Post Occupancy Evaluation of Overland Partners Projects, Overland Partners, $23,000 (PI) 2019 - Present
City of San Antonio Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) – Phase I, CPS Energy, $500,000 (PI) 2017 - 2018
Under 1-Roof- Home Energy Assessment, City of San Antonio, $38,000 (PI) 2016 - 2019
City of San Antonio Sustainable Neighborhood Planning Tool, City of San Antonio, $60,000 (PI) 2010 - 2012

SELECTED SERVICE LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

President, Architectural Research Centers Consortium (ARCC) 2016 – 2020
Chair, ACSA Research + Scholarship Committee 2017 – 2019
Chair, UTSA Academy of Distinguished Teaching Scholars 2017 - 2018
Vice President, Architectural Research Centers Consortium (ARCC) 2014 – 2016
Chair, Public Facilities and Community Safety Plan Element Working Group (PEWG), City of San Antonio Comprehensive Plan 2015 – 2016