

The Preparation and Training of Expert Studio Reviewers

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Abstract : In design education, professional education is delivered in a studio, where students learn and understand their discipline. This learning methodology culminates in a final review, where students present their work before instructors and invited reviewers, known as jurors. These jurors are recognized experts who add a wide diversity of opinions in their feedback to students. This feedback can be provided in multiple formats, mainly a verbal critique of the work. To better understand how these expert reviewers prepare for a studio review, a survey was distributed to reviewers at a multi-disciplinary design school within the United States. Five design disciplines are involved in this case study: architecture, graphic design, industrial design, interior design, and landscape architecture. Respondents (n=122) provided information about if and how they received training on how to critique and participate in a final review. Common forms of training included mentorship, modeled behavior from other designers/past professors, workshops on critique from the instructing faculty prior to the crit session, and by being a practicing design professional. Respondents also gave feedback about how much the instructor provided course materials prior to the review in order to better prepare for student interaction. Finally, respondents indicated if they had interaction, and in what format, with students prior to the final review. Typical responses included participation in studio desk crits, a midterm jury member, meetings with students, and email or social media correspondence. While the focus of this study is the studio review, the findings are equally applicable to other disciplines. Suggestions will be provided on how to improve the preparation of guests in the learning process and how their interaction can positively influence student engagement.

Keywords : critique, design, education, evaluation, juror

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