Experiential Design – Rethinking relations between people, objects and environments

• Paper / Proposal Title:
Developing Classroom Design Guidelines for the University of California, Berkeley

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• Abstract (300 words):
In 2012, University of California, Berkeley began an ambitious program to renew their 220 general assignment classrooms. Seven years later, they have improved two-thirds of their classrooms and have one-third left to renovate. In the process of doing systematic renovation projects, they found a need to develop benchmarks and criteria that guide decision making for which classroom spaces to prioritize for future improvements.

Spatializing, Inc. was hired this fall to work closely with the Office of the Registrar at University of California, Berkeley to develop and maintain classroom design guidelines that are evidence-based, measurable, and repeatable. We are at the start of our work
and have the opportunity to chronicle our experience from the beginning of the process through roll-out and possibly into testing.

Evidence-based design has become a proven strategy in the field of healthcare design, but other project types still lag in this important work. Several organizations have been developed to champion healthy standards for K-12 education, for instance, Collaborative for High Performance Schools, LEED for Schools, and OECD’s ELE. However, a similar focus has not been applied to the higher education environment.

Our objective is to canvass the existing body of knowledge surrounding high performance schools, evidence-based design, higher education classroom standards of other institutions, and sustainability stands like WELL to develop a comprehensive standard that addresses quantitative and qualitative criteria. In combination with developing the criteria, we will also develop a series of surveys to further validate and improve our research. We intend to collaborate with organizations like the Center for the Built Environment, and other professors and disciplines associated with the University of California, Berkeley.

With successful implementation of the classroom guidelines and maintenance program, we hope to further extrapolate our findings and methods to learning environments in corporate settings in addition to higher education settings.

• Author(s) Biography (200 words each):

Michelle Gayle combines over 20 years of interior design and architecture practice with an MBA to provide humanistic solutions that embrace technology and are grounded in metrics. The award-winning projects that Michelle has participated in push the boundaries of design for education, workplace and sustainability. In her career, she has been a lead interior designer, furniture specifier, project architect, space planner, construction administrator and project manager on projects ranging from higher education buildings to museums and learning centers. Projects include notable museums such as the Monterey Bay Aquarium and the Exploratorium; libraries and classroom buildings at CSU Monterey Bay, UC Santa Cruz, UC Berkeley and UC Merced; and workplace projects for non-profit and for-profit organizations of all sizes. Michelle’s portfolio includes 3 net-zero energy projects. 50% of all projects completed have achieved LEED Gold or Platinum. In 2016, Michelle founded Spatializing, Inc. with the goal to facilitate the creation of interior environments that are productive, inspiring, and healthy. The Spatializing team cares about both the physical and mental wellbeing of the users of our spaces. Michelle is also an adjunct faculty at California College for the Arts where she teaches building systems to interior design students.

Jade Muir is a recent graduate of the California College of the Arts with a BFA in Interior Design. Jade was an exemplary student, receiving nominations for jury prize, history
theory, and student leadership. Jade has had a range of diverse experience prior to discovering interior design. Those experiences make her design perspective rich and empathetic. Jade is inspired by the idea that design can challenge and change the way we think and act in a space and the way we live our daily lives. Jade is the research assistant for this project.