Teaching urban design: the UQAM Praxis III studio approach

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Abstract:

The professional urban planning program at Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM) was founded in 1976. From 1993 to 2007, a program based on learning the theoretical and practical notions of urbanism has been developed around the « Praxis » studios. The Praxis I studio is aimed at the acquisition of the methods of research on the social and economic dimensions and on the physical aspect of urban form. Praxis II is oriented towards the learning of the operational tools of urban planning practice in Quebec. Finally, Praxis III is the highlight of the program because the students are asked to elaborate a large-scale project to develop an urban design approach in the last year of the program. The objective of the research is to study the pedagogical approach of the project organized throughout the whole academical year. The questions are: In what context is the project elaborated? What is the content and what methods are used in the design approach? What are the results? The ten recommendations for enhancing urban design teaching and learning formulated by Strickland (Strickland, 2017) are used to answer these interrogations.
• Author Biography:

François Racine is a registered architect (Order of architects of the province of Quebec, Canada) and urban planner (Order of urban planners of the province of Quebec, Canada). He has worked in the domain of urban design for twenty years and he had his own firm with his associate, Cecile Baird, architect (Atelier BRIC). He is now an associate professor of urban design at Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM). He is responsible of the urban design studio of the urban planning program since 2015. He also does research on the evolution of the urban design practice in Montreal from 1956 to today and has published numerous articles on the subject in the Journal of Urban Design, Urban Design and Planning, Urban Form and Design and Urban Morphology. He also conducts codesign exercises to study the process of collective urban design.