ONLINE EDUCATION: TEACHING IN A TIME OF CHANGE

• Paper / Proposal Title: Architecture Education Challenges in the Pandemic Era

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• Abstract (300 words):

This paper aims to investigate the gap between face to face and online architecture education in Middle Eastern countries through an examination of the literature review and a survey of an existing practice-education program in the Middle East. The survey targets architecture educators’ experience and challenges with the sudden movement to online education caused by the pandemic of COVID-19. Indeed, the case of online education is more challenging for architectural curriculum than most other disciplines, since most design (studio) courses require some form of physical interactions and hands-on to conduct a large part of the course requirements. Furthermore, not all faculties, departments, and staff could smoothly shift to an online mode and most of them have never dealt with this. From the survey findings, a framework was developed to enhance the overall structure of online education and minimize the gap between physical and online architecture learning in the Middle East. Educators need to develop architecture curriculums. Such development should not only suite online systems with less dependence on tangible on-campus materials but also needs to maintain more creativity and freedom of choice. Educators also need to evaluate and enhance the students’ learning experience by benefitting from the availability of technologies, tools, and shared knowledge. Along with this, it may also be the time to expand the architectural curriculum, merge across disciplines, and truly work towards building the future.
• Author(s) Biography (200 words each):

Dalia Hafiz is an architect, academic, researcher, and phenomenologist. She received her Ph.D. and master’s degree from the school of Architecture and Design (A+D), Virginia Tech, USA with several excellence awards. She taught and helped to teach various courses in both architecture and interior design fields in several universities in the US, Egypt, and the United Arab Emirates. She has a variety of research interests including exploring ways to enhance the relationship between education and practice of architecture, daylighting, visual discomfort, wayfinding in interior spaces and outdoors, design aid for visually impaired/elderly and energy-saving technologies, enhancing the quality of smart city citizens. Dalia published articles related to her research in several conferences, newsletters, and publications in the USA, the UAE, and Egypt, in additions to several book chapters.

Dr. Lorenza Di Pilla is currently Assistant Professor at the Al Ghurair University College of Architecture and Interior Design (architecture courses). She got her MSc. in Civil Engineering in Italy, as well as her PhD in Architecture (Doctor Europaeus additional title from Aalborg University – Denmark). She achieved the Postgraduate Diploma in “Integrated Systems for Environmental and Business Quality” and the Postgraduate diploma in “Building construction management” in Italy. Dr. Lorenza is chartered as Acoustic Technician in the National Italian Register and her main research activities are focused on the field of Building Physics and Bioclimatic Architectural Principles, also involving the subjects of Energy and Sustainability in buildings, Energy Conservation and Optimization, Renewable Energies application, Energy efficient retrofits.