ONLINE EDUCATION: TEACHING IN A TIME OF CHANGE

• Paper / Proposal Title:
Construction Off-Site: An experimental summer practice program

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• Abstract (300 words):
“Construction Off-Site” is an online summer practice program developed by TED University as an alternative to on-site summer practices which suffered from the negative impacts of Covid-19 pandemics and the lock down conditions in summer 2020 - most of the construction sites either stopped working or refused to offer internship positions. Internship practices are considered as an inseparable component of professional education in architecture since they introduce students with the real-life context and help them acquire practical knowledge. One of the internship practices that architectural schools in Turkey incorporate in their undergraduate curriculum is the compulsory summer practice on site, in which students observe construction processes in an actual construction site, take part in an interdisciplinary team, document their experience in daily logs, and prepare a report. Completing this summer practice, each student is expected to be able to describe the responsibilities of the actors in construction processes, identify construction works, building materials, and machinery used in construction sites, conceptualize the building as a system composed of integrated components, relate technical drawings and construction documents with actual
building processes, and recognize the role of management in organization of construction sites. “Construction Off-Site” aims to fill in for the on-site summer practice through a tripartite structure: (1) a narrative series on the history of construction sector and stories of mega-projects in Turkey told by an experienced project manager; (2) documentaries covering real-life stories and construction processes of buildings which stand out in terms of integrity of building technologies to design intentions, complexities of construction technique, or contextual challenges; and (3) webinars on materials and applications by pioneering manufacturing firms. The results of the student survey conducted at the end of the program shows that, -although it was born out of urgency and shall not replace the on-site summer practice- “Construction Off-Site” overcomes some of the major shortcomings of the typical on-site summer practice and provides insight for the future to design a hybrid program which involves both on-site and off-site components.

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

Heves Beşeli

Received her B.Arch (2002-06), M.Arch (2006-09), and Ph.D (2009-15) in Architecture from Middle East Technical University, Faculty of Architecture, Heves Beşeli works as an Assistant Professor in TED University Department of Architecture. Teaching in architectural design studios as well as courses on building technologies and sustainability, she has been the internship coordinator of the department for the past four years. She is also an active member of MIAK Association for Accreditation of Architectural Education, which aims at determining and improving the teaching and learning standards of architectural schools in Turkey. Her major research interests include design education, architectural precedents, and architectural and ecological encounters.

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