ONLINE EDUCATION: TEACHING IN A TIME OF CHANGE

• Paper / Proposal Title:
Period of Silence

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• Abstract (300 words):
In the discipline of architecture and design, making with one’s hands is essential to the learning process. Much of this learning is heuristic and can be self-guided by the student. Professors provide some framework or set of constraints, but it is up to the student to steer the design direction. Zoom has challenged this type of teaching and learning in many ways from swapping hands-on making to digital modeling, in-studio conversations to breakout rooms, and sitting with one’s work to constant screen-time. This paper challenges and resists screen-time by having students turn off zoom during class sessions for more analog time away from the screen. The paper will explore various formats to structure and successfully accomplish this. One example is a method where the professor “bookends” the class session starting with a twenty-minute check-in and mini-lecture, after which zoom is turned off for all students to work and create in their trusted space. During this time, the professor remains on the zoom call for questions where a student can jump back into the remote class. After 2-3 hours of substantial work time everyone rejoins the remote class for the last fifteen minutes to ask questions and share thoughts. Methods such as this improve productivity, independence, trust, and accumulation of high-quality design work. Similarly, successful design practices operate in similar ways...
and a close examination and comparison of these case-studies will provide further insight to structuring remote courses to include off-line periods of silence.

- **Author(s) Biography (200 words each):**

Nick is a licensed and registered architect in Virginia, Texas, and New York. He is a Founding Partner of Studio Figure, where he oversees various project typologies across multiple scales. In conjunction with co-directing projects at Studio Figure, Nick has taught architecture and design at the Rhode Island School of Design, University of Virginia, Pratt Institute, and Parsons School of Design where he spent thirteen years teaching and developing the curriculum. While at Parsons, Nick wrote and shaped drawing courses, numerous design studios, and established the Parsons Street Seats design-build program with a research grant awarded by the Tishman Environment and Design Center. In addition, he led the Parsons Design Workshop, an M.Arch graduate level design-build studio that designs and fully constructs community-based projects on a pro bono basis. Currently, Nick is an Assistant Professor of Architecture at James Madison University, where his research and teaching focuses on the synthesis between empathetic research and empowerment offered through architecture.