

# DOME + NOMAS Major Topics and Questions

Summer Meetings 2020

## Coursework and Studio Culture:

*Q: Are there designated places on campus where students can go to work or break between classes?*

A: The [UT coronavirus website](#) states that students will still be able to set up hammocks at Humanities Plaza, find quiet spots in Hodges Library, enjoy common spaces in the Student Union, residence halls, sorority and fraternity houses and other areas. In the A+A throughout the atrium, the college has set up cubicles on the platform adjacent to the wood shop and in the areas surrounding the atrium for students to use for studying or relaxing between classes (this is called “hoteling”). For sanitization purposes, please do not eat at the cubicles (signs to this effect have been posted in the cubicles).

*Q: How will the CoAD be proactive about supporting students - especially 1st years - as they adjust to campus life and the workload associated with studying architecture?*

A: The primary means of engaging with first-year students will be the college’s Peer Mentor Program, the Design Living/Learning Community, and Design FYS. This year, Design FYS will include all freshmen for the first time. Each of the four cohorts will include architecture, interior architecture, and graphic design students. In addition to weekly online lectures the FYS students will also have regular small group discussions conducted by upper-year teaching assistants.

A new event, *College Connect*, has been established by the university to ease the transition to college life. The dean and school directors met (online) with all of the college’s freshmen on August 17 to provide an overview of the college and answer questions.

The Student Development staff led by Director Julie Beckman intends to do periodic check-ins with the first-years, prior to advising season and again before they head into final reviews/exams.

Fifth-year students are also coordinating an effort to collect studio supplies that they plan to pass down to the first-years over the course of the year.

*Q: Are there financial and/or academic resources that exist for students studying entirely off-campus?*

A: Students studying entirely off campus are considered full-time students with the same academic support that students on campus receive. In the college, students who are learning off campus will still be able to access the Fab Lab remotely. If there is a sudden change, as there was in spring 2020, the college will follow university protocols in regard to possible refunds.

*Q: What is differential tuition and why does the College of Architecture and Design require it?*

A: This college is a professional college, and like three other professional colleges at UT, Knoxville (Nursing, Law and Engineering), students pay differential tuition. The college provided

details about differential tuition in spring in various ways, including in the college's electronic newsletter called Coronavirus Update, which was a supplement to our biweekly e-newsletter, *sketchbook*. Both of these publications were sent via e-mail to everyone in the college. Here are excerpts and links from April:

[Coronavirus Update April 2, 2020:](#)

"...Fees in colleges (often called "course fees") are annual, specific to courses and can be cancelled. Tuition is permanent, stays in the college and supports faculty, staff, curriculum resources, technology and other long-term initiatives in the college to make our college continue to grow and excel...."

[Coronavirus Update April 6, 2020:](#)

"...Since 2015, students have not paid fees. For the future wellbeing and success of the college, we opted for differential tuition, which supports long-term and permanent aspects of the college, aspects that are essential to the future of the college. Some of the many items include operation expenses of the Fab Lab; studio furnishings; salaries for faculty, staff and student workers; space rental costs; maintenance; utilities; and other fixed costs, as well as student need-based scholarships, college website, student recruitment, final reviews, student activities and events and more that accommodate growth in the college...."

## **Diversity and Inclusion:**

*Q: As professors rework curriculum for online instruction, how is the college advocating for a wider, more global representation of architects and designers in course content?*

A:

The transition to online instruction is a territory of opportunity for the college. In addition to related diversity efforts, in spring 2019 the dean addressed faculty and school directors with the need to include more diversity in the curriculum. Ultimately, faculty are responsible for the curriculum; however, it is the shared responsibility of the college's academic community to help bring marginalized architects and designers to the attention of faculty. Students can help by sharing their interest and excitement about marginalized architects and designers with their faculty. As well, students can advocate for electives that address specific areas of interest.

*Q: How is the college working to introduce a greater level of diversity to the faculty and lecture series?*

A: Beginning in 2020, a member of NOMAS will be the student member on the Lectures and Exhibits Committee. Annually, \$2,000 will be allocated to NOMAS from the Church Lecture Series budget to secure a lecturer for the series. In addition, the college will continue to promote the gender, racial, and disciplinary diversity that has been a hallmark of our lecture series beginning in 2014—the year a diverse group of women architects, designers, and artists delivered 14 lectures in the Church Lecture Series during the academic year.

*Q: How is the CoAD empowering student organizations and leadership this year?*

A: Thanks to advocacy of student leaders in DOME and NOMAS, the college increased the 2020-2021 budget for NOMAS from \$2,000 to \$5,000. The college also allocated \$2,000 annually for NOMAS to continue to advance diversity in the lecture series, and a member of the

NOMAS organization will serve on the college's Lectures and Exhibits Committee to ensure further diversity. Meeting with leaders of these groups as happened over the summer has led to both greater transparency and greater knowledge of the college's decision-making process. With knowledge comes empowerment. For many years, the college has encouraged student organizations to take the lead in developing the creative culture in the college, and the college continues to look to students to take this lead.

Beginning several years ago, the college increased the annual funding to student organizations in each of its disciplines. Today more than \$25,000 annually is budgeted for student organizations. (This is an example of how differential tuition is used.) The dean asked Associate Dean Katherine Ambroziak and Budget Director Florence Graves to work directly with the leaders of student organizations to provide more flexible uses for the funding to student organizations.

*Q: Are students able to submit advocacy posts/requests to the CoAD for their social media content (Facebook, Instagram, website, etc)? Who should they contact to do so?*

A: The college's director of Communications, Amanda Johnson, would be happy to discuss ways students can become more involved with advocating for diversity and inclusion on the college's social media, website and college internal media. Contact her at [amandajohnson@utk.edu](mailto:amandajohnson@utk.edu).

*Q: What is the COAD Diversity Action Plan?*

A: Diversity Action Plans are being drafted in colleges across campus. Our Council for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion—comprised of faculty, students and staff—is led by Ronda Wright. The council is presently developing the college's action plan, and a draft of the plan is now under review by the members.

The college's new Director of Diversity Relations is Felicia Dean. She is an ex-officio member of CDEI and is working with the council on the Diversity Action Plan. As well she is working directly with Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Engagement Tyvi Small and other constituencies focused on diversity outside the college.

*Q: How does the CoAD intend to better support students of color?*

A: For the past decade and beyond, the college has worked diligently to create a college culture that is what we all want, one that welcomes and values everyone, devoid of racism. The college has made significant progress in its lecture series and faculty cohort. It has held events, produced materials, encouraged diversity in the curriculum and more. This summer alone, the college made many strides by renaming its summer design camp, appointing Asst. Professor Felicia Dean as the first Director of Diversity Relations and more. Our Council on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is a dedicated group with a commitment to the kind of actionable change that will improve the quality of the college's academic community. While important and steady, these steps are not enough. Until the college has a culture that is truly free from racism, where everyone matters and belongs and where all members of the community support and respect each other, the college has much more work to do. The dean has been candid and transparent

about that fact, and he will continue to work with students, faculty, staff, college leaders and alumni to push toward that goal.

## Health and Safety:

*Q: Will architecture and design students be able to enroll in an entirely virtual semester for Fall 2020?*

A: Fall 2020 begins on Aug. 19, and the college has made accommodations for students who need to learn remotely due to health concerns related to COVID-19.

*Q: What is the college's action plan should a student, known to have been in the A+A before starting quarantine, contracts COVID-19?*

A: Everyone should refer to the UT coronavirus website that provides details about the steps UT will take [when a case of COVID-19 is reported](#). The site also provides details about [testing, screening and contact tracing](#). The college, like all other colleges at UT, will follow the requirements and parameters established by the leaders of the university. UT is taking [significant measures to maintain cleanliness](#) in campus buildings. Other measures include [use of technology, reconfiguring spaces and more](#). Students will see evidence of all of these measures in the A+A. Everyone must do their part to keep themselves and UT's Volunteer community healthy by [wearing a mask](#), [social distancing](#), washing your hands and wiping down desks and chairs before each class using cleaning supplies that will be made available. Complete the [daily health screening](#) and follow UT protocols. The [UT coronavirus website](#) is the primary source of accurate and updated information; all students should visit it often.

*Q: How will the college communicate the most recent and/or the most urgent coronavirus news and updates on campus (email, Sketchbook, college coronavirus website, etc.)?*

A: The college will always refer to the [UT coronavirus website](#), which is the primary source of accurate and updated information. UT will communicate with speed and clarity on all issues, including urgent updates. The college will include these updates as possible in *sketchbook* e-newsletter, the [college's FAQ webpage](#), by e-mail, via announcements from school directors to faculty members, in dean's messages, via posters in the college and more. UT will make announcements via social media. Each member of the college community must make the choice to read these sources of information regularly to stay informed and to combat misinformation.

### NOTE:

The coronavirus pandemic is a very fluid time, so some information in this document could change throughout the semester.

### Student Resources:

<https://diversity.utk.edu/>

<https://archdesign.utk.edu/coronavirus-2020-2021/>

<https://www.utk.edu/coronavirus/>