

## : PORTFOLIO TIPS & APPLICATION ADVICE :



**Michael Osman**  
*Associate Professor*

**We are looking for curious students who are interested in eventually participating in constructing and/or reimagining the world in which they live.** Expressing this as a life-long ambition in their application is crucial. This is not strictly through the student's dedication to designing buildings and/or landscapes, or to knowledge of the impact of these things on history, but to either of these, and most ideally to both. Students should keep in mind that UCLA is a research university and therefore A.UD dedicates its pedagogy to pushing students beyond what is known and into various directions of experimentation and speculation.

Students should not feel constrained to show competency in architectural drawing. **We are looking for students with visual literacy of all types who have a strong interest in expanding their critical thinking through the field of architecture.** We love to have as diverse and engaged a student body as possible; we hope each year's class represents yet another reflection of the world we live in!



**Mohamed Sharif**  
*Assistant Adjunct Professor*

**We look for thoughtful and focused students with strong academic backgrounds and clear communication skills (visual and written).** There are three things that matter most to forming an impression in the review process: the degree of authenticity of the personal statement; the degree of self-motivation in the construction of a disciplinary trajectory; and the degree of graphic information management and format/balance of the portfolio content.



**Cristobal Amunategui**  
*Lecturer*

Other than consistent academic backgrounds, ideal students should show a strong inclination toward (1) the design of buildings (2) their production (3) their theorization and criticism. **Successful applicants usually refer to one or more of these aspects with some precision in their statements; they remain on focus, don't resort heavily to personal biography, are succinct and to the point.**

Avoid excessive reference to biography or reasons outside those restricted to the area of studies.

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A student doesn't need to possess all the skills and techniques before they get here, but it is important to show creativity and rigor in whatever materials they do include. How the materials are composed, articulated, and conceptualized is as important as the work being displayed. Be yourself, and also push yourself!



**Todd Lynch**  
*Lecturer*

Think about past experience and inspirations that have led you to this point so that you can use your application to tell that story and suggest where you might go next. That said, experience before high school is probably less relevant in this context, unless they were really unique and formative.

**You need to be a good editor and focus on your best original work:** don't copy the work of others, don't crowd portfolios or essay questions with too much extra information. No one ever thinks their own portfolio is complete or perfect - you know your own work too well. Whenever possible, show your work to others and get their feedback. Objective advice can really help you hone in on what stands out (in a good or bad way) and also helps you flag the places that might need a little bit more work. Also, if you can, do show a range of projects - size, scope, type, theme. That helps to showcase your abilities in a micro- and a macro- context.



**Katy Barkan**  
*Lecturer*

We are looking for students who can demonstrate an interest and aptitude for the study of architecture. **The two most important aspects of the application are the essay that conveys a specific, thoughtful, nuanced, and lucid idea of what the discipline is about, and a portfolio that is laid out in a clear way showing spatial/visual thinking through a combination of 2D and 3D media.**

We are looking for students with a strong interest in rethinking and contributing to their environment. Although it might be directed at many diverse aims, ideally the focus and intensity of this interest is reflected in applications. Students should feel encouraged to show conceptual thinking and creative production as best represents them, not only in the design of buildings or explicit architectural skills.

**Architecture & Urban Design is connected to the School of Arts and Architecture and the larger university. As such, we are dedicated to cultural production and addressing conceptual questions from a diversity of viewpoints, fields, and positions.**

The program's curriculum is built around training architects, scholars, educators, and different types of creative practitioners. We always hope to build a class that reflects a breadth of interests, knowledge, and backgrounds to have cultural impact in diverse ways.



**Gabriel Fries-Briggs**  
*Lecturer*