

## ACSA Presentation Summary Miami 2014

1. *The “how” of design-build from an administrative/legal viewpoint. There is great interest in starting design-build projects in schools, but the difficult part for many is getting the project off the ground.*

- *How do you get covered for liability?*
- *How do you get funding?*

The dbX should consolidate this information as a resource for teachers looking to start a design-build project.

2. *The dbX is seeking to set up a method of peer review for design-build projects, in part so that the work of design-build teachers can be tangibly recognized within the existing framework of the larger university/academic context.*

a) One suggestion is to submit a series of peer-reviewed reports throughout the design-build project so that regardless of the eventual outcome of the project, these reports exist, and can be used by a university provost when considering a faculty member for tenure. The dbX would develop a standard by which to document, review, and publish periodic progress and/or topic-based reports on design-build projects.

b) Another outcome of the peer-review process would be that these reports could form the foundation of a scholarly journal, which could in turn serve as a primary source for research papers on design-build.

c) The dbX should collect tenure guidelines from different schools regarding scholarship in design-build. Each school does this differently and it would be useful for the dbX to collect and provide this information so that design-build teachers can use the dbX as an “engine for advocacy,” to show their schools how other schools gauged design-build for tenure. This is part of the intent behind the dbX peer-review reports and the dbX database.

d) It was suggested that the dbX add a question to the survey about tenure policies at individuals’ schools.

3. *The dbX is working on a survey to send out to our contacts so they can fill out project information. How much time would you be willing to spend filling out a survey?*

a) People should be able to complete it in phases so that people can start it and go back to finish later.

b) It should also be made into an app, or made to be mobile-friendly, so people don’t have to be in front of a computer to do the survey, particularly if working in the field, or want to show others while in the field.

4. *It is important to have a “case study” component within the dbX in which failed projects, or difficult points in projects, can be shared for their value as learning experiences. How best to share these “cautionary tales?” Including them in the peer-review report process could have negative implications for tenure. The dbX needs a place to share cautionary tales.*

a) The dbX survey will include a “what three things would you do differently” portion, or a “what were the major impediments” portion. This is one possible place where the failures of a project can be discussed alongside its successes.

b) We need to have a means to filter the cautionary tales, especially for public viewing.

5. *What other connections or influences would you suggest?*

a) The dbX should look to existing networks such as ACADIA and eCAADe as precedents to what we’re doing and see if there is anything we can learn from their network development.

b) The dbX should connect with other similar organizations, such as Architecture for Humanity.

c) The dbX should also connect with non-design-build organizations, such as social engagement groups, non-government organizations, etc. as a way to engage communities and create a dissemination link between them and us.

d) The dbX should also reach out to AIAS and Freedom by Design to get advisors on board with the dbX.

e) The dbX should also reach out to local AIA chapters as connection points to communities. The AIA chapters could have regular dbX meetings to engage the communities and disseminate information to them.

f) The dbX should also reach out to architecture school shops, for instance SAWS (Society of Architectural Workshop Supervisors), because shop supervisors see a lot of interest in design-build that school admin does not see. It would be good for shop supervisors to get involved with the dbX.

g) The dbX should develop some type of public engagement medium (webinars, client meetings, etc.) to involve school administration, clients, project sponsors, so as to justify and legitimize our projects to the public.

6. *The dbX is developing a project database. It would be beneficial if people could search the database by project scale and/or project duration as a way of comparing the processes and outcomes related to these parameters. The dbX intends the database to have some searchable parameters: issue, location.*

*What would be the makeup of the database? As a research database, how searchable would/should it be? Would there be different levels of searchability based on whether a user is faculty, a student, or someone else?*

a) The dbX should go back through the ACSA papers to look for previous projects to include in the database. The dbX database could be a component of the larger ACSA database.

b) It was also suggested that the dbX consider existing Solar Decathlon projects for our database.

7. *This October is the ACSA Fall conference, and the dbX intends to set up a design-build review session for completed and in-progress projects as a form of peer review for existing work. Are there other suggestions?*

- a) The dbX could also have competitions or some form of juried work recognition so people who win can have an award/honourable mention from the dbX. This would showcase people's work within the dbX, and also increase dbX presence through people's work.
- b) It was mentioned that many architecture venues already do this, and the dbX should consider these outside awards as an external peer-review component.

8. *Where does design-build fit academically? Is it about teaching with a goal toward tenure? Is it about research? Is it about providing a community service? Is it any or all of these things?*

- a) Design-build has an opportunity to cross disciplines as architect-client relationships and building use after completion are studied. The dbX has a sociological study component built in, through which we intend to investigate these issues. The social sciences will also be engaged in studying the design-build process, particularly how design-build courses deal with unforeseen issues that arise during design and build.
- b) The dbX should consider the structure of different design-build courses: what is the course weight, what is the workload, how are grades determined?
- c) Also, how effective are the courses, and can teachers learn from each other to make their own design-build courses more effective?
- d) It was also mentioned that design-build is often seen as a lot of work for little knowledge gained on the part of the students. Is there an optimal size for a design-build project that balances the workload with the learning outcome?