

Profile

DARCH



As the leading Swiss institution of higher education in the technical and natural sciences, ETH Zurich has also proven itself at the highest international level. Its multi- and transdisciplinary orientation and its worldwide connections enable emphasise the main points within sustainable development and to serve as a reliable partner for business, politics and society.

Within this context, the Department of Architecture (D-ARCH) is one of the most highly regarded faculties of architecture in the world. It owes its prominent position to both the high quality of the teaching and the outstanding results of the research. This well-established approach to teaching and research, representing a long tradition, manifests itself in the structure of flexible design studios that work in close cooperation with the institutes, and it is experienced throughout all phases of Bachelor and Master studies at the D-ARCH as a holistic and open programme.

As the most important foundation for the Swiss building tradition, the architectural education owes its success to the fruitful intertwining of the teaching staff's academic instruction and practical building activity. In its essential significance for the teaching at the D-ARCH, the experience gained by faculty members in their own architectural practices has a long tradition that goes back to the first director of the architecture faculty at ETH Zurich, the prominent intellectual architect and theorist Gottfried Semper.

The teaching of design and construction draws its central impulses from building praxis as well as in-house research. Questions of building praxis and their validation in the context of the built environment, taken together with knowledge gained from basic research, combine to become inseparable themes of architectural education.

The Department of Architecture sets the focus of its research on broadly defined issues pertaining to the built environment. It makes excellent contributions to ETH Zurich's strategic positions with regard to this

important subject from the perspective of architecture and urban design, particularly on the topics of future cities, energy, climate change and sustainability. At the same time, the D-ARCH actively champions:

- studying the history of architecture to be able to provide information about future developments;
- continual contemplation about design and building principles;
- judicious treatment of available resources, beginning with the materials used and extending to efforts in dealing with macro-scale territories on a transnational level;
- maintaining a dialogue with politicians, industry and professional associations;
- ensuring a balanced treatment of the existing fabric;
- and lastly, the Department's defining task and one that clearly differentiates its teaching and research activities from those of the universities of applied sciences: general exploration of fundamental questions (basic research) in architecture, construction and urban design.

Page URL: <https://www.arch.ethz.ch/en/departement/profil.html>

16.06.2017

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