

How does the Biophilic Design influence the fact that the Metropolitan University of Toronto campus is located in the heart of downtown and within a fully urban context?

1. The location of the Metropolitan University of Toronto campus in the heart of downtown and within a fully urban context significantly influences biophilic design. Being situated in a highly urbanized area, it becomes crucial to integrate natural elements and biophilic design to counteract the lack of connections with nature that urban environments often present. Biophilic design in this context aims to provide spaces where students and staff can experience the presence of nature, which can contribute to enhancing their well-being, reducing stress, and improving academic performance.

The urban context of the campus poses unique challenges and opportunities for Biophilic Design. So, in this case, Biophilic Design seeks to integrate nature-inspired elements into the built environment to create a sense of connection with nature. In this urban setting, the design may focus on incorporating indoor green spaces, vertical gardens, rooftop gardens, and using natural materials to bring the essence of nature into the campus. By doing so, the campus can offer a refreshing and rejuvenating environment that promotes well-being and mental restoration amidst the bustling urban landscape.

How can we find Biophilic Design on the campus, and how is it expressed? What is its importance in learning environments?

2. Biophilic Design can be found throughout the campus in various ways. Indoor spaces may feature living walls, potted plants, and imitation of natural materials through mirrorwalls and different textures of finishes. Outdoor areas might include green courtyards, landscaped gardens, and water features. The design may also prioritize maximizing natural light and views of greenery from within the buildings. Biophilic elements can be expressed through architecture, interior design, and landscaping choices, creating an environment that fosters a deep connection with nature. In learning environments, Biophilic Design plays a vital role as it has been shown to enhance cognitive function, concentration, and creativity, thereby positively influencing students' academic performance and overall well-being.

Where should the hallways be oriented, and what about the classrooms and common areas?

3. In Biophilic Design, it is ideal for hallways to be oriented towards areas with access to natural light and views of green spaces, if possible. This encourages a sense of connection with nature even while moving through indoor spaces. Classrooms and common areas, on the other hand, should be oriented towards maximizing natural light and views of greenery. Orienting classrooms to face outdoor green spaces can create a more inspiring and conducive learning environment. Additionally, access to natural light and green views in common areas can enhance relaxation, social interaction, and overall well-being among students and faculty.