Study Architecture in New York City at The City College of New York

The City College of New York

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Application Deadline
Undergraduate Deadline
February 1, 2023

Graduate Priority Deadline
January 17, 2023
About The Spitzer School

Dean’s Welcome

Dear Applicant,

As you explore architecture as a career, consider the Spitzer School of Architecture as a place to study. Spitzer is the flagship public school of architecture in New York City and at the City University of New York. We are one of the most diverse schools of design in the country and offer students not only a rigorous education, but an affordable one too. As we emerge from the grip of COVID-19, Spitzer is thriving; Spitzer is confident. During the past three semesters we have been creating, drawing, building, imagining, studying, working, and learning together—in situ, in the studios, classrooms, labs, shops, offices, and library that make up the architecture school. I can say with confidence that the state of our school is strong.

Yes, the pandemic has lasted longer than any of us imagined, bringing with it illness, pain, hardship, and loss; this global crisis in public health touched each one of us intimately, personally, politically, professionally. It is a truism that the pandemic has exposed the structural dimensions of poverty in our city and country, the health disparities that are so intertwined with constructed environments, and the searing imprints of racism and sexism. We are at a crossroads—with the pandemic, the movement for Black Lives, #MeToo, the climate emergency, and the global crisis in affordable housing showing us, each day, that it is time for transformational, generational change. It is an excellent time to study architecture and the built environment, explore how you might impact them.

Over a year ago, the architect Teddy Cruz asked, “Could there be a pandemic variant that changes the way we live together?” “What is the public world that we will make, when we venture outside again?” “Can we project something different?” “Can we learn to live with closeness, proximity, and nearness?” Design matters, and we at Spitzer are facing the harm, damage, violence, and inequalities as they manifest in design culture. Change is in the air; and I invite you to further explore what the Spitzer School has to offer as you look at different programs.

I close with this reminder: We take pride in offering an affordable education in architecture, urban design, landscape architecture, and urban sustainability to diverse, talented, and ambitious (in the best sense of the word) students. We live up to the City College motto “access to excellence” each and every day. Please come visit! Please join an information session! Please come to an open house! We invite you to connect and ask questions.

Regards,

Marta Gutman, Dean
Welcome to the Bernard and Anne Spitzer School of Architecture at the City College of New York!

True to the unique spirit of New York City, our studio network offers dynamic core training in specific programs with many opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration and partnership.

We offer:

Our Master of Science in Urban Sustainability and J. Max Bond Center for Urban Futures affiliated programs lend expertise and focus across the curriculum.

Much as our disciplines have been designed to increasingly interconnect, enriching natural synergies between focus of study, our community celebrates the unique experience and identity of each student.

Our faculty and staff are committed to continually evolve our teaching practice to include more of the cultures and history of our student body; this diversity shapes, refocuses, and tests tradition, emboldening new direction and purpose in our field.

We favor dialogue, discussion, and conversation over top-down teaching where you’re told what to learn and do; communication is the foundation of effective and responsible creation. We emphasize the skills required to collaborate under fluid and challenging conditions to underline their absolute value in today’s job market.

The Spitzer School cultivates thought-leaders as well as practitioners, practical and empathetic professionals for whom the common, public good lies at the heart of their profession.

We shape the students of the future. In turn, they shape the future.
“Educating young minds became such a fun, special, and fulfilling mission. Slowly, with the great help of the Zahn Center, we identified the problems of the underserved and underfunded communities, and after some pivots, we arrived at our current platform and business model.”

Wei Ying Zhang, B.Arch ’18
Winner, Zahn Entrepreneur Competition

The architecture program is dedicated to the understanding of the complex systems of the city’s urban fabric and a desire to make the city work well for the people who live and work there. The location of the school in Manhattan allows for direct access to a vibrant and exciting urban resource, which the program uses to the fullest extent.

Typical Courses in the Major

**Fall Term 1**
- Core Studio 1
- Visual Studies 1
- Pre-calculus

**Fall Term 3**
- Core Studio 3
- Survey of World Architecture 1
- Physics for Architects
- Site Technology

**Fall Term 5**
- Core Studio 5
- Survey of World Architecture 3
- Construction Technology 2
- Structures 2

**Fall Term 7**
- Advanced Studio (1 of 4)
- Advanced Computing

**Fall Term 9**
- Advanced Studio (3 of 4)
- Professional Management

**Spring Term 2**
- Core Studio 2
- Visual Studies 2
- The Built Environment of NYC

**Spring Term 4**
- Core Studio 4
- Portfolio Review
- Survey of World Architecture 2
- Structures 1
- Construction Technology 1

**Spring Term 5**
- Core Studio 5
- Survey of World Architecture 4
- Construction Technology 3
- Structures 3

**Spring Term 8**
- Advanced Studio (2 of 4)

**Spring Term 10**
- Advanced Studio (4 of 4)
The architecture program leads students through the artistic, technical, intellectual, and social process of designing buildings, communities, and open spaces. Students may enroll in this course of study, which leads to the 5-year Bachelor of Architecture (NAAB-accredited professional degree), or complete the first 4 years of study to receive a Bachelor of Science in Architecture.

“The experience I had at City College helped me set the strongest foundation for my future, and allowed me to really flourish in a way that would have never happened elsewhere. And it was because of this strength that I felt enough courage to apply to Harvard and eventually MIT for graduate school.”

Chrisoula Kapelonis, B.Arch ’16

“Spitzer truly serves as a one of a kind place in New York City. It’s a center for students from so many different circumstances and spaces to discover architecture but also the different origins their colleagues come from.”

Mohammed Gueye, B.Arch Class of ’21
Program Info

**M.S. Sustainability**

To respond to the increasing demand for a workforce equipped to meet the sustainability challenges of the 21st century, City College proudly offers an interdisciplinary graduate program, Sustainability in the Urban Environment, leading to the degree of Master of Science in Sustainability. This innovative program draws upon emerging approaches in each of the disciplines of architecture, engineering, science, and the social sciences. It prepares students to adapt old and advance new generations of buildings, open spaces, and urban infrastructure: water and energy resources, air quality, waste management, and transportation systems.

**M.L.A.**

Landscape architecture plays an essential role in connecting justice to environmental design and the ecological infrastructures of the urban realm. The mission of the Master of Landscape Architecture Program at the Spitzer School of Architecture, City College of New York, is to prepare students to be leaders in the field of landscape architecture through innovative research and practice in urban ecological design, planning, and policymaking. The program aims to reimagine and rethink the profession’s current and future challenges through the lens of social, environmental, and multi-species justice, including rapid urbanization, resource extraction and management, the interface of nature and technology, ongoing species extinctions, and the climate emergency. The curriculum engages critical thinking about complex and indeterminate systems, empowering students to implement actionable change across multiple scales of the urban landscape.
Program Info

M. Arch I & M.S. Arch

We explore architecture as a field of open experimentation while remaining grounded in a shared commitment to the social good. The Master of Architecture I professional degree (NAAB accredited) and Master of Science in Architecture post-professional programs embrace the role of the architect in contemporary society as a politically engaged, positive agent of change. Using New York City as a laboratory, our curriculum propels students into the urban landscape to connect with stakeholders and to draw inspiration from the city’s teeming diversity. With rigorous education in handcraft, digital fabrication, history, contemporary architectural theory, technology, and sustainable building practices, students graduate as multivalent and agile thinkers, ready to confront difficult and unpredictable design challenges with innovative ideas. Come join us if you want to use design to make the world a better place.

“My experience with the professors here has been great; they’ve instilled in me the social responsibility aspect of architecture. There’s a very social conscious awareness here, and it’s great because part of the danger of being an architect is that you can go without having that understanding and can ruin a neighborhood or the city.”

Glenn Bell, M Arch I ’18
Faculty Spotlight

Ahu Aydogan

Ahu Aydogan is an assistant professor teaching construction technology, design, and research at the City College since 2014. She conducted interdisciplinary design research as a HASS fellow at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute Center for Architecture Science and Ecology (CASE), where she received her Ph.D. in Architectural Sciences in 2012. Her current research facilitates the interdisciplinary design of sustainable systems and technologies for integration within the built environment. She addresses the complexity involved in the management of architectural design problems, which provides her an intimate understanding of the architectural design process, from the viewpoint of the architect and client, as well as the environment. In collaboration with Elizabeth Biddinger (Professor at CCNY Grove School of Engineering), Professor Aydogan received a $40,000 endowed CUNY interdisciplinary research grant. “Plant-Based Air Filtration Using Engineered Growth Media: Formaldehyde Adsorption Dynamics.”

The project Breathe is a botanically-based air purifying system that constitutes plant-based air remediation strategies. It is a hydroponic system (plants growing without soil) that is composed of adsorbents and porous glass stones that capture and filter toxins in the air. This system can be used as a model for a self-regenerating system that would be integrated into the HVAC systems of buildings to improve indoor air quality and reduce their energy consumption profile.

Breathe brings together an interdisciplinary field of expertise including scientists, engineers, and architects.

Currently, the project is in collaboration with the Grove School of Engineering/CCNY and the Advanced Science Research Center/CUNY. With a PSC-CUNY Award, the first prototype of Breathe was fabricated and demonstrated as a standalone exhibit at the SSA graduation in May 2018. In April 2019, the project was re-assembled by Professor Aydogan’s research group and is still on display for demonstration on the 5th floor of the ASRC. This collaboration between SSA and the ASRC aims to merge researchers across disciplines including architects, engineers, botanists, and scientists.

“I am very proud to witness students develop from the time they are freshmen to their very own graduation day. Their knowledge and confidence grows day by day and it is amazing to see them graduating with all of that experience. They have lots of different stories of their own journeys and they have an ambition to be better in their own profession.”
Frank Melendez is an architectural designer, educator, and researcher. He is an Assistant Professor at the Spitzer and partner at Augmented Architectures and bioMATTERS, LLC, based in New York City and London. His teaching, research, and practice focus on the advancement of architectural design through the integration of emerging digital technologies within the built environment. This work engages topics pertaining to architectural drawing, computation, ecology, digital fabrication, bio and synthetic materials, physical computing, and robotics. Frank is the author of Drawing from the Model (Wiley, 2019) and coeditor of Data, Matter, Design (Routledge, 2020). He has held academic appointments at Carnegie Mellon University and Louisiana State University, and his work has been supported through grants, fellowships, and memberships including, the New York State Council of the Arts (NYSCA) / Van Alen Institute, the MacDowell Colony, and NEW INC.

Frank Melendez's research in biodesign explores analog and digital workflows for making and creating new materials in architecture that are based on biological systems. This research involves using living systems, computational processes, and digital fabrication methods, to “grow” architectural materials, systems, and products. This transdisciplinary research requires collaboration with scientists and experts in other disciplines, working together, in an effort to develop design and manufacturing methods that promote upcycling and sustainable design solutions in order to reduce the negative effects of climate change. Computational simulations are used to study complex geometric relationships, growth patterns, and “emergent” rule-based design solutions. Digital and robotic fabrication processes are used to shape and craft complex artifacts and assemblies that are difficult, if not impossible, to make using traditional analog methods of construction. This research has led to projects such as Meander Series by bioMATTERS, a paneling system comprised of mycelium and upcycled waste materials. The Meander Series project was exhibited at the Open Cell “Biodesign Here Now” exhibition, London, UK, 2019, and included in a recent article about biomaterials in Blueprint Magazine: Issue 369, “The Materials Issue,” April 2020.
Eliana Dotan is an adjunct assistant professor and architect who has taught design and research studios at the Spitzer School since 2017. Her research, which began during her M.Arch at Harvard GSD, centers on the reciprocity between vast scalar spans; how the design of an urban-scale system implicates the design of a material detail and vice versa. She is the founder of Always Already, a full-service design office that produces spaces, installations, objects, and systems. Her recent work includes the design of an itinerant theater structure commissioned by BOCA Bienale in collaboration with artist Tania Bruguera, which was subsequently disassembled and re-installed in Brussels, Hamburg, and Paris, as well as the design of a bespoke line of site-specific naturally-dyed upholstery fabrics.

Eliana Dotan’s current research at SSA frames the maintenance, repair, and end-of-life dismantling of technologies and structures as generative sites for better futures. Through a series of Advanced Studios, she is working with students to bring together moments of architectural and cultural breakdown, revealing new spaces, new ideas, and new ways of inhabiting. The first studio in this series, Nesting Typologies I, examined housing typologies and convention centers, ultimately proposing new housing environments made from obsolete mass gathering spaces. The second studio in the series, Nesting Typologies II: Factories for a Broken World, brought together the architectural type of the office park and the economic model of offshore production to create new manufacturing and production facilities within obsolete office space. The studio worked with lighting design and manufacturing company, RBW, which recently acquired a former IBM office building in Kingston, NY. These studios each produced a book that will, together with the final installation of this series form a 3-volume set to be completed in Summer 2023.

“I am proud and honored to teach at SSA. Having New York City as our laboratory to learn from and to experiment is invaluable. My teaching and administrative colleagues are second-to-none. But what brings me back semester after semester are the students; their unique perspectives and backgrounds allow for meaningful discussions about architecture and urbanism that are singular to this very special school.”
Facility Spotlight
Zihao Zhang

Zihao Zhang, Ph.D., is an assistant professor of landscape architecture at the City College of New York. By building transdisciplinary, critical analyses at the intersections among design, engineering, and environmental humanities, his teaching and research interrogate conceptions of humans, nature, and technology in contemporary culture and investigate interspecies entanglements through landscape research. He studies emerging cybernetic technologies and intelligent machines, reflecting on their ramifications on the constructed environment. His work expands designers’ understanding of the messy entanglement between machines and ecologies and inspires innovative landscape strategies.

Funded by a CUNY Interdisciplinary Research Grant, Zihao is currently leading a team of multidisciplinary scholars to develop the Urban Ecology and Agriculture Laboratory (UEAL). This research laboratory will design, test, and evaluate innovative models of robot-assisted urban agriculture for urban biodiversity and climate-sensitive agriculture.

The team is establishing this laboratory to develop collaboration among scholars in environmental design, artificial intelligence, robotics, and urban ecology. To ameliorate dysfunction in the urban food system and food insecurity in American cities, UEAL seeks innovative solutions that integrate sensing networks, machine learning, and robot-assisted systems for a new type of urban agricultural practice. This research has substantial potential impacts on increasing urban food security, biodiversity, and the ability to adapt to climate change. The UEAL project will also build collaborations with community partners and high schools, motivating the next generation of scientists and urban farmers through STEM curriculum development and community outreach.

During the summer of 2022, the team set up an indoor FarmBot and conducted various experiments, developing AI-enabled plant maintenance regimes. Besides the goal to increase urban biodiversity through the experiments, Zihao is especially interested in theorizing the new kinds of relationships developed among humans, machines, and other nonhuman species in creating robot-assisted urban agriculture, formulating new concepts and ideas about interspecies entanglements mediated and enabled by intelligent machines and, thus, inspiring novel landscape design strategies.
B.Arch

How To Apply

Thank you for considering the five-year, accredited B.Arch program at the Bernard and Anne Spitzer School of Architecture at the City College of New York for your future studies.

The application process has two parts:

1. The Creative Challenge: All B.Arch applicants must complete the Creative Challenge or they will not be considered for admission to the program.
2. The CUNY Application including all materials for admission to the City College of New York.

The Creative Challenge may be downloaded from the SSA Admissions website. It is now submitted electronically, with detailed directions about submission on the Challenge itself.

Important Deadlines

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applicant Type</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
<th>What to Submit to SSA</th>
<th>What to Submit to University Applications Processing Center</th>
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<tr>
<td>Freshman (Non-Macaulay)</td>
<td>February 1</td>
<td>Creative Challenge</td>
<td>All other application materials</td>
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<td>Freshman (Macaulay Honors Applicant)</td>
<td>Dec. 1 for CUNY Application, Feb. 1 for Creative Challenge</td>
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<td>All other application materials</td>
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<tr>
<td>External Transfer</td>
<td>February 1</td>
<td>Creative Challenge, Unofficial College Transcript* Portfolio only if transferring from another NAAB-accredited program</td>
<td>All other application materials</td>
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International Students

Evaluation of non-U.S. credentials by an authorized agency are often needed by students for their application. CUNY’s preferred agencies for this purpose are ECE, Evaluation Service Inc., Josef Silny & Associates, and Transcript Research. Applicants with design backgrounds should request a course-by-course evaluation. Applicants without design backgrounds should request a general evaluation with GPA.

Please see the CCNY Admissions International Applicants page and CUNY International Students Financial Resources page for more details.

Important Transfer Information

If you are transferring from another NAAB-accredited architectural program, you will need to submit a portfolio with your Creative Challenge. The portfolio will allow our admissions team to place you in design studio. Transfer students’ credits will be evaluated after they are accepted to the university. The department and university will not tell you which courses you will receive credit for before you apply or are accepted into the program. Prospective transfer students will not be advised on which courses to take at another institution while they await acceptance at the Spitzer School of Architecture. Curricula change frequently, each school is different, and course content varies widely. Therefore, advisement with a guarantee of transfer credit is impossible. In order to expedite the transfer evaluation process, transfer students who are accepted should be ready to provide copies of syllabi, course descriptions, and writing samples or coursework. The more information you can supply to our faculty/department coordinators, the better they will be able to evaluate the work you did at your previous institution(s) and determine if you will receive transfer credit.

The Spitzer School of Architecture only accepts students for the fall semester. There is no spring class admission.
About SSA & CCNY

CCNY is one of the country’s foremost “engines of mobility” and we here at Spitzer are doing our part in Architecture to educate students with truly diverse perspectives.

Architecture is a wonderful field of study. It is so much more than designing and constructing buildings, although it is that too. It is a way of asking and answering questions about the world, through studying the built environment, and designing the places that we humans have built for our own use, our habitats or settlements.

It’s a bit of art
It’s pragmatic
It’s engineering
It’s computer programming
It’s economics
It’s sociology and geography
It’s making stuff
It’s analyzing the past
It’s imagining the future
It’s designing at all scales.

Career Development & Job Opportunities

With over 50 years of training students in New York City, the Spitzer School and its alumni network have vast and varied connections with city agencies, firms large and small, as well as construction companies and design firms. Each spring, there is a Career Fair that welcomes some of the city’s top employers to look for interns as well as part-time and full-time employees. Almost all employers have an SSA alumni at the table – we are proud of our representation in the city and know our students have a reputation for being well trained, thoughtful, flexible, and creative.

Internships are always paid for our students; we partner with our Career Development office and extend all opportunities to students when they come to the department.

“It is no accident that this institution has produced 10 Nobel Prize winners along with countless captains of industry, cultural icons, leaders at the highest levels of government. Because talent and effort combined with our various backgrounds and life experiences has always been the lifeblood of our singular American genius.”

Michelle Obama
First Lady of the United States
CCNY Commencement 2016
### The Premier Accredited Public School of Architecture in Manhattan

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Students</th>
<th>450</th>
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<tr>
<td>Full-Time Faculty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adjunct Faculty</td>
<td>55</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff Members</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Visiting Professors Each Semester</td>
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**135,000ft^2**

Building with Roof-top Amphitheater

**3,000ft^2**

Fabrication Lab & Model Shop With Wood-Working, Milling Machines, and 3D Printers

**1**

Solar Roofpod & Urban Farm

**175**

Years of Upward Mobility

**35,000**

Volumes in Our Architectural Library

**27**

Average Age Of Incoming Graduate Student

**$3,465**

Undergraduate Tuition Per Semester

**$6,485**

Graduate Tuition Per Semester

**31**

Studios

**8**

Degree Programs

**96**

Degrees Granted In 2022