envision: OCAC will be a design studio led by THA Architecture. The goal of the studio is singular - provide vision to OCAC. How can the physical manifestation of the campus reflect the ideological goals and aspirations of the intuition? How can their physical environment affect and better the education and production of art and craft? How might the campus planning reflect the mission of the college?

OCAC’s mission statement:
Oregon College of Art and Craft is dedicated to Craft as the creative material practice at the core of art and design. OCAC’s mentor-based learning community fosters self-reliant, entrepreneurial, globally conscious, critical and innovative makers.

OCAC is an intentionally small, exceptionally student-centered art college gathering people from all over the country. The campus sits high in the West Hills of Portland overlooking the Oregon coastal mountains, yet it is minutes from downtown’s cultural resources, and was originally designed by Barbara Fealy and John Storrs. OCAC is a land rich institution that currently serves 160 degree program students, over 2500 annual registrations in adult and youth programs, and several programming partnerships with groups such as Nike, Steven Smith Teamaker, St. Mary’s Home for Boys, and Monograph Bookworks.

In partnership with three PSU Masters in Real Estate Development (MRED) candidates, and with OCAC’s MFA students, faculty and board involvement in the role of client; students will investigate the campus and master plan, explore and test strategic development opportunities, and create building proposals to put OCAC’s land and built environment to work for the institution in supporting the mission of the college well into the future. The studio will explore identity, placemaking, and urban connections while providing the opportunity to work and study within important project relationships such as with clients, developers, and consultants.

Charles Dorn and Nicolas Smith of THA Architecture will lead this studio with shared teaching responsibilities. The studio will call upon additional THA staff, consultants, and collaborators to attend workshops, mid-terms, and final reviews.

Weekly studio meetings will be as follows, Wednesday sessions will include PSU MRED students for workshopping.

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<th>Day</th>
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Studio Process -

Culture: Each student will be expected to work IN the studio during studio hours, interacting with your fellow students and the MRED students to explore and create the best work you possibly can.

PSU’s MRED students will be active participants in the studio, concurrently studying the campus from their own unique perspective. MRED students will provide consultation and advise to architecture students through tools such as market research, pro forma analysis, funding sources, and financial feasibility. The expectation is that the studio will complete one master plan as a group in the beginning weeks of the term. At the completion of the master plan exploration, building sites will be chosen by each student to develop a unique, visionary, and feasible building project to better the college. At the completion of the term in addition to the final reviews, the studio will create a book to present the work to OCAC. Each student will be required to participate in this compilation.

Instructor Schedule: A typical week will see both instructors in studio on one of the three days, with alternating instructors on the remaining two days.

Desk Reviews: Students will meet at the studio table with instructors on Desk Review days. The studio will be split in half, with one half having desk reviews on Mondays the other on Fridays. Each student will be expected to ACTIVELY participate in desk reviews for two of his/her peers, such that small groups discuss each project as it develops.

Readings: Throughout the term students will be asked to complete and discuss various readings. Whether the same text for the whole group or individualized content; these readings will be specific and targeted at issues being discussed in the studio. The intention is for the content and subsequent discussion to influence your design work.

Project Journal: Writing is critical in development of ideas as well as finding clarity in presenting them. Students will submit journal entries (500 words min) every two weeks. This writing exercise should be used to explore, work through and catalogue issues of one’s project, influence of precedents, reflection on critic, ideas uncovered in readings, etc.

Workshops: Students will meet in small groups with THA staff or consultants to discuss focused development of particular design aspects such as: whole room; exterior assemblies; and systems strategies

Formal Reviews: Students will travel to THA’s office at 733 SW Oak Street to present their work to the entire class and to invited reviewers (practitioners and academics). Formats will vary.
Charles M. Dorn Jr. is a Principal at THA Architecture. He received his Bachelor of Architecture at the University of Arizona and Master of Architecture at the University of Illinois. Charles’s career focus has been on the integration of bio-climatic design, building science, and client program / vision. He believes that a commitment to sustainable development combined with the Integrated Design Process (IDP) will serve to balance environmental, social and economic demands on any project. His emphasis on passive and high performance envelope design combine to create cost effective sustainable solutions.

At THA, Charles has served as Design Architect for their higher education and government building portfolio. One of Charles’ passions is the design of cutting edge Studio Arts Facilities, balancing health and safety with energy efficiency. His experience working with College and University Art Departments has resulted in innovative developments in the design and construction of galleries, studios, critique spaces, and faculty studios.

Growing up with a father with an over 50 year career in the arts instilled Charles and his family with a deep appreciation for the critical role that the arts play in education. Charles is a current board member for OCAC.

Contact Charles at 503.227.1254 or cdorn@thaarchitecture.com

Nicolas Smith joined THA Architecture in 2009, where he is an associate and project designer. Formal training in art, architecture, and construction gives Nic the ability to synthesize the demands of high performance buildings and exacting programmatic requirements with the rigors of design throughout all phases of a project. While rooted in construction and the technical aspect of building, both his professional and scholarly work are concerned with the social and cultural frameworks of architecture, the processes of building, and the philosophical questions of why it is we build at all.

Nic maintains a belief in making and the testing of ideas through the handling of physical material. Despite having transitioned to a career in architecture, he continues to practice art through painting, drawing, assemblage, and collage.

Contact Nic at 503.227.1254 or nsmith@thaarchitecture.com