

broaden the experience of this educational model. Interior design education ranges in approach from instructional to vocational to educational.

An IDEC study offers a basic interiors curriculum with recommendations for course content in Creative Work, Technical Work, Communication Skills, Professional Procedures, and Academic Studies–Liberal Arts. These recommendations were adapted as the basis for FIDER’s standards. The E-Lab/IIDA Report speaks to the present move of both firms and practice toward architecture. In the most positive sense of this direction, theory and research methodology are becoming embedded in the aesthetic and functional expectations of interior designers, resulting in a valued design-as-knowledge form of practice. This move toward architecture currently offers a range of approaches. The E-Lab/IIDA Report concludes that there are currently three types of programs—one in which architecture subsumes interior design, one in which there is an institutional and ideological link with architecture, and, lastly, the program in which the differences between the two are emphasized and in which no true linkage exists. These studies currently accept and encourage diversity and differing emphases within interior design education under the flexible framework of 60–80 percent creative and professional work and 20–40 percent liberal studies. From instruction to invention models, the import of liberal arts in the design education curriculum increases.

Interior design is a broad-spectrum discipline that thrives in the vitality of energy, intellectual engagement, mutual respect, conflict, and collaboration that flow from contact with other environmental specializations. Interior design education needs to strengthen its programs and raise the overall quality of the diverse offerings while emphasizing its expertise in human-scale research and interaction. While celebrating interior decoration, design, and architecture, it needs to balance real-world skills with basic creative education of the designer. Practitioners bring current ideas from the office and industry into the studio, but more full-time academic teachers are needed to contribute to a theoretical and philosophical basis for interior design.

Design education is flexible, vital, and poised to redefine itself in a positive way. Cecil Stewart, past president of the AIA and an educator for over 25 years, says that America is leading the world in design education. He reports that design education is more fluid to change and more connected to the emerging practice and reality of industry. Scott Ageloff of the New York Insti-

tute of Interior Design stresses education over vocation. In a school that still respects the importance of the residential market, a broad-based education emphasizing life-long learning—speaking, writing, and thinking—serves a profession that evolves and changes. Sally Levine of the Boston Architectural Center supports a diverse number of entries into the field of interior design. As the profession works toward achieving title and practice acts, she hopes that it will not limit access to the field. Brian Kernaghah of the Rhode Island School of Design writes that, clearly, interior design education is undergoing a period of redefinition. The Royal College of Art in London acknowledges in its catalogue the rapidly changing role of design and emphasizes a multidisciplinary experience encouraging confident, fluid attitudes and ability to work creatively with other fields. “Quality and courage are pitched equally against issues of probability and possibility.” Creative resourcefulness on the part of the designer is identified with inscriptive practice. Architecture studios share space with landscape, interiors, graphic design, object and furniture design, real-world affiliates. Michael Vanderbyl, dean of the School of Design at the California College of Arts and Crafts, expects that students make connections—between culture and design, between themselves and the world.²⁶

INTERIOR DESIGN PRACTICE

The IIDA/E-Lab Report concludes that “the identity of interior design was not clearly defined,” internally or by the public. This is understandable in light of the differing interior design education models—interior decoration, interior design, and interior architecture. The report concludes, “Clients’ perception of the skills and scope of interior designers differs drastically from the vision interior design has for itself. Most clients still believe that interior design is about surface decoration.”²⁷ The report defines four types of interior design practice. The cooperative model features architecture firms that have both design and technical teams who work collaboratively on larger corporate projects. The separated model consists of firms that deal in the tenant improvement realm; architects oversee project manage-