

Application Summary

Competition Details

Competition Title:	2021 CTL/BP Junior Faculty Teaching Excellence Award
Category:	Institutional Awards - CTL
Award Cycle:	2021
Submission Deadline:	02/28/2021 11:59 PM

Application Information

Submitted By:	Danielle Willkens
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Application Title:	Danielle S. Willkens
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Personal Details

Applicant First Name:	Danielle
Applicant Last Name:	Willkens
Email Address:	danielle.willkens@design.gatech.edu
Phone Number:	

Primary School or Department

School of Architecture

Primary Appointment Title:	Assistant Professor
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Application Details

Proposal Title

Danielle S. Willkens

Nomination Package for Kate Pride Brown
2021 CTL/BP Junior Faculty Teaching Excellence Award

Danielle S. Willkens, PhD
Assoc. AIA, FRSA, LEED AP BD C

Assistant Professor
School of Architecture

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 - Susanna Greiner, BS Architecture major, School of Architecture
 - Bryce Truitt, M.Arch candidate, School of Architecture
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February 26, 2021

Dr. Joyce Weinsheimer
Center for Teaching and Learning

Re: Nomination for Assistant Professor Danielle Willkens for the CTL/BP Junior Faculty Teaching Excellence Award

Dear Dr. Weinsheimer and members of the selection committee,

I am writing this letter of nomination in support of Assistant Professor Danielle Willkens for the CTL/BP Junior Faculty Teaching Excellence Award. Professor Willkens was hired in 2019 from an international search that had exceptional applicants from the top universities around the world and among this group, she stood out. She has quickly emerged as an excellent and innovative teacher, a successful researcher and a key faculty member in the School of Architecture.

Dr. Willkens has successfully taken key steps to transform our history/theory curriculum, including being able to make innovative links between history courses and the unique skill of design thinking that dominates our studio teaching. The architecture curriculum is driven by project-based, hands on teaching that is prevalent in design studios and students typically perceive this as distinct from their other courses. Dr. Willkens has effectively utilized many of the techniques of studio such as design thinking, iteration and the combination of written and graphic representation to completely reinvent one of our largest core courses, History of Architecture I. This course is traditionally taught through slide lectures and then tested with slide identification and short essays focusing on short-term memorization and an ability to write recalled information quickly in an exam setting. Dr. Willkens has replaced this with a semester long design book where small teams of students collaborate to produce a document that synthesizes course content using written text, images and graphic content specifically generated to illustrate themes being described. The results have been stunning, exciting, and visually compelling but most important, have generated a level of student engagement unlike anything I have seen in history courses. I hear more positive comments from students about this course than any other in the school.

Dr. Willkens has also been very proactive in responding to the recent events around racial justice and social equity and the urgent need to address this in our curriculum. She made adjustments to her history courses to expand the topics about the history of the built environment to go beyond just the architect to include the broader context of how buildings and cities embody systems of power in both their design and how they get built. Additionally, she re-envisioned a course that had not been taught in over ten years, *Race, Space, and Architecture in the United States* and is currently teaching this course to both undergraduate and graduate students. She is leveraging aspects of her research, which utilizes digital technology to virtually reconstruct historic landmark sites connected with the American Civil Rights Movement, in very innovative ways to supplement the course.

School of Architecture

College of Design, Georgia Institute of Technology
247 Fourth St N.W., Suite 351
Atlanta, Georgia 30332-0155 U.S.A.

Phone 404.894.4885
Fax 404.894.0572
www.arch.gatech.edu

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It is rare for a history faculty to excel in teaching history courses and architectural design studios but Dr. Willkens does both. She has been coordinating and developing a new approach to our entry level design studio for first year students and has done a great job. This is one of the most challenging courses to teach because students rarely have any previous experience with studio instruction combined with the fact that this studio is formative in their understanding of the foundations of design and has a “first impression” impact all future studios. Dr Willkens was able to create a curriculum that integrated the core principles of architectural design, the necessary skills, both analogue and digital, to explore design options and produce work, with the unique methodologies of design thinking and iterative making that drive studio teaching. This is team-taught studio and in her role as coordinator, she also oversees four other faculty.

I have been thoroughly impressed with the dedication and innovation that Dr. Willkens has applied to her teaching and she has made a significant impact on the students and faculty of the School of Architecture. This innovation is being recognized externally as an announcement was made just last week that Dr. Willkens was selected for the competitive Dumbarton Oaks Teaching Fellowship sponsored by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to further develop coursework for *Race, Space, and Architecture in the United States*.

Dr. Willkens is a rising star in her field and is an ideal and deserving candidate for the Junior Faculty Teaching Award and I give her my enthusiastic and unqualified recommendation. I urge you to give her close consideration for this award.

Sincerely,

Scott Marble
William H. Harrison Chair and Professor
Georgia Tech School of Architecture

Reflective teaching statement

Thus far in my career, I have straddled the connected, although many times disparate, disciplines of architectural history and architectural design. These interests have formed a diverse, but interconnected, pathway in my career thus far: design/build Project Manager, digital visualization researcher at a UNESCO World Heritage site, and curricular developer and instructor for a series of original 'early intervention' design programs for upper elementary students and teenagers. I have extensive experience in primary research, working within archival settings as well as extrapolating information from the built environment as documentary evidence through traditional building surveys, 3D LiDAR scanning, photogrammetry, and aerial investigations assisted by UAV technology. One of the commonalities that my studies share is the desire to expand architectural dissemination to diverse audiences.

With more ten years of collegiate teaching experience, I have undertaken a series of teaching positions in architectural history and design in both America and the UK. My instructional experiences include courses on foundation design, the history of architecture and design (prehistory to the present), theory (historic preservation and interpretation), architectural graphics (manual and digital), photography, sustainability, and structures. My instructional interests are grounded within experiential education: using immediate examples, through field studies when possible, and enlivening instruction on remote sites through multimedia and exploratory research and design exercises. My curricular development focuses on encouraging history and design majors, as well as those outside of disciplines focused on the built environment, to participate in thoughtful architectural explorations.

Throughout my own education and involvement with architectural practice, I have been fascinated by the potential of architecture to serve as a cultural record of memory while simultaneously offering creative solutions for sustainable approaches to living and working in a globalized, digitized world. Architects have the rare professional opportunity to reflect on the past and postulate the future, actively curating history through researching and building. Consequentially, research questions and practice-based investigations that blur the lines between design exercises and historical investigations prepare students for careers in the increasingly interdisciplinary design world, where we will hopefully value restoration, adaptive reuse, and reinvention over the construction of new structures with much shorter lifecycles and more detrimental environmental footprints.

As an impassioned researcher with educational and professional qualifications in both architectural history and architectural design, my teaching aims to form a curricular and methodological bridge between the research realms of history, theory, criticism, and design technology. Invested in the concept of research through practice, coursework deliverables focus on sustainable heritage, digital humanities, and community outreach. As a transatlantic speculator and educator, with the desire to cultivate global curiosity within students, I value the importance of international experience but also believe it is critical that researchers and designers serve as architectural activists and inquisitive inspectors at home, bringing the signature on-site and active learning aspects of the architectural studio into all components of architectural education.



Figures 1-3. Studio I students exploring and sketching the National Memorial for Peace and Justice, 8 February 2020.



Figure 4. Studio I review in Architecture West.

Course design and redevelopment

ARCH 1017 (renamed ARCH 1855) Studio I

- Spring 2020 Spring 2021

As a co-coordinator in spring 2020, and the current coordinator, for this first studio within the BS Architecture program, I lead the teaching team and develop projects for a cohort of approximately 70 students. In both iterations of the course, we focus on cultivating drawing and modeling skills while enriching formal and analytical research capabilities. The studios involve site-based investigations and engage a variety of voices through guest presentations, tutorials, and project critiques. Adaptation of the studio has been a particular challenge amid COVID; however, this has also provided opportunities to explore alternative ways of making, presenting, and providing feedback on work, as well as engaging more diverse critics for project reviews.

ARCH 2111/6105: Global History of Architecture I: Prehistory to the 18th century (3 credits)

- Fall 2019 Fall 2020

The typical architectural history course in professional schools of architecture needs to be reexamined. Too often, students receive writing assignments that do little to address the concepts of design thinking that dominate their studio-based training and these assignments are rarely revisited. Therefore, students learn the iterative process in the studio, but it is seldom reinforced in their requisite architectural history and theory courses, neglecting opportunities to analyze and refine their own writing through multiple drafts. I am continually developing exercises in these courses to challenge students to read and think critically about key projects across time, as well as projects outside of the established canon. My courses abandon the typical slide ID test in favor of an analytical approach to testing: students are presented with ‘unknown’ works. They must then identify an architect, movement, style, and/or place and explain their rationale, referencing specific examples. Testing more than skills in short-term memory and recall, this method aids the development of long-term working memory and retrieval. Additionally, an essential aspect of my course development includes the creation of an original research, writing, and graphic design product that, unlike a typical paper produced for an architectural history course, could form a portion of a student’s design portfolio. Students undertake semester-long, projects in self-selected teams of three to four students synthesize course content into an original ‘book’ or layered

website with an and original organizing theme, and consist of text, sourced images, and original graphics. Due to COVID, the fall 2020 iteration of the architectural history survey executed the semester-long 'local history' project as an individual exercise but there were ample opportunities through discussion boards and peer reviews for students to engage with each other's work.

This large course (~150) has a diverse cohort of majors (a required course for BS Architecture) and non-majors across all years (it satisfies a humanities requirement), as well as Master of Architecture students beginning the 3.5-year program. This latter group also requires that the course satisfies the requirements associated with the M.Arch programs National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB) accreditation. Additionally, for the first-year students from both within and outside of the College of Design, this may be their first interactions with a large, lecture-based class that requires research, visual analysis, the command of a specialized vocabulary, as well as all of the other challenges, from academic to social, that accompany freshmen embarking on their first semester in college. With such a diverse cohort, and a range of experiences with not only architecture but also research and writing, calibrating the learning objectives and outcomes is a tall task that has required a creative approach to the presentation and organization, as well as scaffolded objectives and outcomes for course deliverables.

This course discusses both the established canon of masterpieces and counterbalances this approach with discussions about vernacular and nomadic sites, the changing role of the architect, and shifting concerns about architecture's social purpose and issues of representation. In addition to the impacts of politics, geography, religion, materials and technology, the course addresses questions of preservation, reconstruction, and the 'ownership' of history in the built environment.

Reflecting on the fall 2020 iteration of the Global History of Architecture I course (ARCH 2111 6105), I am currently working with an undergraduate research assistant, sponsored by funds from the Class of 1969 Teaching Fellows, to collate the semester projects that explored a small, local architectural site through on-site photographic captures and basic physical surveys, as well as independent research into the form, style, typology, and story of the structure. We are compiling a database to understand some of the broader trends in the project and how it could be adjusted in future semesters.

ARCH 3115: Modern Art and Architecture Workshop (3 credits)

- Fall 2019 Fall 2020

This course structures a dialogue between design disciplines as well as trends within Eastern and Western art and architecture of the in the early modern period. Blending primary and secondary source readings, as well as analytical and creative exercises this course is an introduction to modern theory, thinking, and digital craft through a variety of tools. Aimed at architecture minors, this course strives to help students broaden their visual catalog, increase their knowledge of the associated terminology of design, and be able to recognize the identifiable details, styles, and influences of both prominent designers within the Western canon of modern architecture as well as those who significantly shaped the evolution of design but are typically overlooked in survey courses (e.g., females, people of color, vernacular influences). We also examine the effects of politics, geography, and technological advancements and will conduct parallel investigations into other aspects of visual culture and creative practice such as painting, sculpture, furniture, industrial design, photography and film. Ultimately, students craft a site-based proposal that could form an integral piece within a design portfolio.



Figure 5. On-site documentation for ARCH 4823/6160 Race, Space, and Architecture in the United States; (left) English Avenue Elementary School and (right) St. Mark's AME.

ARCH 4823/6105: Race, Space, and Architecture in the United States (3 credits)

- Spring 2021

Although this course has been on the books, it has not been offered at Georgia Tech since the fall of 2012; significantly before my fall 2019 appointment and the faculty who originated the course is no longer with the Institute.

The course is interdisciplinary by nature, referencing the projects and methodologies of not only architects and architectural historians, but also archaeologists, artists, designers, environmentalists, ethnographers, historians, photographers, urbanists, sociologists, technicians, and writers. Although the course will cover topics and themes across the U.S., the focus will decidedly be on the American South, with a close lens on and around Atlanta. Through historiography, the course will aim to counter the stance illuminated by Dell Upton: black history in the built environment is studied only alongside stories of white supremacy. The course will examine intersectionalities between race, ability, gender, and sexual orientation to further explore the complexities of the policy and practice within the built environment, acknowledging shortcomings within the records of architecture, landscape, and urban history.

Through case studies, the course is exploring overlooked BIPOC projects and designers. By enacting research, reflective interpretation, and productive creativity, this course is questioning how architectural history and design can forward, but also hinder, components of social justice and equity. Using online platforms, the course consistently engages myriad voices from the fields of architecture, urban planning, education, public history, and historic preservation, as well as non-profits and community stakeholders from various outreach projects and historic sites in the United States, as well as voices from the United Kingdom and South Africa will provide for comparative context. Two small grants from the Office of the Provost provide honoraria.

Working collaboratively to honor erased histories, the cohort is contributing to the documentary record of eight selected sites in Atlanta, using 3D scanning, photogrammetry, and archival research. Course deliverables will focus on documentation and the design of a virtual exhibit for public outreach. The re-piloting of this course provides an invaluable opportunity for teaching reflection as well as research and content development. We have a Qualtrics survey open throughout the term, allowing students the opportunity to provide anonymous for adjustments

and additions to course content. Through the semester-long projects, we are exploring how the course can leverage student deliverables for public history and outreach projects, while also questioning how the course can have an impact beyond the College of Design and the Institute: we will pilot online platforms, submit HABS/HALS projects, and revisit (and submit revisions to) state historic register listings absent of critical notes of cultural landscapes as well as contested and racist histories. This course is providing critical time and focus for reading, interactive lecture and virtual exploration development, and essential on-site documentation and research related to sites of slavery, transformative marches and protests, and catastrophic acts of violence that have left little or no remnants in the built environment, meaning that the historical and geospatial consequences of the events are not fully registered by visitors or even other researchers. How can we create impactful visuals at and about cultural landscapes that provide few remaining artifacts?

Innovation through Preservation Technology and Heritage BIM

Advancements in technology make it possible to bring history to life in ways previously unimagined. Architectural and public historians, in an alliance with the guardians of local cultural artifacts, now have the capacity to move outdated curricula as well as static, two-dimensional displays and outdated dioramas toward sensory experiences that are capable of engaging and enlightening even the youngest students and museum visitors. Through rigorous and accurate historic interpretation that features diverse perspectives, including the narratives of historically marginalized populations, educators have the responsibility and opportunity for drawing attention to the people, places, and stories of America, including its darker and hidden histories, to cultivate new generations of well-informed citizens. As interpretive immersion technologies advance beyond the realms of digital archives, collections, and databases, so do augmented and virtual reality. Incorporating these innovative interpretive methodologies into explorations of race and space will give educators the distinctive ability to enrich the experience of researchers, students, and historic site visitors, on and off-site.

While the costs associated with these technologies, such as 3D scanning and photogrammetry through terrestrial cameras and UAVs (drones), steadily decrease, their availability makes digital documentation more accessible to vernacular sites and cultural landscapes outside of the cannon of architectural history. The primary hurdles for digital documentation at rural and vernacular structures and landscapes relate to the physical and financial access to required hardware, software, and computing power. Historian and preservationist Antoinette J. Lee concludes that structures located in marginalized communities, especially poor rural African American communities are frequently underestimated or outrightly overlooked by the “professional elite.” However, collaborative initiatives such as the Slave Dwelling Project, in partnership with the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training and numerous universities and national non-profit organizations, are expanding the documentary record.

The Race, Space, and Architecture in the United States course affords similar opportunities to enhance the documentary record and expand public interpretation. As we are discovering, there is much work to be done in the realm of documentation and capture of disappearing narratives in the built environment. Far too many BIPOC sites have been consciously erased or are in severe peril, especially in Atlanta (i.e., Paschal's, the Royal Peacock, and the English Avenue School). Course deliverables focus on documentation: 3D scanning, photogrammetry, the design of items for preservation planning and revitalization, as well as virtual exhibits for public outreach. Using online platforms to our benefit, the course consistently engages myriad voices

from the fields of architecture, public history, and non-profits, specifically the Atlanta Preservation Center, and community stakeholders, underscoring the value of partnering with a local organization with an existing audience to give the students real-world experience and also to contribute to local organizations and communities. The cost of 3D scanning is typically prohibitive for the sites we are studying; so, this truly is a service-learning endeavor in preservation.

Ongoing professional development

Through enrichment programs, I am dedicated to becoming a better, more dexterous teacher who is able to integrate technology and creativity within an array of course types and delivery methods:

- Class of 1969 Teaching Fellows for the 2020-2021 Academic Year
- College of Design Tech fee proposal to expand access to 3D scanning in the classroom
- Fall 2020 Dumbarton Oaks Mellon Teaching Fellowship (see below)

This recently granted residential fellowship for fall 2021 will facilitate research and course content development for Race, Space, and Architecture in the U.S. Teaching within a School of Architecture with a technological focus, I plan to use my time in DC as well as during field work to capture a number of sites using photogrammetry, 3D cameras, and 3D scanning. These will serve as record documents for sites and provide the opportunity to explore places remotely and in more detail. Building maps within readily accessible platforms such as Google Earth will also allow for the creation of virtual tours with embedded content, bringing sites of history to life. As already demonstrated with my work in Selma with the Old Depot Museum, the development of a digital 3D model using Building Information Modeling (BIM) technology, in addition to the detailed digitization of selected items within museum's archives related to the Civil Rights Movement through digital scanning and photography, not only expand historical narratives but directly assist in the museum's mission to provide educational opportunities to children, the general public, and seasoned researchers alike beyond the municipal borders of Selma.

Building upon an ongoing project (b. 2016) about Bloody Sunday and the documentation of deteriorating sites in Selma, Alabama to the civil rights movement, this project will explore sites of conflict in Atlanta, Memphis, Washington, DC, Richmond, and Charlottesville. The sponsored project will be threefold: (1) instructional and student-deliverable reflection and development based on the spring 2021 iteration of the course Race, Space, and Architecture in the United States, (2) archival research and literature review for thematic development in the realms of cultural landscapes related to the struggles for civil rights, and how they are relayed in terms of collective memory and public interpretation, and (3) documentation and development of visual materials for future iterations of the course as well as online platforms with project partners, particularly the Georgia Institute of Technology, Dumbarton Oaks, the Atlanta Preservation Center, and the Old Depot Museum in Selma, Alabama.

Looking forward, I would hope that my maps, digital models, and materials curated with primary and secondary source links would be useful to curricular explorations outside of Georgia Tech. Ideally, these would be translated into open-source materials that could be formatted for various online outreach initiatives, such as the digital platforms of Dumbarton Oaks, the Society of Architectural Historians' Archipedia, and the Global Architectural History Teaching Collaborative. As COVID-19 has so severely highlighted, educators need to invest in interactive

and accessible platforms for exploration and critical conversations. These materials aspire to illuminate sites of oppression, segregation, and exclusion but also aim to make these lessons open to a wider audience, breaking down possible impediments from travel restrictions, due to safety or financial limits, or economic boundaries. My goal is that the digital documentation and resources developed could reach students in distant classrooms, learning collaboratively in-person or virtually, or public library patrons in underserved areas, looking to expand their horizons and their understanding of the unique and complex American landscape.

Enhanced community connections

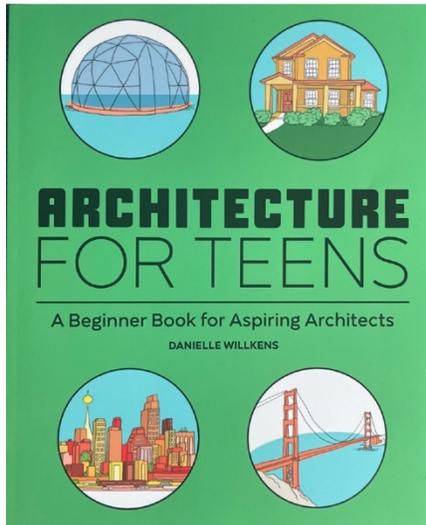
Since my appointment with Georgia Tech in August 2019, I have been working to build partnerships and outreach opportunities through both teaching and research

- Altana Preservation Center, Board of Trustees
- Education Committee for the Southeast Chapter for the Institute of Classical Architecture and Art
- Drew Charter STEAM Workshop presenter
- Upcoming participant in the Atlanta Public School's College & Career Motivation Week

Early intervention design education

The phrase 'early intervention' is primarily associated with developmental educational studies.; however, with reference to design education, 'early intervention' directly addresses the need for architects to be active members of community programs, advocates for the profession, and practitioners engaged in pre-college educational scaffolds. Between 2008 and 2020, Duke University's Talent Identification Program (TIP) was an outlet for a variety of design teaching experiments with students from grades 5-12. As an eStudies Curriculum Developer and

Instructor between 2015 and 2020, I pioneered the 7-week, online intensive "Architecture: Design and Reinvention" course. I also crafted an independent learning program, "Architecture: Discover, Dream, Design," and contributed to curriculum for the short course CRISIS: Hurricane, Curriculum Developer, "Architectural Design and Structures."



From these experiences, it is clear that the multimodal delivery used in design education can engage students of various learning types. Furthermore, the student-led discussions and research investigations found in design education cultivate beneficial collaborative skills as well as academic independence.

This wealth of teaching experience with young students inspired the creation of the forthcoming book, *Architecture for Teens*, that will be released March 2021, as well as a series of K-12 lesson plans commissioned for the Society of Architectural Historians' Archipedia and NEH Edsitement! Project: "Reading a Building" and "Architecture Working with the Environment."

Teaching Record at Georgia Tech

Semester	Course number	Course name	Number of students
Spring 2021	ARCH 1017	Studio I (coordinator)	15
Spring 2021	ARCH 4823	Special Topics: History, Theory, and Criticism for Race, Space, and Architecture in the United States	10
Spring 2021	ARCH 6160	Race, Space, and Architecture in the United States	16
Fall 2020	ARCH 2111	History of Architecture I	92
Fall 2020	ARCH 3115	Modern Art & Architecture Workshop	5
Fall 2020	ARCH 6105	History of Architecture I	12
Summer 2020	GT 1000	Freshman Seminar Architecture & Design	34
Spring 2020	ARCH 1855	Studio I (co-coordinator)	12
Fall 2019	ARCH 2111	History of Architecture I	116
Fall 2019	ARCH 3115	Modern Art & Architecture Workshop	6
Fall 2019	ARCH 6105	History of Architecture I	17

Demonstration of excellence in teaching at Georgia Tech

Measures of Student Successes

- Honorable Mention for the 2020 School of Architecture Mike Rice Award (ARCH 1855)
- Recipient of the 2019 Christopher H. Brown Paris Drawing Tour Scholarship from the Southeast Chapter of the Institute for Classical Architecture and Art
- Two students from ARCH 1855 Studio I served as team leaders of the summer 2020 design track of GT 1000
- Student's PURA submission currently under review

Thank a Teacher, Fall 2020

- I just wanted to thank you for a fantastic semester of architecture. It's been so interesting learning about the history of architecture from a truly global perspective. I've learned a lot from your lectures and our discovery and dissemination project as well. Additionally, I appreciate all of the work you've done to make the class challenging and thought-provoking but not too overwhelming and stressful. Thanks for always being available to answer any questions and clarify things. I hope you have a great holiday break!

Representative student comments from CIOS

Best aspects of ARCH 2111 History of Architecture I (taught twice):

- The incredibly broad range of material that we covered was really eye opening- I think that this course has improved my thoughts about what I can design by miles.
- the professor! and her passion!! :)
- the content was definitely unique and not something I would have learned in my other classes
- Some of the criticisms we wrote were very engaging and brought upon a good amount of thought and analysis at the level of those first learning to read architecture. Also, discussions were very short assignments, but they helped us build a basis for how architects look at buildings, and some key aspects of how they do that
- The best features of the course would be the Local History assignment. I felt like I could use what I learned in class for an actual building in my area.
- The best feature of this course was definitely the lectures. I feel that Professor Willkens did a good job of weaving together basic information, interesting tie-ins, and relevant examples to convey an interesting story throughout our discussion of architectural history.
- Danielle was extremely well organized and gave us more than enough resources to learn. She challenged us and made us better writers. I think she structured the course nicely and I never felt extremely overwhelmed.
- I really enjoyed the writing projects, even though I didn't do great on them. They were very unique compared to
- most historical writing I have done, and it really helped with my understanding of the material.
- Very motivated instructor, very interesting subject. As a non-Architecture student, every class was a delight to attend and to learn about how people lived and constructed great monuments.

Best aspects of ARCH 6105 History of Architecture I (taught twice)

- She is one of the best professors I have ever had!! She portrayed information in a way that everyone can understand, challenged the class, interacted with the class and I learned a lot. I really appreciated that she made our projects not just about writing essays, but also a design challenge!
- The best feature of this course was the lectures. Professor Willkens was able to relay the information in a concise way while maintaining a level of interaction among the student with questions to drop into the chatbox.
- Combination of multiple modes of learning made the course effective. Fairly equal balance between more traditional studying in preparation for quizzes, open-ended discussion about topics, and research-based writing assignments. I found the writing assignments to be especially helpful and applicable to future success in
- the program.
- I loved the writing assignments. The prompts, resources provided, and avenues to deepen our own independent pools of knowledge were extraordinary. I also deeply appreciate that this class offered an in-class option to experience learning live.
- Danielle and her TA's did an excellent job using a variety of techniques to implement the course. This was by far the most well-done survey course I've ever taken as an undergraduate or graduate student.
- This course included research. Rather than doing menial assignments, it was better to focus on research and learn how to write like an architect.

Best aspects of ARCH 3115 Modern Art & Architecture Workshop (taught twice)

- I loved the projects given in this course, they really forced me to be creative while many of my other classes forced me to be analytical. The projects always forced me to try something new or learn a new technique.
- We hit so many different topics in this class. Learning things outside of the structural aspect of architecture, like various forms of printing/line work, typography, and the history supporting our lessons was fun. I also am glad we got to use so many different programs for modeling and editing.

Instructor's strengths (various courses)

- Obviously her mastery of the material, but her phenomenal organization allowed her to take advantage of every possible teaching minute. From having readings ready for discussions to allowing us to peer review and learn from each other to the thoughtfulness in the writing prompts that allowed independent exploration on a variety of subjects. There were some common standards that she taught, but also great differentiation offered to the wide spectrum of students.
- It is abundantly clear that Professor Willkens is passionate about Architecturally History. This passion was able to shine through and, accompanied by her impressive depth of knowledge across a multitude of architectural history periods, inspired me to learn more about certain styles of arch history outside of the classroom.
- Her willingness to really spend time with us to iron out anything we were unsure of, needed, or asked of. She was the most accessible professor I have had at Tech and always responded to my emails very quickly with understanding.
- Really great feedback was offered that helped to improve my thought process and approach to assignments moving forwards. She offered helpful criticism while still being encouraging. I also liked how she adjusted the class schedule and focus based on class interest and feedback, it made it feel more personalized and less stressful.
- Knowledge of content and ability to make the content relevant to today's world
- Danielle's professionalism and encouragement were exceptional.
- Her profound knowledge. She could answer any question in a way that anyone could understand.
- Availability and continuous feedback. She's very bright and I have never enjoyed a history class as much as I enjoyed this one because of her.
- Danielle was always exceptionally professional and welcoming to all students. She facilitated an open and enthusiastic learning environment while still having high expectations.
- Her understanding of the course material in depth. For example, not only was the information on an architecture site given but also its history, supporting detail info, social perception as the time vs now.
- She definitely cared deeply about us as students and listened to us. I was never afraid to email her with a question or to ask about a grade. She made herself very available and was super reasonable when adjusting assignments.
- The greatest strength of the instructor was the variety of topics and information that was covered in the course, providing not just a Euro-centric or colonial view of architectural history.
- Her ability to make everything we covered so interesting and work together. I particularly enjoyed how no development was shown in a super abrupt manner, rather showing how individual developments built on each other, even with callbacks to developments hundreds of years after they occurred. Showing those callbacks really made it clear why this material was so important
- She had a lot of passion for the subject, and in lectures she was very excited to talk about all of the buildings and people we discussed.
- Providing handout worksheets was a nice touch to the lectures. Also, she definitely listens to her students, which was evident through my interactions with her and her announcements in class.
- She was very helpful to me and always made time to meet with me outside of class if I needed. Also worked through Willkens difficulties with the disability services and was supportive and patient with me and them.
- I feel that Dr. Willkens greatest strength was her fascination concerning the subject of Architecture. I found myself in discussions with her on several occasions after class that involved aspects of Architectural history that we both found intriguing. It's good to know that a teacher wants to share with you the things about their work of study that appeal to them so that you might learn to revere the subject as much as they do.
- Dr. Willkens is a very understanding and encouraging professor; she is a good educator rather than just a professional in her area of study.
- Georgia Tech made a smart decision when they hired Dr. Willkens! Her passion for not only her area of expertise but also for her students is evident. She puts in 110% into her job. She invests in students and is always there to push, encourage, and understand them not only in relation to her class, but in relation to their career and future.

24 February 2021

I enthusiastically offer my support for Assistant Professor Danielle Willkens, PhD in consideration for the CTL/BP Junior Faculty Teaching Excellence Award.

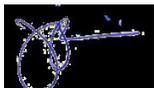
I have been fortunate as a professor, associate chair, and undergraduate program director at Georgia Tech to have engaged with some incredible faculty colleagues over the years. For a School of Architecture to be successful on multiple levels, it must include faculty with, at least, the following qualities: vision; an awareness of opportunities; a willingness to question; and an acceptance of challenges. Dr. Willkens embodies all of these traits. Whether she is mentoring a student, developing her coursework, or partnering with her colleagues in her scholarship efforts, she is most generous in all that she offers. Since she joined Georgia Tech in 2019, I have seen first-hand her immediate and significant impact on our program. I will speak to a few specific meaningful examples.

Dr. Willkens has been actively involved in teaching core required and elective courses in our undergraduate program. She has crafted the course structures for ARCH 1017, a first-year foundation studio; ARCH 2111/6105 Global History of Architecture, the core required course; ARCH 3115 Modern Art and Architecture, required for architecture minors; and ARCH 4823/6160 Race, Space, and Architecture, an elective. The elective course had not been offered for several years, and Dr. Willkens enthusiastically took the initiative to revive it for Spring 2021. In this course, she is particularly interested in how we can approach the challenging subject of race through the complex places and histories of the American South's cultural landscapes. Students were eager to enroll in this class and have the opportunity to work with Dr. Willkens. The waitlist grew and all, ultimately, were invited by Dr. Willkens to join this class.

No matter the nature of the course, Dr. Willkens exhibits energy, enthusiasm, and commitment. As a studio instructor, she presents our students with a compelling and dynamic studio environment that fosters critical and thoughtful learning within an open dialogue. These are critical steps our students take when they begin their journey to become architects and designers. Dr. Willkens' priorities on transparency and clarity offer an effective structure that extends students' development in design thinking and execution. She continually enriches the classroom environment with her inquisitive spirit, thoughtful contributions, and engaging observation.

Dr. Willkens is passionate about teaching, mentoring, and learning. In addition to her own scholarship and teaching efforts, she has taken on a leadership role in the School of Architecture Equity, Justice, and Inclusion task force. In this role, she is actively participating in an important effort that will have lasting impact on our students' lives and to the future of the school. Her consistent self-evaluation, her passion for the educational process and her willingness to experiment are only a few of the incredible qualities that make Assistant Professor Danielle Willkens such an excellent colleague and educator. The School of Architecture is fortunate to have her as one of its faculty members.

Professor Willkens is thoughtful and fully engaged with all the layers of academic life here at Georgia Tech. She will have a lasting impact for our students and on our community. This is, in fact, already happening. I enthusiastically offer this letter of support for her in consideration of the CTL/BP Junior Faculty Teaching Excellence Award. Please feel free to contact me if I may be any further assistance.



Julie Ju-Youn Kim AIA NCARB
Associate Chair, School of Architecture
Director, Undergraduate Program

School of Architecture

College of Design, Georgia Institute of Technology
247 Fourth St N.W., Suite 351
Atlanta, Georgia 30332-0155 U.S.A.

Phone 404.894.4885
Fax 404.894.0572
www.arch.gatech.edu

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To the Selection Committee,

My name is Susanna Greiner and I am a second-year undergraduate architecture student at Georgia Tech. I am writing this letter in full support of the 2021 award nomination for Assistant Professor Dr. Danielle Willkens. I have taken two of Assistant Professor Dr. Willkens' courses offered through the College of Design, and I have truly enjoyed learning as a student in her History of Architecture I class (ARCH 2111) and her section of Architecture Design Studio I (ARCH 1017), for which she was also the coordinator. I also participated as a volunteer Teaching Assistant for the design-related GT1000 course of iGniTe for which Dr. Willkens was an instructor.

Dr. Willkens has fully immersed herself here at Georgia Tech and is committed to challenging her students and providing them with the materials they need to succeed. When I completed her Architecture History I course in the fall of 2019, the curriculum was clearly organized and had a variety of modes of communication despite it being her first semester teaching the course. Not only did Dr. Willkens provide engaging lectures, but she also encouraged class engagement through discussion, clicker questions, academic writing, and team projects. As the class is also a popular humanities course, Dr. Willkens also took advantage of the varying academic backgrounds of students to encourage multidisciplinary teams and group thinking. Dr. Willkens enthusiasm for and knowledge of architectural history was evident in every class, and she often contributed invaluable insight by talking about her personal experiences of architecture from around the world.

I also had the pleasure of Dr. Willkens as my studio critic for Architecture Design Studio 1, the second-semester architecture studio for first-year students. I took this course in the spring of 2020, and in addition to being a studio critic at Georgia Tech for the first time, Dr. Willkens coordinated the studio with the help of the other critics. In her studio, I enjoyed her superior understanding of how to explain basic design concepts to students new to the field of architecture. Once again, her organization of the class materials was exceptionally clear, but she was also not afraid to adapt projects as she received feedback from students and critics. Dr. Willkens supported students and gave feedback in a variety of ways, including traditional desk crits, interactive pin-ups and formal reviews. She was understanding, informative and engaged throughout the entire course.

When the institute transitioned to remote delivery of courses mid-semester, Dr. Willkens adapted studio to an online format quickly and simply. Aware of the range of home situations of students, Dr. Willkens relaxed project deadlines and meeting times as appropriate. She established an effective routine for desk crits through the use of Bluejeans, Canvas, Microsoft Teams, and Padlet, and continued to provide clear comments and critiques for each student's project. Dr. Willkens flexibility during this time was admirable, and she juggled studio with students in different time zones and personal projects with apparent ease. Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed having Dr. Willkens as a studio critic and coordinator.

Outside of the classroom, Dr. Willkens makes it clear to each of her students that her door is always open. As a first-year architecture student, I quickly became a bit overwhelmed by the academic thinking that was employed in Architecture History I. However, after dropping by Dr. Willken's office hours for only a couple of minutes, I left with software tips, book recommendations, plenty of encouragement, and a much better state of mind. This is one of the many reasons that I reached out to Dr. Willkens last summer for her advice on a research project. Since then, she has helped me work through my research problem and potential outputs, and I am ready to submit my research

proposal. Dr. Willkens has agreed to serve as my mentor for the project, and I am extremely grateful for the expertise and perspective that she provides. I am excited to continue working with her, and I am looking forward to where this project takes us.

Dr. Willkens enthusiasm for teaching, passion for architecture, and dedication to research and mentorship makes her a strong candidate for this award. I would be happy to discuss further how Dr. Willkens has made an impact on my experience at Georgia Tech, and I believe that she will continue to have that effect for years to come.

Sincerely,

Susanna Greiner

Architecture Student
Georgia Institute of Technology

Dear members of the Selection Committee,

I am very pleased to convey my full and enthusiastic support for Dr. Danielle Willkens as a recipient of the CTL and BP America Junior Faculty Teaching Excellence Award.

In my two years of experience as a Graduate Teaching Assistant in the School of Architecture at Georgia Tech, I have had the privilege to work twice under Dr. Willkens' extraordinary delivery of *History of Architecture I*, a survey of architectural history from antiquity through the eighteenth century.

The first semester we worked together was Danielle's first at Georgia Tech and while there would be some expectation of an acclimation period, it never seemed necessary for her. Instead, Danielle unyieldingly provided a meticulously developed, innovative, and much-needed transformation of the course from antecedent versions. Her reorganization and delivery of the curriculum in thematic modules, such as *Power* and *Climate*, brilliantly provides an exceptional understanding of architectural history in nuance for undergraduate and graduate level architecture students, all the while fostering a critical understanding of the built environment that students with varying areas of study, degrees of aptitude, and range of ambition, have been compelled to engage.

Danielle's inclusive reformulation of the course is a mere expression of the greater pedagogy that positions her apart from other educators. Every aspect of her teaching methodology, including the orchestration of lecture presentations, requirement of peer reviews and recurrent blog discussions, prolific deployment of new learning technology, and crafting of assignments, is thoughtfully devised for the exact purpose of student immersion in course material and their general development as meaningful scholars and/or professionals. The culmination of this is most evident in the *Local History: Discovery and Dissemination* assignment, a semester-long endeavor in which Danielle guided students to empirically document a colloquial building of their choosing, research its social and contextual history in depth, and develop a critical response. What is most impressive still, though Danielle's pedagogy is innovative and highly developed, she maintains a nimbleness for constant refinement.

Against all proclivities of a survey course with over one hundred students, Danielle manages to offer a level of student engagement commensurate to that of a small seminar. She evinces an approachability and eagerness for one-on-one discussions and seeks to facilitate the learning of students on an individual level, regardless of performance.

Danielle is markedly one of the best educators I have come across in my academic experience from both the perspective of a student and a member of instructional teams alike. Above all, she consistently imparts an invaluable understanding of the built environment as the product of the socio-political, technological, and cultural continuum. Her investment in scholarship is altruistic and seems to stem from a deep and unwavering belief in the importance of learning for greater benevolence. To my estimation, any support for Dr. Willkens' scholarly endeavors will be exceeded tenfold in what is made of it.

In closing, Dr. Danielle Willkens comes with my strongest support as a recipient of this award. Please do not hesitate to let me know if I can further assist her nomination in any way possible.

Sincerely,

Bryce Truitt

M.Arch. Candidate
Graduate Teaching Assistant
Georgia Institute of Technology

February 20, 2021

To the Selection Committee,

It is my honor to write this letter in support of Professor Danielle Willkens for the Junior Faculty Teaching Excellence Award. She is an exemplary professor that fosters an environment of collaboration and continual improvement. Her class is the most personally meaningful, impactful class that I have taken at Georgia Tech.

I had Professor Willkens for the Modern Architecture and Art Workshop in the Fall Semester of 2020. She was the ideal professor for such a creative class, facilitating an open classroom setting full of discussion and friendly critique. As a sophomore majoring in civil engineering, I took the class as the first for my architecture minor. Most of my classes are technical and math-heavy, so I did not know what to expect from a more artistic-oriented class. I found it to be a welcomed change of pace, especially with the ingenious class format employed by Professor Willkens.

In each class session, each student would present and discuss their work for the open-ended assignment that had been given in the previous session. Professor Willkens encouraged and facilitated in-depth discussions in which I gained much insight into the works of my peers as well as myself. She guided these discussions with thought-provoking questions, but she would also step aside to let us explain our thoughts and opinions, allowing us to take a more personal, impactful approach to the content.

Early in the semester, I was not used to presenting creative works open to interpretation, much more accustomed to the more black-and-white answers of my math-heavy classes. However, as the class progressed, I became more comfortable presenting my thoughts and found myself inspired by my classmates' works and comments. Being prompted by Professor Willkens to explain my work each week, I began to think harder about my motivations for the works as I was creating them, and I could feel myself improving and becoming more creative with each passing week. I found that by showing and explaining my work to my classmates each week and receiving their feedback, I was not only motivated to put more effort into my assignments, but also to open my mind to the different perspectives and ideas brought up by my classmates. It also helped maintain interaction with my peers even through the disconnect brought on by COVID-19, producing a feeling of connection I did not get from most of my other classes.

The final project given to us by Professor Willkens was another impactful decision on her part, as it was my first opportunity since coming to Georgia Tech to design my own solution to a problem of my choosing. She encouraged us to pick topics we cared about and asked about our motivations to get us thinking deeply about the problem and our desired solutions. As a result, this was a project I truly cared about doing, rather than feeling like it was just another item on my to-do list. She made sure to check in with us each week, even offering individual critique sessions so we could get personalized, meaningful feedback on each step of our processes. She organized a panel of guest judges to give feedback on our projects during the final class session, and this was probably one of the most meaningful experiences I have had in a class at Georgia Tech. It felt so rewarding to have my work positively reviewed by people in the industry, and it solidified my decision to continue pursuing a minor in architecture.

Professor Willkens is an inspiring professor, and I am very thankful that I was able to take her class and experience the creative growth she fosters in her students. She truly cares about the success of every student in her class, and this is clear by the way she makes time to support each student individually. Her methodology and attitude are exemplary and make her extremely deserving of this award.

Sincerely,

Emma Kollman