INTERIOR DESIGN EDUCATORS COUNCIL

(All times listed below are in Eastern Time)

2026 Virtual Symposium - Celebrating Teaching Excellence

DAY 1 – Wednesday, November 4, 2026

9:45 am - 10:00 am **Welcome and Opening Remarks**

10:00 am – 11:00 am **Signature Session**

Preparing for an Evolving Industry *[1.0 CEUs]*

Ultimately, the purpose of interior design education is not simply to prepare students to enter the workforce, but to prepare them to lead an evolving profession. AI is fundamentally reshaping design—shifting the emphasis from manual execution toward critical curation, accelerated exploration, and data-informed ideation. As these tools expand what is possible, educators have an essential role in preparing students to use them with intention and discernment. The opportunity is to embrace the efficiency and creative potential of AI while strengthening what remains distinctly human: foundational spatial reasoning, empathy, critical thinking, responsible judgment, and ethical design practice. The goal is not merely proficiency with new technology, but the development of adaptable designers who can thoughtfully shape what comes next.

Keynote Speaker: Laura Constantin, NCIDQ, CID, CHID, NIHD, IIDA | Healthcare Client Leader | CannonDesign

11:05 am – 12:05 pm **Concurrent Sessions**

Session 1 – Innovative Teaching Idea Presentations (Breakout Room 1)

1. Graduate Interior Design Studio: An Exploration of Animal Care Facility Design (11:05-11:35) *[0.5 CEUs]*
   Jason Shields, MID - Assistant Professor, University of Manitoba
2. From the Design Challenge to the Design Concept: The Application of Designer Centric AI in Projects (11:35-12:05) *[0.5 CEUs]*
   Daniel Ronderos, M. Arch - Instructor, The University of Alabama

Session 2 - Spark Presentations (Breakout Room 2)

1. Sensing Empathy: Biometric-AI Feedback in VR Design Studios (11:05-11:35) *[0.5 CEUs]*
   Lucy Trimarco, MS - Assistant Professor, Columbia College Chicago
2. Crates, Charrettes, and Chatbots: AI as Scaffold in Civic Studio (11:35-12:05) *[0.5 CEUs]*
   Anna Gitelman, MDS, M. Arch - Associate Professor, Suffolk University

Note: To accommodate a faculty schedule change, the order of the presentations in this session has changed since the original schedule

12:05 pm – 12:25 pm **Lunch**

12:25 pm – 1:25 pm **Roundtable**

Perspectives in Practice and Academia *[1.0 CEUs]*

This roundtable brings together professionals from healthcare design, academia, and nursing to explore perspectives across practice and education. Featured panelists include:
-Elizabeth Johnson, Ph.D., MS-CRM, RN - Nursing Institute for Healthcare Design, Assistant Professor, Montana State University
-Sara Bayramzadeh, Ph.D. - Associate Professor, Coordinator/Elliot Professor, Health Care Design Program, Kent State University
-Stephanie Fallon, MS, IIDA, CHID - American Academy of Healthcare Interior Designers, Senior Interior Designer, The Beck Group

Moderated by: Laura Constantin, NCIDQ, CID, CHID, NIHD, IIDA | Healthcare Client Leader | CannonDesign

FINAL

DAY 1 - Continued

1:30 pm – 2:30 pm **Concurrent Sessions**

Session 3 – Innovative Teaching Idea Presentations (Breakout Room 1)

1. Augmented Reality: A Wood Joint Assignment (1:30-2:00) *[0.5 CEUs]*
   Hoa Vo, Ph.D. - Assistant Professor, Indiana University Bloomington

2. From Food to Furniture to Full Interior (2:00-2:30) *[0.5 CEUs]*
   Jessica Bonness, MA – Program Director and Associate Professor, Marymount University

Session 4 – Innovative Teaching Idea Presentations (Breakout Room 2)

1. The Environment Makes the Sound (1:30-2:00) *[0.5 CEUs]*
   Erin Speck, M. Arch - Assistant Professor, George Washington University

2. Empathy in Interdisciplinary Service (2:00-2:30) *[0.5 CEUs]*
   Beth McGee, Ph.D. – Associate Professor, Georgia Southern University

2:30 pm – 2:45 pm **Break**

2:45 pm – 3:45 pm **Interactive Session**

The Power of Space *[1.0 CEUs]* - Jerry Brown, Senior Consultant, Sales - Steelcase Learning
This interactive session explores the impact of intentionally developed learning environments on student outcomes. Participants examine how space influences teaching practices, learner behaviors, and the development of student agency, belonging, and engagement. Through review of historically significant evidence-based research, real-world case studies, and guided discussion, attendees share experiences and understandings on how thoughtfully designed environments can empower teacher excellence while creating more flexible, inclusive, and future-ready learning experiences.

3:45 pm - 4:30pm **Teaching Excellence Presentation**

Beyond Biophilia: Expanding the Studio Toward Nature-Centered Design *[1.0 CEUs]*
Kendra Locklear Ordia, NCIDQ, ASID, IIDA, MID- Assistant Professor, University of North Carolina at Charlotte
2024 ASID Educator of the Year & 2023 IDEC Teaching Excellence Award

4:30 pm - 4:45 pm **Happy Hour Intermission**

Take a short break and return with your favorite beverage and get ready to connect and celebrate with colleagues!

4:45 pm – 4:55 pm **A Word from our Sponsor – Dan Binford & Associates**

4:55 pm - 5:05 pm **Introduction to Communities and Knowledge Networks**

Welcome Message from the IDEC Director of Communities
Dana Vaux, Ph.D. - Associate Professor, University of Nebraska Kearney

5:00 pm - 6:00 pm **Community & Knowledge Network Happy Hour Breakout**

Attend any session(s) from the list below

- Knowledge Network: Lighting – Hosted by *Stephanie McGoldrick*
- Knowledge Network: Residential Design – Hosted by *Denise McAllister*
- Knowledge Network: Technology & Emerging Tech – Hosted by *Daniel Ronderos*
- Southwest Region: Hosted by *Roxann O'Rourke*
- South Region: Hosted by *Laura Kimball*

Session Wrap-Up from the Knowledge Network Chair *Amy Huber, Ph.D. - Professor, Florida State University*

6:00 pm **Day 1 Closing Announcements**

FINAL

2026 Virtual Symposium - Celebrating Teaching Excellence

DAY 2 – Thursday, November 5, 2026

(All times listed below are in Eastern Time)

9:45 am - 10:00 am **Welcome to Day 2**

10:00 am – 11:00 am **Signature Session**

Excellence in Design Education: Adaptive Reuse and Historic Preservation [1.0 CEUs]

Keynote Speaker: Lisa Tucker, Ph.D., FIDEC, FASID, FIIDA, AIA, WELL AP, LEED-AP BD+C |Professor & Director of the Center for Historic Preservation, Virginia Tech

11:05 am – 12:05 pm **Concurrent Sessions**

Session 5 - Innovative Teaching Idea Presentations (Breakout Room 1)

1. Sites of Learning (11:05-11:35) *[0.5 CEUs]*
   Keena Suh, M. Arch – Professor, Pratt Institute

2. Construction Detailing: Field Trip (11:35 -12:05) *[0.5 CEUs]*
   Mengni Zhang, Ph.D. – Assistant Professor, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Session 6 - Spark Presentations (Breakout Room 2)

1. Clear Paths, Complex Plans: Rethinking Space Planning Pedagogy (11:05-11:35) *[0.5 CEUs]*
   Sarah Hathcock, MID - Assistant Professor, University of Tennessee Chattanooga

2. Generating Beyond Data: Breaking AI Uniformity with Humanized Manipulation (11:35-12:05) *[0.5 CEUs]*
   Randy Fernando – Assistant Professor, Rochester Institute of Technology

12:05 pm – 12:25 pm **Lunch**

12:25 pm – 1:25 pm **Concurrent Panel Sessions**

(Breakout Room 1)
Collaborative Trauma-Informed School Design as Studio Pedagogy
[1.0 CEUs]
Mia Kile, MFA- Associate Professor, The University of Oklahoma
Katelyn Bell – Licensed Interior Designer, MA+ Architecture
Adrea Edwards – Lecturer, The University of Oklahoma
Gary Armburster – Principal Architect/Partner, MA+ Architecture

(Breakout Room 2)
Designing the Academic Career: Perspectives on Becoming an Interior Design Professor Across Institutional Types
[1.0 CEUs]
Panelists who have served on or led search committees for FT Faculty representing four common institutional types (R1, R2, RCU, and Teaching) will answer questions that allow insight to the nuanced differences for full-time faculty candidates to consider when preparing applications for employment during job searches.
Dr. Lori Guerrero, Auburn University - R1 institution
Kelly Mann, Abilene Christian University - R2 institution
Anna Gittelman, Suffolk University - RCU institution
Tony Purvis, Savannah College of Art and Design | Atlanta - Teaching institution

FINAL

1:30 pm – 2:30 pm **Concurrent Sessions**

Session 7 – Innovative Teaching Idea Presentations (Breakout Room 1)

1. Hands on Exercises for Understanding of Five Human Factors in Interior Design (1:30-2:00) *[0.5 CEUs]*
   Yongyeon Cho, MFA, MIA - Associate Professor, Iowa State University

2. Mapping Hostile Design (2:00-2:30) *[0.5 CEUs]*
   Solmaz Kive, Ph.D. - Assistant Professor, University of Oregon

Session 8 – Innovative Teaching Idea Presentations [(Breakout Room 2)

1. Material Performance Report (1:30-2:00) *[0.5 CEUs]*
   Stephanie Sickler, MFA - Associate Professor, Florida State University

2. Understanding Interdisciplinary Collaboration (2:00 -2:30) *[0.5 CEUs]*
   Gloria Stafford, Ph.D. - Associate Professor, University of Northern Iowa

2:30 pm - 2:45pm **Break**

2:45 pm - 3:45 pm **Concurrent Sessions**

Session 9 - Innovative Teaching Idea Presentations [(Breakout Room 1)

1. Sensory Learning Landscapes (2:45-3:15) *[0.5 CEUs]*
   Tina Patel, MFA – Associate Professor, Kent State University

2. Abstraction from Nature (3:15-3:45) *[0.5 CEUs]*
   Lauren Pillote, MA – Lecturer II, Central Michigan University

Session 10 - Spark Presentations (Breakout Room 2)

1. A Sensory Chair: Prompts for Adaptive Design (2:45-3:15) *[0.5 CEUs]*
   Barbara Weinreich, M. Arch - Assistant Professor, Fashion Institute of Technology

2. Beyond the Pretty Room: Teaching Interior Design Through Story (3:15-3:45) *[0.5 CEUs]*
   Sarah Hathcock, MID - Assistant Professor, University of Tennessee Chattanooga

3:45 pm - 4:30 pm **Teaching Excellence Presentation**

ASSIST: Collaborating for Rural Futures | Students, Communities, and Values-Driven Design [1.0 CEUs]
Nate Bicak, M. Arch- Associate Professor, University of Nebraska-Lincoln | 2026 IDEC Teaching Excellence Award

4:30 pm - 4:45 pm **Happy Hour Intermission**

Take a short break but return with your favorite beverage and get ready to connect and celebrate with colleagues!

4:45 pm - 5:00pm **Introduction to Communities and Knowledge Networks**

Welcome Message from the IDEC Communities Coordinator
Laura Morthland, MIA - Associate Professor, Southern Illinois University Carbondale

5:00 pm - 6:00 pm **Community & Knowledge Network Happy Hour Breakout**

FINAL

Attend any session(s) from the list below

- Knowledge Network - Creative Scholarship – Hosted by *Rina Naik & Anna Ruth Gatlin*
- East Region – Hosted by *Tania Branquinho*
- Midwest Region – Hosted by *Joan Kaufman*
- Pacific West Region - Hosted by Communities Coordinator *Laura Morthland*

Session Wrap-Up from the Knowledge Network Chair
Amy Huber, Ph.D. - Professor, Florida State University

6:00 pm **Symposium Closing**

FINAL