Choosing a Thesis Advisor

Process:

Students are required to find a thesis advisor a year in advance of their thesis semester, in other words, in the semester preceding their thesis prep term*. This means that students must begin to think about their thesis topic and possible corresponding advisors at the start of their options studios cycle, or even earlier.

While students are allowed and encouraged to reach out to faculty at any point in their in the program in order to explore the possibilities of partnering with them as advisors, the official advisee-advisor matching process is done through a centralized process and in a specific timeframe. In December or May, depending on one's intended thesis semester, students will submit a thesis proposal and a list of their top choices for thesis advisors to the Architecture Department via an online form. The department will then reach out to all faculty who have been requested and ask them to review their students' thesis proposals. Faculty will then select which students are suitable matches for them and we will make those advising relationships official.

Though nothing is official until the form is submitted and we receive confirmation from different faculty, students are encouraged to touch base with their intended advisors beforehand to introduce themselves and their projects to them. It is important that you attempt to meet with prospective advisors in advance of submitting this official request. Advisors are more likely to accept advisees if they have at least cursory knowledge of you and your work.

Guidelines:

In order to make this process as simple and effective as possible, students should keep in mind the following guidelines when choosing and approaching a faculty member to ask them to be their advisors:

1) **Have a compelling and well-thought-out thesis proposal.** Exciting and detailed proposals are much more likely inspire confidence and interest in faculty. Please refer to the Thesis Program Requirements document for suggested guidelines on crafting a compelling document.

2) **Match your proposal to the correct faculty member.** Instructors are more likely to advise on a thesis topic aligned with their own academic interests and expertize.

3) **Find a full time faculty member who will be in residence during your thesis semester.** Visitors and part time faculty are normally not eligible to be thesis advisors. Be aware that some faculty are in residence at the GSD every other semester or could be on sabbatical in a given year. Additionally, students pursuing a fall thesis must be aware that their review is in January and their advisors *must* attend.

4) **You *can* have an advisor from Landscape or UPD, but be careful.** Be sure to work through logistics between departments, such as scheduling difference. Students should also be careful that their theses do not stray outside the discipline of architecture, as their project will be judged on its architectural merits.

5) **Having two advisors is allowed, but identifying a primary advisor is strongly recommended.** The challenges of coordinating with your thesis advisor's schedule will be compounded when coordinating with two busy faculty members. Students should consider having one primary advisor and consulting with other faculty members unofficially.

* For example, students completing thesis in the Spring 2020, would need to have thesis advisors by the end of Spring 2019; or students doing thesis in Fall 2020 would need to have a thesis advisor by the end of Fall 2019.
By default, MArch I students are scheduled to do their theses in the Fall, unless their thesis semester is deferred via "splitting" or from taking a leave of absence. The default thesis semester for MArch II students, on the other hand, is in the spring.

Potential Advisor List

The following list represents a **sample** of faculty who have advised thesis in the past. If you have questions about the eligibility of a faculty member to advise whose name is not on this list, please feel free to inquire with Taylor Horner (thorner@gsd.harvard.edu).

Name	Notes
Bechthold, Martin	
Bonner, Jennifer	
Burchard, Jeffry	
Cohen, Preston Scott	
Eigen, Ed	
Hays, K. Michael	
Holder, Andrew	
Howeler, Eric	
Kuo, Jeannette	Spring only
La, Grace	
Legendre, George	Spring only
Malkawi, Ali	
Michalatos, Panagiotis	
Moe, Kiel	
Moussavi, Farshid	Limited Fall availability
Mori, Toshiko	
Naginski, Erika	
Panzano, Megan	
Picon, Antoine	Spring only
Rowe, Peter	
Sayegh, Allen	
Scogin, Mack	
Silvetti, Jorge	
Smith, Christine	
Whittaker, Elizabeth	
Witt, Andrew	
Wodiczko, Krzysztof	
Wu, Cameron	
Jon Lott	
John May	
Kaijima, Sawako	
Pietrusko, Bobby	
Samuelson, Holly	
Tom DePaor	Spring only
Panagiotis Michelatos	
Michalatos, Panagiotis	
Tato, Belinda	