

STUART WEITZMAN SCHOOL OF DESIGN

The Weitzman School of Design prepares future built environment professionals and artists to improve the quality of life in communities around the world and confront climate change and rising inequality.

At the same time as we empower the next generation of artists, designers, planners, and preservationists to be agents for positive change, we pursue a more just, sustainable, and healthy environment through partnerships with government agencies, NGOs, foundations, and other community partners.

We work at multiple scales ranging from the parklet and school courtyard to the megaregional and transnational with time horizons from days to years.

Learn more at: <https://www.design.upenn.edu/about> (<https://www.design.upenn.edu/about/>).

Mission

The Weitzman School of Design prepares students to address complex sociocultural and environmental issues through thoughtful inquiry, creative expression, and innovation. As a diverse community of scholars and practitioners, we are committed to advancing the public good—locally, nationally, and globally—through art, design, planning, and preservation.

Weitzman is committed to creating a learning environment in which all students, faculty, and staff members feel valued. As a school whose faculty, students, alums, and friends have strengthened communities around the world through visual culture and the built environment, we recognize the profound importance of contributions from individuals with a variety of backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives. Equal opportunity and a global outlook are foundational to the fulfillment of our mission and values.

Community building at Weitzman has taken many forms, including establishing a school-wide committee consisting of Weitzman faculty, staff, and students focusing on promoting our schoolwide values; partnering with the Penn Center for Excellence in Teaching, Learning and Innovation (CETLI) to promote effective and inclusive teaching practices across the school; and collaborating with communities across the region to implement neighborhood improvement initiatives. We welcome participation from Weitzman students, faculty, and staff in support of these programs, and to help us develop new initiatives in response to the dynamic needs of our vibrant community.

The Weitzman Engagement + Community (WE+C) platform creates opportunities and spaces to increase our understanding of others' experiences and support one another through social activities, interactive discussions, trainings, and initiatives designed to promote a culture of care and respect. By creating more opportunities and spaces for connection, we are helping to build and strengthen the Weitzman learning and research community.

We are proud of our exceptional legacy of advancing design education, scholarship and practice, and improving the quality of everyday life through design. We recognize that we should measure our success not just by what we do but by how we approach our work. The values and

guiding principles below reflect our commitment to creating a culture of trust, integrity, and fairness.

Respect

We treat each other with respect – faculty, staff, and students – regardless of background or position.

Inclusion

We strive to create an inclusive environment, embracing difference and welcoming diverse perspectives.

Belonging

We believe that everyone in our community should feel welcome, valued, and unafraid to ask questions or raise concerns.

Humility

We recognize that listening to and learning from others is critical to our success. We acknowledge our mistakes, and we understand that they are essential to our growth.

Support

We seek to foster a supportive community, celebrating our successes and learning from our mistakes.

Courage

We encourage risk taking and exploring beyond established boundaries in pursuit of excellence.

Collegiality

We believe in teamwork, recognizing that differences of opinion are constructive and should be addressed collegially and respectfully.

Transparency

We are committed to frequent, open, and transparent communication.

Justice

We recognize that some members of our community may experience unfair barriers or advantages and we make changes to ensure that everyone has access to equal opportunities.

History

Although the Weitzman School of Design dates its founding from 1890, architecture courses were first offered in 1869, making Penn's architecture program the second oldest in the United States. In 1921, the Department of Architecture joined with the Department of Music and Fine Arts to create an independent undergraduate School of Fine Arts modeled on the French École des Beaux Arts. In 1958, the School was renamed the Graduate School of Fine Arts, reflecting the shift to graduate degree offerings in architecture, city and regional planning, landscape architecture and fine arts. In the 1980s, a program in historic preservation was added. To more accurately capture the School's sphere of influence, it was renamed the School of Design in 2003, and, in early 2019, the University named the School for award-winning designer Stuart Weitzman in recognition of his lifetime commitment and support.