

# **Development of Visual Skills: Digital Photography as a Tool for Research and Teaching in Architectural Education**

Mayra Jiménez-Montano, and Laurie Ortiz-Rivera



Universidad de Puerto Rico  
Escuela de Arquitectura

**ECIL 2014**

22.10.2014

An architect's education requires a broad mastery of **visual skills**.





The **objective** to this research is to recognize the use of photographs in architectural education, as a research tool in the study of urban landscape, as well as an object of research, to understand the processes of learning in architectural design.





# Visual Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education, published by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL)



**Photography** allows the architectural student to interact with and interpret the urban landscape, not only while taking photos, but also during the postproduction stage to highlight issues that later will be integrated into their design process.

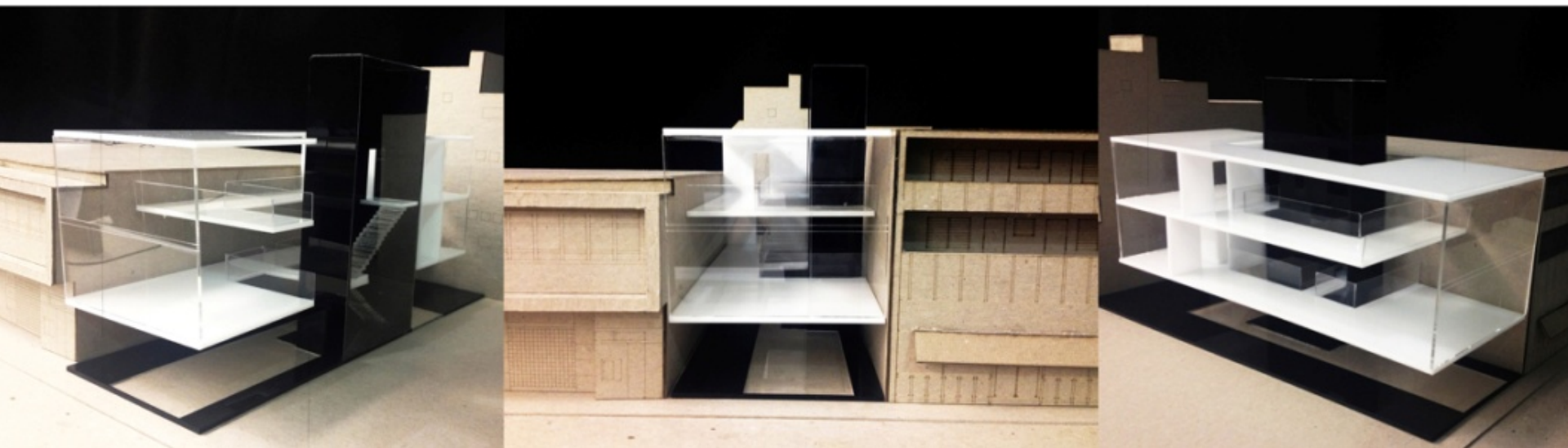


Categories	
Subject	





**Fig. 1.** Photographic sequence from student 2 is shown, where the contrast from day and night at Loíza Street is observed.



**Fig. 2.** Architectural design proposal from student 2, based on his original developed theme .

# Conclusions

- **Visual literacy** were fundamental since most of the decisions taken during the design process included formal, proportional and composite considerations of the object, and hence, require aesthetic judgments.
- In this case study, the **integration of photography**, as a visual tool for the development of visual skills for first-year architecture students was an appropriate instrument to facilitate teaching.
- The assignment of a task, the creation of instructional objectives, and the implementation of a rubric for the measurement of specific criteria that are part of an architectural project, sets **a first methodical approach for the development of the visual skills**.
- **Collaborative and interdisciplinary participation** presents a great opportunity to enrich the visual products of the students.
- The **pedagogical training of instructors** for the creation of adequate instructional resources to develop visual literacy in design courses deserves attention.
- Future studies will be required to explore in depth the **development of these skills**, as well as the implementation and evaluation of new strategies for teaching and learning in design courses.



# Thank you.

[mayra.jimenez@upr.edu](mailto:mayra.jimenez@upr.edu)

[laurie.ortiz@upr.edu](mailto:laurie.ortiz@upr.edu)