

Studio Report: ARCHITECTURAL PROJECTS FOR SECOND YEAR

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This is the third semester for students in the Bachelor of Design (Architecture) programme in UPM. Among the objectives aimed this semester are to reinforce students conceptual design development as well as refining their systematic design process in producing a design. The students are also exposed for the first time, designing arrangement of multiple buildings in a site. As such, in their projects, contextual dynamics are explored to form a coherent whole. Natural ventilation and daylighting, taught in the previous semester, are applied in this semester to familiarise the students with sustainable environmental design strategies.

The course is split into four interrelated projects, with increasing complexity from one to the next. The first is a precedent study, a look into what would become their next project, i.e. FRSB sentinel, a guardhouse for the Faculty. In the precedent study, students are taken on study visits to eight existing guardhouses around Klang valley. In this exercise, students are taught basic research activities such as interview, visual recording, empirical physical and environmental measurements. At the end of this exercise, they are equipped with the knowledge of what is good and what is bad, what works and what does not, in the design of a guardhouse. With this knowledge, students are then introduced to the second project, the FRSB sentinel.

The FRSB Sentinel is a design project for a guardhouse for the Faculty. Each student has to come up with a complete proposal of a guardhouse, which would serve as a landmark for as well as a welcoming gesture to the Faculty. Some of the proposals showed fresh new ideas which offer new concepts in the design of a guardhouse.

Located next to the guardhouse, is the location for the third project, a student terminal centre. This is the drop off point for the university's internal bus service for the students of the faculty. In this terminal, open, naturally ventilated spaces are designed to accommodate waiting area, a small café and toilet facilities. The greenness of the site, with existing trees, is the strength offered by the site for refreshing views and shades. Slightly bigger than the guardhouse, this project challenges the students' ability to handle multi-functional public spaces in a building. In some of the proposals, delightful interactions between interior and exterior spaces are proposed. In some others, brave explorations of organic forms yield quite exciting results.

The last project, located close to the terminal project, is an annex to the proposed Taman Malaysia, a theme park for the exhibition of Malaysian art of gardening. The project's brief required the students to propose an info centre, consisting of information counter, small exhibition space, a viewing deck and restrooms. Many students came up with design of multiple buildings arranged around a semi enclosed courtyard. Again the integration between interior and exterior spaces is used to produce exciting results, at the same time responding to the need of the climates for natural ventilation. Shading devices are employed to serve environmental protections as well as providing interesting design features to the delicate natural landscape of the site.