

Meet NewSchool's President and Chief Academic Officer, Marvin J. Malecha

Dear Campus Community,

It is with great pleasure that I join NewSchool of Architecture & Design community as the President and Chief Academic Officer. I do this after having the distinct honor of serving as a member of the NewSchool Board of Directors for the past five years. I have been in higher education for nearly 40 years and most recently served as the Dean of the College of Design at North Carolina State University. Through these years I have not only gained experience in higher education, but I have also practiced as an architect and served in the role of National President of the American Institute of Architects. I have been fortunate to be positioned as a leader during an incredibly vital period in history. Through these many experiences I have come to consider design thought as the essential foundation of the design disciplines and the essential ingredient of innovation. It is design inquiry that places the design professional in a position that is crucial to the future of our culture.

The model of design education established at NewSchool — with its global mindset, sustainably minded classroom instruction, and innovative offerings adapted to reflect the shifting design landscape — represents something new and innovative in higher education. As an intimate school with tight-knit faculty and student connections, NewSchool has greater agility than many larger universities. This characteristic is critical during a time when the ability to adapt quickly to changing scenarios will determine who will lead and who will follow. Think about it — approximately 40 percent of billable work hours in today's architecture and design industries didn't even exist in 2008! There are countless new fields emerging today, including service delivery design and UX design. Through internships and relevant job experiences, we prepare individuals for the practice of design and architecture, and we are expanding into new fields that also touch industrial design, interior design and much more. Leadership preparation and mentorship is essential if we are to realize the aspirations associated with design inquiry. Design professionals have an increasingly expansive role and ever broadening horizon of opportunity. Architects today are involved with issues beyond traditional notions of building design. From funding strategies, urban design, sustainability tactics, regulatory reform, building commissioning, to post-occupancy assessment, design leadership is comprised of far more than aesthetic challenges. Similar examples may be cited for the designer who may begin with a graphic challenge but is soon enmeshed in media studies, applications and branding.

I am confident that the future is going to be explored by a school like NewSchool, which embraces a willingness to rethink how education is accomplished in a dynamic world culture. Broadening a student's perspective on the world, exposing them to different cultures and ways of life will better prepare and sustain our students and alumni in their design careers inspired by human needs and desires. I see it as a liberating opportunity to push in new directions, laying the groundwork for design innovation. Our campus extension with Domus Academy and NABA in Italy enables us to introduce new disciplines that will strengthen the school and our curriculum here in San Diego. The diversification of disciplines that's possible with Domus Academy, NABA, Media Design School and even Santa Fe University of Art and Design offers possibilities for NewSchool to continue to develop a substantial, tangible design atmosphere — which opens the door for a convergence of new energy and design passion on campus. Leveraging our international network and the world culture of design thinking helps us launch unique initiatives, such as our professional certificates which will help propel us to not only be a leader in design, but in progressively rethinking the way students can achieve a meaningful degree today.

Teaching students to think differently, in processes and not absolutes, translates into professional practice. Being one of the top 13 universities exploring the new Integrated Path to Architectural Licensure (IPAL) helps us do that as well, offering students an accelerated path to achieving architectural licensure paired with professional internship experience.

As a professional school, an integrated path between academia and the industry is so very important. NewSchool is committed to connecting students to today's practitioners, serving as their champions and mentors, and we offer our students strong relationships with top companies in our communities and around the world.

In the city of San Diego I see an emerging new urban center that's truly unique and global, primed to help us achieve this goal of unfiltered collaboration. International by its character, with an interesting mix of high tech, high education and research, San Diego has a young population that is remaking the image of San Diego. I have aspirations for NewSchool to be a premiere institution in which to study design in San Diego. This aspiration is possible because great strides have already been achieved, asserting NewSchool as a preeminent design community of students and faculty through local community outreach. These achievements have been recognized through local and national awards won by our students and faculty.

At NewSchool we help our students succeed in the industry by preparing them with professional experiences for advancement throughout their career. This includes connecting them with employers during school and upon graduation. In the classroom, our instructors will continue to be intensively focused on what it means to generate the new forms of practice, so our students will be leaders in that transformation. It's my vision for our alumni to be known as the revolutionaries of the new practice of design, equipping them with greater and deeper perspective of design thinking. To do this, our graduates must understand that the design landscape is dynamic, always changing. They will always be learners — we at NewSchool are simply setting them on that path to lifelong learning.

On a personal note, in my innermost center I am a continuous learner. I define the role of teaching as a guide along the path of learning. I believe deeply in design inquiry and will employ it in all of my responsibilities. To teach design is an intensely personal commitment. It is a one-on-one experience. I expect this commitment from all who share the incredible privilege of being a member of the NewSchool community.

I look forward to joining you as a fellow life-long learner on the path to design innovation.

Regards,

Marvin Malecha, FAIA

President and Chief Academic Officer
NewSchool of Architecture & Design