

# The Application of Coaching Mode in Architectural Design Course

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## Abstract

Coaching is partnering with students in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential. Through the training of coaching mode in an architectural design course, students can be encouraged in implementing their plan. They will not only understand and grasp the basic function and streamline required in the architectural design, but also gradually master the basic methods. In a word, project groups with a coaching system that is used in the architecture departments works more creatively and efficiently than the standard teaching methods.

## Keywords

Coaching, Teaching, Architectural Design Course, Self-Awareness

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## 1. Introduction

As an evolving profession (since the 1970's), the research in Coaching Mode is growing, and coaching itself is spreading into many areas of work and life. "Coaching" is different from traditional "teaching". Coaching is partnering with students in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential. It is a way of helping students discover and develop their abilities.

At present, the traditional architectural design course usually has the characteristics of "indoctrination", emphasizing in theory indoctrination, such as: construction knowledge, project design and sketching (Zhang et al., 2019). Teachers comment on the homework of each student at different stages, and directly impart their own way of thinking to the students. Although this teaching mode has advantage of sharing knowledge and theory, it is not conducive to stimulating

students' individual creative potential.

However, during the application of coaching mode in architectural design course, the coaches will: listen and help students reflect on their thoughts; support students in developing an action plan focused on a goal they set by themselves; encourage students in implementing the plan. Coaches will not: tell students what they should do; give advice based on the teacher's own experience; share the content of their conversations with anyone else. For example: a teacher will share tips from their experience of designing structures, a manager will tell you how to organize the designing project, but a coach will encourage and support students to try and learn by themselves.

## 2. Purpose of Coaching Mode in the Architecture Design Course

Engaging in personal development coaching during the Architecture Design course, will enable a student to build greater self-awareness and understand through a dialogue focused on listening, reflecting and questioning. And a student could take the opportunity to think at depth and be listened to in a completely confidential environment. And coaching mode seeks to raise awareness of a student's thinking and beliefs to explore how these affect behaviour. In addition, he could feel supported in acting, changing and moving forwards.

Purpose of coaching is: provoking thinking, changing direction of thought, changing how someone thinks, inspiring ideas, creating dialogue, raising awareness, creating insight, etc. In order to achieve the purpose, some classroom questions are needed. Usually, the questioning styles of coaching mode course are as follows:

**Open Questions:** What? Who? When? Where? How? Tell me? = Gather information & create foundations for further design.

**Scaling questions:** On a scale of one to ten, where would you rate your architectural design in terms of X now? What makes it a 5? What makes it a 5 and not a 4? Where would be good enough for you? What point do you think you could achieve?

**Exceptions questions:** When do the bad design ideas not happen? What is happening instead? What is different? What do you do differently in that situation? How do you approach that? What makes that work for you?

**Coping questions:** I can see that architectural design has been quite difficult for you with this, how do you manage to work with this through the day?

**Questions about Impact:** How is your study and development impacting: You? Others?

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## 3. Some Lesson Details about Coaching Mode in the Architecture Design Course

The coaching method may lead more creative and successful results, not only for

the students in high schools but also for the universities that have high level education especially in the architecture departments. As we all know, the work of architecture students mainly focus on investigation and research, and their work need the university teachers' guidance by coaching method.

For example, the university teachers can also design the following operational approaches:

1) Students are encouraged to survey and use real sites in or around the university, and they could map the topographic maps by themselves. Because they are familiar with the campus environment, they will conduct more detailed analysis and research on the surrounding conditions of the plot.

2) Students could investigate the users of the building and make their own assignments according to the research results. Being familiar with the living habits and hobbies of the users, the students will design the function and space of the building more reasonably.

3) Students are encouraged to conduct research on the information collected, they could open their minds, and design novel architectural shapes, using new building materials, and trying advanced design concepts.

4) In the design process, students are encouraged to introduce their own plans and ideas, and use multimedia to carry out more extensive information exchange.

The following picture (**Figure 1**) is a student's research and drawing record, after being guided by the university teacher in architectural design class. The teacher's guidance includes: the plot is along the Qiantang River, students should investigate the history and culture of the Qiantang River, record the buildings and bridges along the river, and analyze the road trend around the site. Then the starting point of the architecture design should be put forward according to the results of the survey.

In a coaching mode course about architectural design, students will be encouraged to participate in or contribute to seminars based on their design development needs. For instance: 1) students will participate in some professional seminars, interacting with their classmates. 2) They will participate in online and book studies, or make field trips about building and space environment (Wen et al., 2019). 3) They will participate in teaching interactions and keep records, such as writing learning reports or study notes.

Through the design and training of coaching mode courses, students can be encouraged in implementing their plan. They can not only understand and grasp the basic function and streamline required in the architecture, but also gradually master the basic methods of architectural design. Based on the analysis of various external and internal factors, they are able to form a unique concept and enter into the in-depth design of various aspects, including: space, form, environment, and facade materials, etc. The following list (**Table 1**) is about some lesson details in coaching mode:

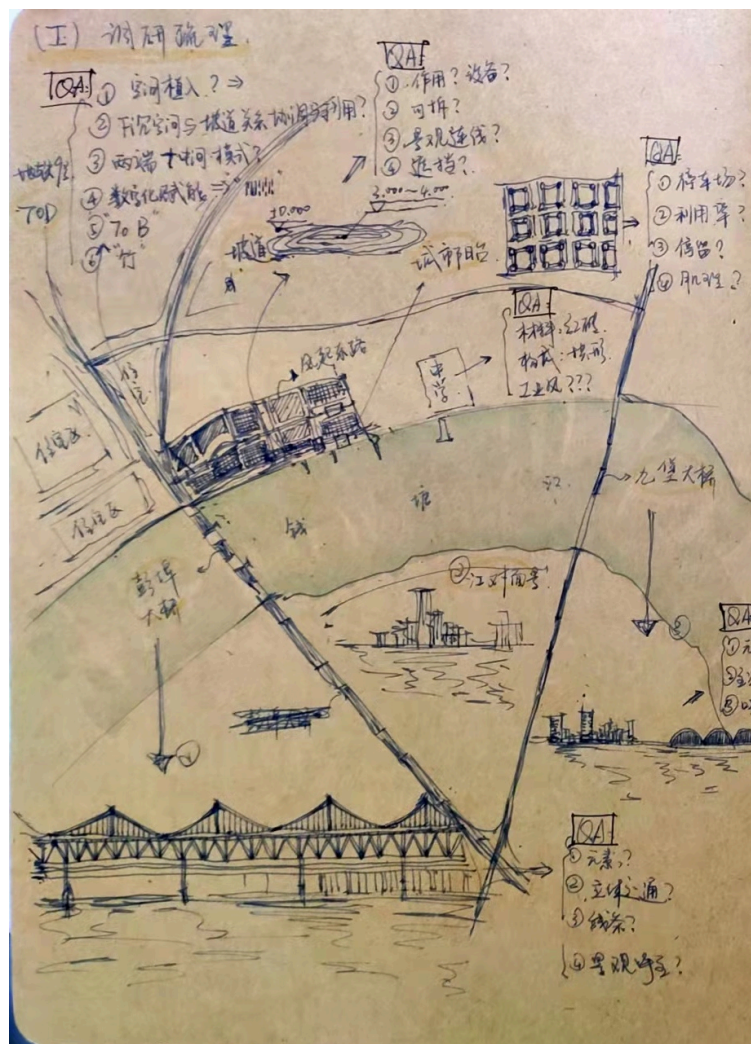


Figure 1. A student's research and drawing record.

Table 1. Some Lesson details in coaching mode.

Guides	Activities	Aims
<p>Question: What is a good exterior environment design? How should you modify your design?</p> <p>Answer: Students could think from the respect such as practical, durable, beautiful, etc. And they should look for the examples of site plans and outdoor Spaces.</p> <p>Detail Schedule:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. General layout design, building and environmental modeling, including: architectural design, road and site design, landscape design, etc.</li> <li>2. The floor plan of public toilet and restaurant.</li> </ol>	<p>At the beginning, students walk behind the teacher, they are listening and thinking quietly.</p> <p>After the teacher guide several questions, the students gradually understand the purpose of the course assignment, and they begin to take the initiative to find problems and think. They make their own solutions to their assignments.</p> <p>Some students make PPT, some students draw cognitive maps, and some prepare presentations. The atmosphere was tense and orderly. Instead of being dazed and passive, students have responsibility in their studies, and they take the results of their research very seriously.</p> <p>Students research questions, complete tasks, and have discussions with the teacher. They upload the homework and pictures to the assignments section of Ding Talk.</p>	<p>Through a task paper and some tools, the teacher drives students to explore independently and learn actively.</p>

## 4. Conclusion

After the introduction of coaching mode to architectural design course, students are inspired by a creative process that maximizes their personal and professional potential (Wan, 2021). Through the implementation of coaching mode, the following improvement and development can be achieved: after group guidance mode is adopted, the teaching methods transform from indoctrination to heuristic. At the same time, project groups with a coaching system that is used in the architecture departments works more creatively and efficiently than the standard teaching methods.

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## Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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