

Incorporating Experiential and Reflective Learning: The Nashville Parthenon

Teaching with high-definition images and movies helps to reveal the nuances in architectural detail, but there is still a level of separation between the student and the material. While virtual reality might close this gap between object and viewer, it is difficult to explain to a student how one experiences and reacts to architecture in person. Furthermore, the student can use images to learn facts, but they might have issues engaging in the knowledge creation process that occurs as one experiences architecture. As Ellsworth states, “Our experiences of a building arise not only out of our cognitive interpretations of the building’s allusions to historical or aesthetic meanings but also out of the corporeality of the body’s time/space as it exists in relation to the building” (6).

Utilizing experiential and reflective pedagogies to heighten my students’ awareness of architecture, I am developing and implementing a semester-long project in fall 2017 focusing on the Nashville Parthenon. The project is part of a freshman Honors course on the art and literature of the ancient world from the eighth century BCE to the fourth century CE. The course investigates the idea of knowledge creation and what the university calls ‘ways of knowing,’ such as experiential and reflective learning. In addition to the content and aims of the course, this course is suitable to experimentation because the chair of the Honors Program encourages pedagogical exploration and the Honors students are eager and ready for new challenges. Above all, I am able to develop and implement an experiential project on ancient architecture because the Nashville Parthenon is close to the university. The Nashville Parthenon is a full-scale replica of the Athenian Parthenon and it houses a 42-foot statue of Athena in the *naos*.

During my presentation, I will cover experiential and reflective learning, project design, student outcomes, and challenges involved with the project. Although this project focuses on the

Nashville Parthenon, my presentation will offer insights into the benefits of experiential and reflective learning that could be implemented on a smaller scale in one's own community.

Bibliography

Ellsworth, Elizabeth. *Places of Learning: Media, Architecture, Pedagogy*. Hoboken: Taylor & Francis, 2005.