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# RWU and Miami Dade College Establish Course Pathway for Architecture Students

New agreement provides affordable route for diverse group of students to earn bachelor's and master's degree in high-quality architectural program



RWU architecture student Linda K. Penaloza, who has seen firsthand the benefits of following the path from Miami Dade College to RWU.

October 5, 2018 | By Edward Fitzpatrick

**BRISTOL, R.I.** – A new agreement charts the course for architecture students to earn an associate's degree at Miami Dade College, in Florida, before pursuing bachelor's and master's degrees in Roger Williams University's highly regarded architectural program.

The agreement maps out the courses that architecture students would take at Miami Dade College, which has one of the nation's largest student enrollments, before transferring to continue their studies at RWU's School of Architecture, Arts and Historic Preservation.

In doing so, the agreement provides an affordable pathway for students, including many members of Florida's large Latino population, to access high-quality architectural education at Miami Dade and at Roger Williams University, with well-established links to national job markets.

"We are formalizing a great relationship with Miami Dade College that has already made it easier for successful students to complete architectural bachelor's and master's degrees in a much more economical way," RWU Interim President Andy Workman said. "It is part of our commitment to affordable excellence and to redefining the model of American education."

"We are excited to create such a clear pathway from Miami Dade College to Roger Williams University for our students," RWU Vice President for Enrollment Management and Marketing Brian G. Williams said. "This partnership to help students move seamlessly from associate's to bachelor's degrees allows RWU to bring in incredibly talented Miami Dade students to our campus. We are excited to help students on their journey as emerging architects. We pride ourselves on meeting students where they are – connected to affordability and excellence."

"We are truly excited to provide our architecture students a seamless transition to the architectural program at Roger Williams University," said Antonio Delgado, Dean of Engineering, Technology and Design at Miami Dade College. "This partnership is such an amazing opportunity for our students to earn a bachelor's and master's degree at an

excellent university. Like Miami Dade College, Roger Williams University is also committed to providing high quality, affordable education.”

Linda K. Penaloza has seen firsthand the benefits of following the path from Miami Dade College to RWU.

Born in Colombia, Penaloza moved to Doral, Fla., at age 7 and studied at Miami Dade College from fall 2012 to spring 2015. She enrolled at RWU in spring 2016 and earned a bachelor’s degree in architecture in spring 2017. Now, she is pursuing a master’s degree in architecture at RWU.

“I think it’s great,” Penaloza said of RWU. “I really didn’t want to go to school where everyone else was going. I wanted to experience something new.”

Since arriving in Bristol, she has experienced a semester abroad in Spain at the Barcelona Architecture Center. She has gained experience in an internship with the city of Central Falls, R.I., working on Broad Street rejuvenation. And she has won the Norton E. Salk Scholarship for Design Excellence from the American Institute of Architects Rhode Island Architectural Forum.

Penaloza said she likes the architectural program’s faculty. “It’s very personal,” she said. “I can ask them questions. They are passionate about technology and providing resources to help us achieve.”

She said she appreciates the studio space provided to each student and the school’s rCloud computing site. Also, she said she saved tens of thousands of dollars by spending her first two years at Miami Dade College, as opposed to paying full tuition for those years at a private four-year college.

Penaloza said she hopes more Miami Dade College students follow her to Bristol now that the new course pathway is in place. She said a large number of Latino students attend Miami Dade College and their presence would add to the rapidly rising level of diversity at RWU, which has made diversity and inclusivity part of its core values.

Gregory Laramie, Associate Dean of the School of Architecture, Art and Historic Preservation, explained that the new course pathway ensures that students are taking the classes at Miami Dade College that will prepare them to succeed once they come to RWU. He noted RWU has worked closely with Miami Dade College faculty members.

“There are some community colleges with exceptional architectural programs that RWU would like to connect with, and Miami Dade College is one of them,” Laramie said. “Hopefully, we can get a steady stream of students that will come to RWU to complete their education.”

Lyle D. Culver, a Professor in Miami Dade College’s School of Architecture & Interior Design, said, “This articulation agreement not only gives our students a tremendous opportunity to transfer as juniors and continue their architecture studies at a very prestigious design program, but it also validates and recognizes the quality of education that MDC offers at the School of Architecture and Interior Design. I look forward to working with Roger Williams University in fostering an even greater level of cooperation and academic partnering between our institutions and departments.”

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