

**DESIGNING WITH NATURE
LATERAL THINKING AS A DESIGN STRATEGY FOR FOUNDATION
YEAR STUDIO IN BACHELOR OF ARCHITECTURE**

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ABSTRACT

The role of educationists is to help students develop quality thinking through self-reflection and discovering. Nature is on top of the index of discovery. This study contains measures for enhancing sensitivity towards nature, with the basic assumption that nature is the primary guide that generates diverse empirical and creative design processes in architecture education. Understanding the importance of nature and environment at beginner level is more effective, as working with nature will become intrinsic part of students' design thinking. Foundation studio at the Department of Architecture at COMSATS University, Islamabad, serves as junction of art, architecture and nature, which works towards developing the critical thinking process.

In order to bring students closer to the goal of inclusion of nature in the core design thinking "Impulsive" teaching methodology was adopted. Lateral thinking, one of the tools of impulsive system of teaching, was carried through in three stages: observation of nature, recording observations in variety of media and correlating observed natural phenomena to solve a given design problem. In this case the design problem was a piece of furniture, using a very thin sheet of steel that had a thickness of sixteen to twenty gauge.

The study highlights a studio model by describing one of the experimental processes that was designed to augment originality in architectural design thinking. A specific natural phenomenon that is wind, was focused upon as a natural parameter of this study. The objective of the studio model was to offer students an organic tool for exploring new design possibilities. This helped students to visit and revisit the central idea for multiple interpretations, in order to relate it with architectural design process at any stage of design development.