



9.4 Will You Build Me a Treehouse?

Background

The following paragraphs provide options for SDC faculty and staff in response to the occasional request(s) from outside parties requesting design, consulting, and/or construction services from students, whether or not those services are compensated. The title of this document emerged from an emailed request to the AIAS student group of a house addition, which included a treehouse, from a private individual in January of 2014. The request was not pursued.

SDC faculty and staff are under no obligation to choose any of the below options in response to such requests, nor are faculty and staff obligated to pursue such requests; indeed, every request likely will have its own specifics for which none of the below options apply directly. However, language may be extracted from the below option(s) and used to clarify to outside parties the obligations, liability, and expectations involved in employing student labor.

It is acknowledged that some requests from outside parties may provide legitimate opportunities that aid in the teaching and/or research mission of the SDC, may cohere with ongoing grants or projects (e.g. RCDI or civic partnerships with Pullman, Walla Walla, etc.), or may provide faculty with outside consulting work. Faculty members are welcome to pursue the latter provided they fill out the university-required "Annual Report for Compensated Service and Extended Professional Activities" available at the WSU Provost's website. Even so, the paragraphs below may be worth consulting for guidance in communicating with any outside parties for work involving SDC students or faculty:

Curious but Guarded Response

Thank you for your interest in the School of Design and Construction and the (insert program name or names here) program(s). We are curious if you could provide additional information in order to best determine a path forward. It is possible that this is something that we could incorporate into a class during the upcoming semester or even present to one of our student clubs for consideration. It is important that we attain as much information as possible in order to determine if this is something that is possible for students to undertake or best left to a professional designer and/or builder.

It is worth noting that taking on a project like this must be done strategically as our courses and student club endeavors are typically planned/scheduled months in advance; faculty and students have certain areas of expertise/interest which may or may not align with this project; and faculty have specific curricular responsibilities associated with accreditation requirements relevant to the program(s) in question which may or may not align with this project.

Furthermore, we do not possess the licensing and/or insurance which would be compulsory of a professional designer and/or builder. As such, a waiver of liability will need to be provided to hold harmless the University, School, program(s), and its representatives (students, faculty, and staff). Depending upon the nature of our collaboration, a Memorandum of Agreement may be required from the WSU Office of Contracts: <https://contracts.wsu.edu/>.

Should we pursue this endeavor, we request a monetary donation to the [School of Design and Construction Excellence Fund](#) and the (insert name or names here) program(s) (via this/these

link(s): _____), to help cover the cost of additional administration, coordination, travel, student resources, and other ancillary costs incurred as a result of this project.

We look forward to hearing from you soon regarding the details of this project. Once the information is received (or a meeting is held) we'll respond as quickly as possible indicating our ability to pursue this endeavor.

CCE Redirect Response

Thank you for your interest in the School of Design and Construction and the (insert program name or names here) program(s). We have reviewed and discussed the information provided. Given the nature of the project as described, we must politely decline. While we appreciate the (humanitarian/sustainable) initiative behind your proposal, neither the School, program, nor our students possess the necessary tools/equipment, the applicable liability insurance, and/or professional licensing required for such an undertaking.

If the involvement of Washington State University students is desired, we would suggest that you contact the Center for Civic Engagement (CCE) via e-mail (cce@wsu.edu) or phone (509-335-3400). For further information regarding the CCE, please consult the following website: <http://cce.wsu.edu/home/>. It is possible that such an arrangement will still allow for our students to be involved with the project.

We wish you the best of luck in bringing this project to fruition. Again, thank you for considering our School and program(s) for this project.

“No, Thank You” Response

Thank you for your interest in the School of Design and Construction and the (insert program name or names here) program(s). While we appreciate your offer of a “hands on” or “real world” project, our students are regularly exposed to such real world experiences through their coursework and/or internships while gaining much-needed educational framework for future success. We are unable to pursue your request at this time.

We wish you the best of luck in bringing this project to fruition. Again, thank you for considering our School and program(s) for this project.