

Please, reference a response to Dr. Gary's article on architectural degree inflation below.

Dear Gary of www.archsoc.com/kcas/credentialinflation.html,

In response to your rather provocative article regarding credential inflation, I am sorry to inform you that your view points on the issue were totally misguided. Contrary to your position, I would say architectural degrees were very badly deflated over the years. There are two distinct paths in education viz: strictly research oriented education and professional education involving relevant skill development and a reasonable academic and research content. For professional education in the U.S the minimum degree level required for entrance into these fields is a doctorate- a minimum of 7 years training at an accredited university, some internship experience and a license. Examples are terminal and first professional degrees in medicine, law and architecture. Of the minimum of 7 years required, three of those years must involve graduate level work. These are 4 + 3 models. The older schools of architecture adopted this model in the early 70's- Harvard, Yale, Berkeley, UCLA to mention but a few. The rationale for this was simple. These schools recognized the level of grave responsibility generally required in professional fields and deemed it necessary to attract more mature students with diverse backgrounds to enrich their programs. Consequently, architects today have diversified experiential and educational backgrounds as opposed to Ph.D programs which offer monolithic educational pathways only (ex. B.A Architecture, M.A. Architecture, Ph.D Architecture) A product of such program is usually very limited with parochial and myopic perspectives on issues. Professional architectural programs offer the contrary. The seven year educational goal can also be attained through a 2 + 4 model, i.e 2 years undergraduate work combined with 4 years graduate level work. Here one year of graduate level work is considered equal to 2 years of undergraduate level work. The Doctorate in Pharmacy (D. Pharm) exemplifies this situation. There are several non professional fields in which a Ph.D is awarded after six years at a university. Those degree awards are predicated on this model. This standard is in uniformity across the world. Actually, the highest level of education possible in human society today is given only in professional fields via: law, architecture and medicine. After 7 years in training for the first professional education, additional years are required for a masters or Ph.D in these fields. In some cases, students may spend upwards of 5 additional years in school. Such is the case in law or medicine. In this case the Ph.D in architecture lacks the adequacy of training required to set a pace of new discoveries in the field via research. The first professional terminal degree in architecture at this time is far superior to the Ph.D in architecture. Why? Well, the work of architects is mainly based on creativity. Creativity is considered to be the highest level of intelligence possible in humanity. Benjamin bloom's work (Bloom's taxonomy or cognitive learning domain) lists levels cognitive learning behaviors hierarchically-knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Creativity is shown to be beyond evaluation in the cognitive taxonomy. Research also has it that the most intelligent students normally end up in architecture, law and medical schools. Ph.D is actually not as useful in today's world as it was in the past. We now live in a scientific and technological world. As a sociologist you should know that culture is dynamic in human society. A Ph.D is a research-based degree. Your article failed to reflect any measure of research or data driven information. The time shall come when Ph.D will be totally anachronistic in society.

Somewhere on your site it was indicated that Frank Lloyd Wright did not have an architectural degree. That argument is redundant. The world in which he lived is considerably different from today's world! Can you imagine that Plato, Aristotle and other masters of philosophy never had a degree or Ph.D? Can you imagine that Jesus never drove a car? Can you imagine that Donald Bren (Real Estate Magnate) named on the recent Forbes 400 does not have a degree in Real Estate? Well, that is because in today's changing world, the first real development degree program in the United States was established at U.S.C Los Angeles via the monetary contributions from California real estate mogul, Ralph Lewis just a few years ago.

I am an African/Aborigine/American with multiple degrees from prestigious American universities and preparation in the fields of Political Science, Architecture, Education, Law as well as a reasonable measure of diversified experience in architecture, construction, education and journalism.

Dr. Edobor Gbenoba