



Ghassan Aouad

Chancellor of Abu Dhabi University, Past President ...
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Introducing Dr Mark David Major: A Leader in Architecture

Dr. **Mark David Major**, AICP, CNU-A, is an Associate Professor in the Department of Architecture and Design at **Abu Dhabi University**. He is an architect, urban theorist, and academic known for his interdisciplinary approach to understanding built environments. He is one of the world's leading experts in space syntax, with expertise in architecture, housing, real estate, and urban morphology. Space syntax is an international research program developed by Professor Bill Hillier and others at University College London in the 1980s to analyze spatial configuration from a single building to entire cities. He counts Bill Hillier (1937-2019), Julianne Hanson, **Alan Penn** at UCL, and architect and historian Robin Evans (1944-1993) at the Architectural Association among his most important influences. Dr Mark holds a PhD in Architecture from **UCL** London, an MSc in Advanced Architectural Studies from the **University of London**, and Bachelor of Arts degrees in Design (Architecture) and History from **Clemson University**, USA.

Dr Mark has been teaching at ADU for the last two years. He previously taught at **Qatar University**, **Savannah College of Art and Design** (SCAD), and UCL. He is the author of *The Syntax of City Space: American Urban Grids* (Routledge, 2018). Dr Mark is working on a new book about Doha, Qatar, with his longtime collaborator, Heba O. Tannous of **Birzeit University**. He has published many journal articles about urban spatial structure and development. His housing research includes traditional courtyard houses in Qatar and Old Damascus, Syria, and contemporary houses designed by the American architect Peter Eisenman. Dr Mark is ramping up his urban studies research on Dubai and Abu Dhabi in the UAE. Dr Mark also has thirty years of experience in architecture, urban studies, real estate development, and business in Europe, USA, and Middle East. He was the Vice President of Business and Planning at **Starr Sanford Design Associates, Inc.**, the principal of **MAJOR Planning LLC**, the Land Entitlements Manager for Pulte Homes Jacksonville, and a former Director of **Space Syntax**. Dr Mark is the recognized founder of International Space Syntax Symposia. He has been a Lifetime and Accredited Member of the Congress for New Urbanism (CNU-A) since 2015 and a certified planner of the **American Institute of Certified Planners** of (AICP) since 2003.

Dr Mark advocates evidence-based design, emphasizing empirical analysis over ideological approaches that sometimes prioritize aesthetics over functional efficacy. He has contributed journal articles to *Environment and Planning B: Urban Analytics*, *Habitat International*, *Open House International*, and the *Journal of Urbanism*.

It is clear to anyone who knows him that Mark's greatest passion is and always will be teaching and his students.

#Architecture #UrbanStudies #SpaceSyntax #ADU

Hamad Odhabi Professor Barry O'Mahony Hamdi Mustafa Sheibani Khulud Abdallah

