

DES 581 Graduate Seminar / Autumn 2019

Assistant Professor Audrey Desjardins (adesjard@uw.edu)

CLASS: Tuesdays 8:30-11:20am, Art 247

FACULTY OFFICE HOURS: By appointment, Art 255

COURSE OVERVIEW

In this seminar we will read and discuss a sampling of texts that articulate contemporary discourses in design: we will reflect and argument about what design and design research are, what they could be, and perhaps what they should be. We will look at design not only as a professional practice but also as a way of producing new knowledge about how humans, artifacts and systems are entangled in and with the world.

In addition to the discussions in class, you will write short papers and sketch design responses that enter into a dialogue with the readings.

The final project in the course will be to write an academic essay that engages two or more peer-reviewed articles, using them as a point of departure for investigating a research question and making a claim or argument of your own.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the course is for you to:

1. Become familiar with a sampling of writings about design written for scholarly and professional audiences.
2. Grow more adept at careful and critical reading of a wide range of texts of different subject matter and styles.
3. Increase your ability to translate what you learn from your reading into pointed inquiry and discussion.
4. Become more discerning about your sources of information (books, journals, articles); be able to qualify sources for their likely reliability.
5. Expand your capacity to write by engaging what others have written and learn how to better articulate your own point of view.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Consider this class an open forum for ideation and discussion. Debate and dis-agreement are a natural part of design discourse. Sharing ideas and work in progress will benefit everyone. You are expected to produce all work with consistent effort, rigor, and creativity.

Be respectful of your colleagues. Please clean up your space after class sessions. Cell phones should be off during class. Laptops are for class assignments only. Do not surf, email, twitter or facebook during class.

EXPECTATIONS

Please arrive at course meetings on time. Be prepared with the assigned work at every class session. At the graduate level, you are expected to pursue interests independently and to formulate your own research directions. After exploring a series of readings and discussions, you will select and research your own topic for a final paper.

COURSE WEB SITE

Design 581 via Canvas: <https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1319302>

Readings and references will be posted weekly. Assignment details and deadlines will be posted on Canvas as well. You will be required to upload all your assignments directly to Canvas.

ASSIGNMENTS

7 responses to readings

In response to the assigned readings each week, you will either (1) write a brief paper, in which you do two things: First, summarize in your own words (preferably with a minimal number of direct quotations) what the reading is about. Second, formulate a response to the readings that either agrees, disagrees, or responds with some mixture of agreement and disagreement. (See the readings in *They Say, I Say* for guidance.) Be sure to back up your opinions with evidence and reasons. Or (2) sketch a design response that enters in dialogue with the weekly readings. This response can explore, exemplify, contradict, or expand the readings' arguments. Each sketch will be accompanied by a very short text and a series of questions.

Responses are due no later than 8:30am each Monday before our Tuesday class discussion. Please submit documents in pdf format only in the Canvas assignment for that week.

Lead a discussion

Once during the quarter, you will lead the discussion. You should plan to begin the class discussion with a brief (5-minute) introduction that places the readings in context, before using prompts, examples, and questions to lead the discussion. You will also prepare a cheat sheet about the core concepts of the papers for your colleagues.

Final paper: an academic essay (3,000-5,000 words)

During your studies as a graduate student in design, you will be moving toward formulating a particular question or topic you want to investigate in depth in your final thesis for the Master's degree. Before that, you should be exploring what possible domains and questions you might be interested in. Writing this paper is one such opportunity.

For your essay, use ONE of the following approaches:

- Select at least two articles you find in one or more peer-reviewed design journals. Your task is to question or challenge assumptions in the articles and possibly offer alternative readings and interpretations. Feel free to introduce your own examples of existing designed work and other articles to support your arguments.
- Choose an issue in design about which there is question, controversy, or debate. Articulate your point of view (or mixed reactions) to the controversy, and support your view(s) and claims with a minimum of two substantial articles.
- Choose a design project or area of design that you have worked on or a domain of design in which you would like to work. Using concrete examples of work from that domain, discuss one major issue or problem in that domain, using a minimum of two substantial articles to support your claims.

Avoid questions that are overly broad. You will need to research some of what is already known about your subject, then determine what you think about it. The summary of what you discover and your response (evaluation and analysis) should form the heart of your paper.

FINAL EXAM

There will not be a final exam. The final deliverable is your final essay, due on December 10th, at 11:59pm on Canvas.

GRADING

Grading is based in equal parts on:

- The depth and extent of your engagement with the research of the topic of your final paper.
- The quality of the writing of the final paper.
- The quality of your written and sketched responses to the readings.
- The energy and thoughtfulness of your participation in class discussions and leading of one discussion.

Grade breakdown:

[25% of total grade]

6 responses to readings

4 papers and 3 design sketches: 10 points each

For the class during which you lead the discussion, you are excused of writing a reading response.

[25% of total grade]

Discussion and participation

Lead a discussion and prepare cheat sheet: 25 points

In class participation: 25 points

[50% of total grade]

Final paper

Research question: 5 points

Working hypothesis and substantive outline: 10 points

First draft: 10 points

Second draft: 10 points

Draft of the abstract: 5 points

In class presentation: 10 points

Final paper: 50 points

The following criteria is used when determining grades:

- **A 3.8-4.0** is given to a student who has exhibited the highest possible performance in all aspects of the course—final projects, the design process and participation are excellent. This student independently seeks out additional information on design and is highly committed/passionate about their work.
- **A 3.4-3.7** is given to a student who exhibits superior performance in all aspects of the course—the final projects, design process, and participation are uniformly of high quality. This student has a thorough understanding of all concepts presented, and is motivated to improve and succeed.
- **A 2.9-3.3** is given to a student who has good performance in most aspects of the course. This student follows a thorough design process, has good design work, and consistent participation that reflects a clear understanding of almost all concepts being presented.
- **A 2.5-2.8** is given to a student who has fair performance in the course. The final work is adequate, with a design process that reflects the minimum needed to complete assignments. Participation and motivation are moderate.
- **A 0.0-2.4** is given to a student with poor performance in the course. Projects are incorrectly prepared, incomplete or missing. This student does not understand the majority of concepts presented and rarely participates in class. This student is not prepared for subsequent courses in design.

COURSE READINGS

Required reading:

- Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein, *They Say, I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing*, Second Edition, New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2010.

Recommended readings:

- Kate L. Turabian; revised by Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, Eighth Edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013.
- Booth et al., *The Craft of Research*, Third edition, 2008.

WEEKLY READINGS

Week 2: Design canons–What is design?

- Cross, N. "Designerly Ways of Knowing." *Design Studies* 3, no. 4 (1982): 221-227.
- Rittel, Horst W. J., and Melvin M. Webber. "Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning." *Policy Sciences* 4, no. 2 (June 1, 1973): 155-69.

Week 3: Design canons–Design process

- Schön, Donald A. *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action*. New York: Basic Books, 1983. Chapter 2 (p.49-69) and chapter 3 (p.76-104).
- Sanders, Elizabeth B.-N., and Pieter Jan Stappers. "Co-Creation and the New Landscapes of Design ." *CoDesign* 4, no. 1 (March 1, 2008): 5-18.

Week 4: Design as provocation–Discursive Design

- Tharp, Bruce, and Tharp Stephanie. "Discursive design: critical, speculative, and alternative things", MIT Press, 2018. Chapters 1, 4, and 6.
- DiSalvo, Carl. "FCJ-142 Spectacles and Tropes: Speculative Design and Contemporary Food Cultures." *FibreCulture Journal*, no. 20 (July 1, 2012): 109-22.

Week 5: Design responsibility: Attending to non-humans in design

- Khan, G., 2013. *Vital Materiality and Non Human Agency: An Interview with Jane Bennett*. In *Dialogues with Contemporary Political Thinkers* Palgrave Macmillan. 42-57
- Latour, Bruno. "Where Are the Missing Masses? The Sociology of a Few Mundane Artifacts." In *Shaping Technology/Building Society: Studies in Sociotechnical Change.*, Edited by Wiebe E. Bijker and John Law., 225-58. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1992.

Week 6: Design as method: Revisiting methods in design

- Bennett, Cynthia L., and Daniela K. Rosner. "The Promise of Empathy: Design, Disability, and Knowing the 'Other.'" In *Proceedings of the 2019 CHI*. New York, NY, USA: ACM, 2019.
- Avle, Seyram, Silvia Lindtner, and Kaiton Williams. "How Methods Make Designers." In *Proceedings of the 2017 CHI*. New York, NY, USA: ACM, 2017.

Week 7: Sustainable design–Design and the Anthropocene

- Light, Ann, Alison Powell, and Irina Shklovski. "Design for Existential Crisis in the Anthropocene Age ." In *Proceedings of the 8th International Conference on Communities and Technologies - C&T '17*, 270-79. Troyes, France: ACM Press, 2017.
- Escobar, Arturo. *Designs for the Pluriverse: Radical Interdependence, Autonomy, and the Making of Worlds*. Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2018. Chapters 5 and 6.

Week 8: Design as inquiry–Design Research

- Wallace, Jayne, Jon Rogers, Michael Shorter, Pete Thomas, Martin Skelly, and Richard Cook. "The SelfReflector: Design, IoT and the High Street." In Proceedings of the 2018 CHI. New York, NY, USA: ACM, 2018.
- Bowers, John. "The Logic of Annotated Portfolios: Communicating the Value of 'Research Through Design.'" In Proceedings of the Designing Interactive Systems Conference, 68-77. DIS '12. New York, NY, USA: ACM, 2012.
- Fallman, Daniel. "The Interaction Design Research Triangle of Design Practice, Design Studies, and Design Exploration." Design Issues 24, no. 3 (June 25, 2008): 4-18.

** Note that more optional readings, additional media, and resources will be added weekly to Canvas.*

LAPTOPS/FILE STORAGE

It is strongly recommended to regularly backup your work – use a jump drive, buy a portable hard drive, subscribe to a backup service (Crash Plan), use UW server space or iCloud.

EMAIL + CORRESPONDENCE

Class announcements are sent to registered students via the course email list. Check your UW email daily. For all e-mail communication, please observe normal business etiquette with formal salutations to instructors and colleagues, written in proper English without acronyms or abbreviations. *Please note that emails will not be answered on weekends, evenings, or holidays.*

As a matter of policy, no assignments will be critiqued through email. Use your colleagues, class time, or office hours for feedback on papers. Note: office hours are a not a substitute for missing class.

PERMISSIONS

Unless you notify me otherwise, I assume that you are willing to allow me to use samples from your work in this course in future instructional settings (e.g., excerpts or examples in presentations). I will remove all identifying information from the work so that it is anonymous.

ACCOMMODATIONS

If you need to request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact Disabled Student Services, 448 Schmitz, 543-8924. If you have a letter from Disabled Student Services indicating you need academic accommodations, please present it to me so we can discuss what you might need for the class.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is defined as using in your own work the creations, ideas, words, inventions, or work of someone else without formally acknowledging them through the use of quotation marks, footnotes, bibliography, or other reference. Please check with me if you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism. Instances of plagiarism will be referred to the Vice Provost/Special Assistant to the President for Student Relations and may lead to disciplinary action.

VIOLENCE AWARENESS + PREVENTION

- Preventing violence is everyone's responsibility. If you're concerned, tell someone.
- Always call 911 if you or others may be in danger.
- Call 206-685-SAFE (7233) to report non-urgent threats of violence and for referrals to UW counseling and/or safety resources.
- TTY or VP callers, please call through your preferred relay service.
- Don't walk alone. Campus safety guards can walk with you on campus after dark. Call Husky NightWalk 206-685-WALK (9255).
- Stay connected in an emergency with UW Alert.
- Register your mobile number to receive instant notification of campus emergencies via text and voice messaging.
- Sign up online at www.washington.edu/alert.
- For more information visit the SafeCampus website at www.washington.edu/safecampus.

RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY

Washington state law requires that UW develop a policy for accommodation of student absences or significant hardship due to reasons of faith or conscience, or for organized religious activities.

The UW's policy, including more information about how to request an accommodation, is available at Religious Accommodations Policy (<https://registrar.washington.edu/staffandfaculty/religious-accommodations-policy/>) (Links to an external site.).

Accommodations must be requested within the first two weeks of this course using the Religious Accommodations Request form (<https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request/>) (Links to an external site.)

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Week 1 - Perspectives in design

10.01

Class introduction

In class exercise

Week 2 - What is design?

10.08

Discuss readings (Cross / Rittel

& Webber)

Week 3 - Design process

10.15

Discuss readings (Schön / Sanders & Stappers)

Submit list of preliminary topics

Week 4 - Discursive design

10.22

Discuss readings (Tharp & Tharp / DiSalvo)

Submit topic and research question

Week 5 - Non-humans in design

10.29

Discuss readings (Bennett / Latour)

Week 6 - Design as method

11.05

Discuss readings (Bennett & Rosner / Avle et al.)

Submit substantive outline

Week 7 - Design and the anthropocene

11.12

Discuss readings (Light et al. / Escobar)

Week 8 - Design as inquiry

11.19

Discuss readings (Wallace et al. / Bowers / Fallman)

Submit first draft of final paper

Week 9 - Writing workshop

11.26

Submit second draft of final paper

Submit draft of abstract

12.01: Exchange peer review

Week 10 - Final paper presentations

12.03

Final paper presentations

Guided group reflection

Finals Week

Final paper is due on : 12.10 at 11:59pm.

Submit to Canvas. Attendance is not required.

* *Schedule subject to change.*