51–254

Design for People and Planet

"First of all, design is about people.
It is about our lives, our hopes and dreams,
our loneliness and joy, our sense of beauty
and justice, about the social and the good.
It is about being in the world."
— Kees Overbeeke

"Design is the patterning and planning
of any act toward a desired, foreseeable end…
any attempt to separate design, to make it
a thing-by-itself, works counter to the fact
that design is the primary underlying
matrix of life." — Victor Papanek

CarnegieMellon
Design

Design for People and Planet
Carnegie Mellon University | School of Design | Alexander Cheek

Syllabus

Overview

Through the course of our lives we constantly take deliberate and thoughtful action to improve our state of being by altering the environment and situations that surround us. It's part of what makes us human. This thought, planning, and action has come to be known as the applied art of *design*. Information, objects, processes, interactions, environments, and ideas are subject to design thinking and process. Design has been the cause of many of our most complex problems, but design's values, when applied consciously and considerately, can affect positive change in a community and across cultures.

"Design thinking" offers a particular set of values that foster **collaborative thinking**, **alternative pathways**, and **encompassing solutions**. Empathy is one value that stems from design being a core human activity. Working across boundaries is another. Vision for an improved future state and forming that vision from a variety of perspectives reflects the dialectics and design's abductive thought process. These values and others uniquely qualify design in addressing issues on a societal and global level. It helps us navigate social contexts by scoping issues into a manageable form enabling a community, designers, and advocates to take collective action. What emerges is the advancement of the public good by bringing positive impact on an individual level.

Of course it's not so simple, nor is this the only set of values or methods that address social issues. Sometimes projects rely too heavily on analytics, are dismissive of human needs, fail to see part-whole relationships, or don't realize the complexity of situations. Furthermore, many problems in our world like urban strife, poverty, inequality, international conflict, and ineptitudes of the education system are addressed by considering them as mechanical and orderly problems, when instead they are dynamic and unpredictable. These ill-defined and unwieldy problems were coined by Horst Rittel as "wicked" ones. They are also problems that we can't avoid addressing.

In this class, we will use design thinking and create design products to address fairly tame problems. Instead of trying to solve global poverty and climate change in one semester you will have the opportunity to develop campaigns for Qatar that could potentially shift perspectives, heighten sensitivities, improve quality of life, and help individual people and fellow citizenry.

This is a studio course where you will focus on one topic, but span many orders of design, creating many different types of design products in the process. This course fulfills one requirement as a humanities elective. 9 credit hours; no pre-requisites.

Objectives

- To devise strategy to bring about positive change in a landscape of interwoven sociological, economic, political, and cultural issues.
- To experience a structured and cross-disciplinary approach in designing.
- To develop project management skills and focus in the move from thought to action.
- To strengthen craftsmanship in the realization of your products.
- To develop a variety of design products, each with different objectives but a shared goal.
- To further skills in creating a united system of design products.

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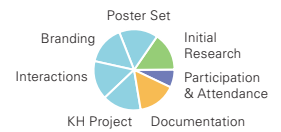
Evaluation	Each stage of project development will receive a grade based on conceptual quality, process and development, and craftsmanship. Final documentation will be graded on overall thoroughness as well as how well the whole campaign is integrated visually and rhetorically.

No grades will be discussed over email. No extensions are granted unless a medical note or an email from your academic advisor is provided. Incomplete course grades are generally not granted without an arrangement with the academic dean. *Three absences will result in the loss of a final letter grade; six absences will result in a failure.*

Decorum

Being a studio class, your attendance is imperative. The studio environment is one of collaborative work in the creative process with regular feedback. Part of the instructor's role is to guide you through this process. Working off-site is sometimes necessary in information-gathering phases but aside other than that you are expected to be in studio for the full class time.

Plagiarism is dealt with in accordance to the Carnegie Mellon University academic standards and policies regarding cheating and plagiarizing. Any instance of copying the work of another student or copying information without proper citation is not acceptable. The student handbook details acts that are considered plagiarism, the channels through which it will be handled, and its consequences.

Texts

- *Design for the Real World* by Victor Papanek — ISBN: 978-0897331531
- Moleskine Ruled Notebook Extra Large — ISBN: 978-8883707223

Instructor

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Extracurricular

Students are encouraged to take advantage of cultural activities in Doha like the MIA, mathaf: arab museum of modern art, the Qatar Philharmonic, Souq Waqif, and the Doha Players.

Viewing

The following TED Talks are encouraged for viewing over the course of the semester:

Liz Coleman: "A Call to Reinvent Liberal Arts Education" http://on.ted.com/ABlK
Ken Robinson: "Schools Kill Creativity" http://on.ted.com/ABlM
Alex Steffen: "A Sustainable Future" http://on.ted.com/ABlN
William McDonough: "Cradle to Cradle Design" http://on.ted.com/ABl4
Jane McGonigal: "Gaming Can Make A Better World" http://on.ted.com/ABlm
John Hunter: "World Peace Game" http://on.ted.com/ABls
Yves Behar: "Designing Objects That Tell Stories" http://on.ted.com/ABk9
Ray Anderson: "The Business Logic of Sustainability" http://on.ted.com/ABkC
Al Gore: "New Thinking on the Climate Crisis" http://on.ted.com/ABkQ
John Doerr: "Salvation and Profit in Greentech" http://on.ted.com/ABkH
Graham Hill: "Less Stuff, More Happiness" http://on.ted.com/ABlx
Cameron Sinclair: "Open-Source Architecture" http://on.ted.com/ABl7
Amy Smith: "Simple, Lifesaving Design" http://on.ted.com/ABlA
John Hardy: "My Green School Dream" http://on.ted.com/ABlS
David Kelley: "Human-Centered Design" http://on.ted.com/ABlg
John Maeda: "The Simple Life" http://on.ted.com/ABli
Mark Bittman: "What's Wrong With What We Eat" http://on.ted.com/ABm4
Jamie Oliver: "Teaching Children About Food" http://on.ted.com/ABm1
Louise Fresco: "Feeding the Whole World" http://on.ted.com/ABm5
Robert Hammond: "Building A Park in the Sky" http://on.ted.com/ABnY

Course Flow

Monday and Wednesday 1:00 pm – 2:20 pm, Room 1030

Introduction	M 16.01	Syllabus Review & Welcome
		SLIDES: Design for Social Change
		Class brainstorming session
		READING FOR NEXT CLASS: Liz Coleman, "Design Matters"
Research	W 18.01	Project introduction; begin the research phase for selected topics
		SLIDES: Design Research
	M 23.01	Research day — students are encouraged to use this week to meet with community members in their chosen area of focus.
	W 25.01	Present territory maps illustrating stakeholders, context, environments, and questions. Include a vision statement on your area of focus and how you plan to proceed.
Concept Development	M 30.01	Begin to develop ideas for how you could affect change through scoping, rhetoric, and the products of design. Be prepared to brainstorm and sketch during in-class studio.
	W 01.02	*Professor is out of town; class will not meet. Please use this time to meet with community members if you haven't already.*
	M 06.02	Studio day with small group meetings
	W 08.02	Poster session-style all-class pin-up. Have a rough-but-organized A1 poster of your ideas in the form of messages, drawings, diagrams, frameworks, storyboards, scenarios, sequences, etc. Compose a set of guiding principles that support your vision statement.
Branding	M 13.02	Begin branding phase where we develop the visual outer layer that represents the underlying principles of your concept. Be prepared to brainstorm and sketch during in-class studio.
	W 15.02	Studio day
	M 20.02	Studio day with small group meetings
	W 22.02	Studio day or lab day
	M 27.02	Studio day or lab day; *time-out to introduce Kristin Hughes*
Posters	W 29.02	Introduce posters phase. A2 posters should include data visualizations for public viewing and composed in the brand scheme developed earlier. Three posters are required, all that fit in one visual system, i.e., standardized grid, type style, color scheme, image style, and branding, even if each of the posters has a slightly different goal or audience.
	M 05.03	*Spring Break — No Class* ✈
	W 07.03	*Spring Break — No Class* ☀
We Have A Visitor!		**Kristin Hughes**, Associate Professor at Carnegie Mellon School of Design, presents a workshop on designing for local impact. Theme: road safety in Qatar.
	M 12.03	Workshop — *See project handout*
	W 14.03	Workshop — *See project handout*
	U 18.03	Final presentations to a public audience. *Adjust your calendars!*

Posters *continued*	W 21.03	Studio day with small group meetings
	M 26.03	Lab day with InDesign tutorials
	W 28.03	Lab day
	M 02.04	Lab day
	W 04.04	Final critique

Interactions	M 09.04	Introduce final phase where you will form interactions with the community and see how the project can be fully realized by the public and in the public. Plan to engage the community through activities, games, info booths, interventions, and positive, informative interactions. Develop this component during this final phase and plan on presenting it "in the field" on the 25th.
	W 11.04	Studio day — begin to make arrangements and pre-planning for the 25th.
	M 16.04	Studio day
	W 18.04	Studio day
	M 23.04	Studio day — final prepataions must be in order for implementation.

In the Field	W 25.04	Out in Doha day! Enlist friends to help and be sure to document your project rollout. All community engagements must be cleared first by appropriate agencies.

Conclusion	M 30.04	Final critique open to a public audience. Present your designed elements as well as photos, videos, and stories from Out in Doha day. This critique will be held as a poster session, location to be determined.

Areas of Inquiry

- **Human Rights, Human Dignity**

  women's rights; rights and dignity for the disabled; domestic abuse; discrimination against minority groups; tolerance; human trafficking; racism; multi-cultural pride or awareness

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- **Labor**

  equality in the work place; just and fair working conditions; protection against forced or compulsory labor; rights for immigrant laborers and minority groups

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- **Public Safety**

  texting and talking while driving; speeding and reckless driving; obeying traffic laws; use of safety belts; child booster seats; bad behaviors on national day

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- **Animal Welfare**

  animal adoption; animal abandonment; animal cruelty

- **Urban Development, Architecture**

  encouraging mixed-use communities; encouraging diverse communities; universal accessibility for the disabled; following or policing building codes

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- **Personal, Family, and Community Health**

  smoking shisha and cigarettes; stop smoking around children; alcohol access; nutrition and balanced diet; perils of fast food; disease prevention; mental health stigmas; food safety; personal fitness; doctor checkups; drug use prevention; get active!; over-consumption; autism awareness

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- **Technology**

  fraud prevention; online bullying; addictions; respecting copyrights

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- **Environment**

  littering; dumping; air, water pollution; dangers of household chemicals and cleaners; recycling of plastics/paper/metals/glass/electronics; climate change effects in Qatar; home/office energy conservation; water consumption; solar energy at home; where are the hybrids?

- **Education**

  educating people about the history/heritage/cultures in Qatar, adult literacy in reading/math/technology; stay in school/go to college; standards in school curriculum; human rights education

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- **Community Service, Civic Engagement**

  aid for the needy; volunteerism; good samaritanism; encouraging young people to get involved

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- **Child Development**

  crib safety; importance of early childhood education; child healthcare; adoption; child raising relationships with parents and maids/nannies