

# Syllabus

course description

The course belongs to the class “caratterizzante” (obbligatoria) in the MA in Eco-Social Design (LM-12). This course is a compulsory subject in the area “Projects”

Course title	<b>Transforming the City by Care</b> Area: Project 1 in Eco-Social Design
Course code	<b>96100</b>
Scientific sector	<b>ICAR/13 – Disegno industriale</b>
Degree	<b>Master in Eco-Social Design (LM-12)</b>
Semester	<b>I</b>
Year	<b>1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup></b>
Credits	<b>12</b>
Modular	<b>No</b>
Lecturer Group A	<b>Karl Emilio Pircher</b> office F4.02, e-mail <a href="mailto:karl.pircher@unibz.it">karl.pircher@unibz.it</a> , tel. +39 0471 015329 Webpage <a href="https://next.unibz.it/en/faculties/design-art/academic-staff/person/37175-karl-pircher">https://next.unibz.it/en/faculties/design-art/academic-staff/person/37175-karl-pircher</a>
Lecturer Group B	<b>Kris Krois</b> office F4.06.a, e-mail <a href="mailto:kris.krois@unibz.it">kris.krois@unibz.it</a> , tel. +39 0471 015224, <a href="http://designdisaster.unibz.it">designdisaster.unibz.it</a> <a href="https://next.unibz.it/en/faculties/design-art/academic-staff/person/893-Kris-krois">https://next.unibz.it/en/faculties/design-art/academic-staff/person/893-Kris-krois</a>
Scientific sector of the lecturer	<b>Prof. Pircher: ICAR/13</b> <b>Prof. Krois: ICAR/13</b>
Teaching language	<b>English</b>
Total lecturing hours	<b>90 + 90</b>

Total hours of self-study and/or other individual educational activities	<b>about 210</b>
Attendance	<b>highly recommended</b>
Prerequisites	<b>Experience in self-motivated and -organized project work</b>
Course page	<b><a href="https://www.unibz.it/it/faculties/design-art/master-eco-social-design">https://www.unibz.it/it/faculties/design-art/master-eco-social-design</a></b>

## Course description

*Project description group A (Prof. Pircher) & Project description group B (Prof. Krois):*

### Transforming the City by Care

Students of the MA Eco-Social Design collaborate with OfficineVispa, a cooperative doing social work in Bolzano. They will be introduced to other local stakeholders, citizens and employees of the municipality to develop projects that foster social-ecological transformations in Don Bosco. Particular attention is given to the diverse social practices of “CARE”, and to social infrastructures, which are enabling dwellers and stakeholders to care for each other, for the built environment and the relation to other living beings.

Generally, the *project 1* serves multiple purposes:

- support the landing of new students in Bozen–Bolzano / South Tyrol / Italy, and get them into collaborating with local actors
- getting into eco-social design thinking and doing
- understanding the structures and practices of the study course and taking actively part in its permanent development
- experimenting in diverse ways and developing individual eco-social design practices, which interconnect among students, with teachers/researchers, external partners and the rest of the world ;)

The project *Transforming the City by Care* focuses on developing infrastructures, spaces, services rituals, social practices and other things or activities which are fostering relations of care in the neighborhoods of Don Bosco. After an introductory phase students will form groups of three. Each group chooses its focus freely and develops their project autonomously, in a dialog with the

external partner, stakeholders and teachers. This involves research in the field and of the state-of-the-art supported by the course in *Design Research*, conceptual framing and critical reflection also involving learnings and teachers from the courses of the area *Observe, Analyse & Apply*, hands-on experimentation and prototyping supported by tools and teachers of area *Make & Intervene*.

At the end of the semester each projects' outcomes and key elements of the process will be presented in diverse forms:

- as a portfolio page on the website (based on a shared template)
- an exhibition within the end-of-semester exhibition of the faculty and/or in Don Bosco
- a booklet (based on a shared template), which serves as a catalogue for the exhibition (to be handed over to partners and stakeholders)

The annual theme CARE serves as a background. It brings along transversal ideas and criteria, which can be used to discuss and develop projects. Practically the project development will be accompanied in diverse formats, such as

### **Monday afternoon: Plenum & Collaborative Work Session (in University)**

### **Review & Support Sessions (for each student team; usually on Tuesday afternoon)**

#### **La Rotonda Sessions**

Co-Working at OfficineVispa's community center "La Rotonda" in Don Bosco

Wednesdays, approx. 9:00–15:00 (in the afternoon with Design Research; eventually to be extended to 16:00)

#### **Monday Sessions at Karl's Place**

Collaborate in convivial mode at Karl Pircher's wonderful mountain place, when the weather allows (to be tested)

#### **Student/Alumni Sessions**

Students of the second year and alumni talk about works that matter for project 1 and on their current practice

#### **Reading & Designing Circles**

[see last years Circles](#)

#### **Eco-Social Design Manifesto Sessions**

Students talk about what they envision to do as eco-social designers. Discussions in small groups (~4 students + ~2 teachers)

## Educational objectives

*the educational objectives need to refer to the Dublin Descriptors: please confirm or delete/adapt*

### Group A (Prof. Pircher) and Group B (Prof. Krois)

Students will be able to:

- develop projects in eco-social design from problem finding to prototyping
- collaborate with partners, experts and other designers to develop, prototype and test an integrated project;
- analyse the context of projects, conceptually frame them and explore potentials
- create and develop projects in an integrated way, with an interplay of diverse elements like social interactions, spaces, products, services, cross-media communication, etc.
- think, communicate and act across diverse areas and disciplines. Apply and integrate instruments and knowledge from Design Research and from the chosen courses in the areas *Observe, Analyse & Apply* and *Make & Intervene*. Find for synergies across all areas
- make complex issues tangible by design, visualization and storytelling
- collaborate with partners and experts and other designers to develop and implement an integrated project
- prototype, and partially implement and test projects
- learn quickly and adapt to given situations and their contexts
- propose and develop projects which will contribute to local development while considering the global context, starting from a “glocal” vision, which “focuses on the global and planetary dimension and the local one at the same time” (from the Dizionario Treccani);
- integrate socio-economic aspects and sustainability requirements in project design
- adopt and invent project methods that comply with the requirements and with the needs of the project and its stakeholders
- work with interdisciplinary, international and multidisciplinary teams
- organize and manage creative processes
- organize, manage and motivate a team
- develop an individual way of thinking, leading to critical judgements and self-assessments. Apply critical thinking as it is taught in the area *Observe, Analyse & Apply*
- balance inspiration and systematic planning
- balance more intuitive ways of working with more analytical ones
- design by taking into account the needs and desires of a given territory, of a situation/set of circumstances, of a specific group of people, thanks to the ability of observing, listening, interacting and mediating amongst various stakeholders involved in the project. Apply methods learned in the area *Observe, Analyse & Apply*

*The gained abilities vary from student to student, depending on their background and on their own focus.*

#### List of topics covered

*Shared part:*

**Project description group A (Prof. Pircher) & Project description group B (Prof. Krois):**

Eco-Social Design, design and communication for/with CARE in neighborhood relations public space, public life and public debate

*Specific part (Object–Space–Services)*

Project description group A (Prof. Pircher):

Product-, Event- and Exhibition Design

*Specific part (Communication–Interaction–Services)*

Project description group B (Prof. Krois):

Social Interaction Design, Visual Communication, Strategic Design and Media Tactics

*Not all topics will be treated with the same depth for all students. Students can focus on specific topics, and depending on this teachers will provide specific input in groups and individually. Students are encouraged to ask for this proactively.*

#### Teaching format

**Project group A (Prof. Pircher) & Project group B (Prof. Krois):**

Project-work with a balanced mix of field trips, lectures, exercises and experiments, workshops, presentations and reviews (individually and in groups), interventions by external experts

#### Learning outcomes

Group A (Prof. Pircher) & Group B (Prof. Krois)

**Knowledge and understanding**

- understand the potential and restrictions of given settings, the connected issues and actors / stakeholders, considering available capacities, recourses, instruments and technologies
- understand the requirements and potentials of a project, including all the above mentioned

**Applying knowledge and understanding**

- be able to conceptually frame projects, integrating competences and knowledges from Design Research and from courses of the area *Sciences & Discourse*
- be able to co-create original ideas for effective projects, aiming at desirable and viable Eco-Social transitions
- be able to develop effective projects in given situations (see above) with the above mentioned aims
- setup and organize a project according to its requirements, across all phases: initial research, finding, project development, exploration and experimentation, prototyping, testing and publishing / exhibiting.
- be able to design and build mockups, functional models and/or other artifacts, which make the project tangible and testable, integrating methods and skills from courses of the area *Skills & Technologies*
- Integrate approaches, knowledges, methods, competences, skills and technologies from multiple fields and (design) disciplines

**Making judgments**

- be able to critically assess potentials and restrictions of given situations and settings (see above), and estimate strength, challenges, risks and prospects
- be able to review projects critically, to understand what is working, what could be improved (and how)
- apply instruments and knowledges from other courses, regard to making judgments, in particular critical thinking as learned in courses of the area *Sciences & Discourse*

**Communication skills**

- think, communicate and act across diverse areas and disciplines
- be able to present and discuss their own project successfully (in diverse settings, using appropriate media and modes)

- be able to communicate and collaborate in teams, with partners, stakeholders and potential users or audiences

#### **Learning skills**

- learn quickly and adapt to given situations and their contexts
- understand own capacities and limitations, and understand, where, when and how to involve other experts / partners, for certain competences, roles and tasks

#### Group A (Prof. Pircher)

##### **Knowledge and understanding**

understand basic methods and strategies of product design, the design of objects, spaces and events. The focus within this spectrum depends on the interest of each student and on the needs of their project, as if the main part of the teaching happens in individual consultancies of project teams and single students.

#### Group B (Prof. Krois)

##### **Knowledge and understanding**

understand basic methods and tactics of media communication, of visual identity, of visual communication and social interaction design. The focus within this spectrum depends on the interest of each student and on the needs of their project, as if the main part of the teaching happens in individual consultancies of project teams and single students.

#### Assessment

Throughout the semester the work-in-progress are critically and constructively discussed.

At the end of each part students present and discuss their works. They will design and setup an exhibition with the works within the end-of -semester exhibition of the faculty and/or in Don Bosco.

All presentations include the demonstration of mock-ups, models, prototypes, documentation of interventions or events, and/or other designed artefacts. For the presentation, students are asked to use media and speech in convincing and attractive ways, that motivate understanding and interest among the audience of the presentation. The presentation has to be done in a way that also works for external partners and stakeholders.

Additionally, a documentation has to be submitted (as portfolio web pages and booklets). It communicates the project including its development process. This essential documentation should be concise and attractive for interested audiences, like: fellow designers and practitioners, partners and stakeholders of the project, potential collaborators, participants, users and/or consumers of the project, etc.). The format of the documentation will be defined and communicated two weeks before the end of the semester at the latest. By the end of the academic year it will be integrated in the so-called [transfolder](#) containing outputs of all courses. This is thought to share production and to enable cross-fertilisations among the diverse courses.

Assessment language: English

Evaluation criteria and criteria for awarding marks

**Group A (Prof. Pircher) & Group B (Prof. Krois)**

1. **Eco-Social agency**  
Impacts and potentials for positive eco-social change
2. **Qualities the of designed artefacts**  
Aesthetic and technical qualities, and in how far these qualities foster the eco-social agency. How they build up on the state of the art in your chosen field and (design) disciplines. Boldness and vigour of experimentation and design exploration.
3. **Conceptual framing, reflection and future perspectives**  
A visual map of 'state of art' setting out the terrain of your project and your starting position. Critical analysis, synthesis, reflection and evaluation. Understanding of iterative development and future perspectives.
4. **Relations, processes and organization**  
Understanding and managing relations and processes with the project team, collaborators, partners, stakeholders and other actors. Project management.
5. **Storytelling**  
Effectiveness and potential in communicating the project to relevant publics. Quality and effectiveness of presentation techniques and narrative. How well the story attracts attention, convinces and touches audiences. Defense of your proposition and your response to critics.

All works have to tackle all 5 qualities. Particular weight is given to the interplay between *eco-social agency* (1), the *qualities of the of designed artefacts* (2) and *Conceptual framing, reflection*



*and future perspectives (3).*

Readings and other inspirations

*Some will be read together in the Reading & Designing Circles.*

### **Group A (Prof. Pircher) & Group B (Prof. Krois)**

Paper

Escobar, Arturo, Designs for the Pluriverse: Radical Interdependence, Autonomy, and the Making of Worlds, 2018, MIT Press ([PDF](#))

Fuad-Luke, Alastair et al. [Agents of Alternatives](#). Berlin: Agents of Alternatives, 2015.

Gehl, Jan & Birgitte Svarre (2013), How to study public life

Gruendl, Harald, Ulrike Haele, Marco Kellhammer, Christina Nägele (IDRV):

EN: [Tools for the Design Revolution. A handbook for sustainable design strategies](#) by IDRV – Institute of Design Research Vienna (book with hands on tools and cases)

DE: [Werkzeuge für die Designrevolution. Ein Handbuch für zukunftsfähige Designstrategien](#) vom IDRV – Institute of Design Research Vienna

Krasny, Angelika, Elke Fitz / Architekturzentrum Wien, [Critical Care. Architecture and Urbanism for a Broken Planet](#), MIT Press, 2019

Manzini, Ezio, and Rachel Coad. [Design. When Everybody Designs: An Introduction to Design for Social Innovation](#). Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2015.

Puig de la Bellacasa, María (2017): Matters of Care: Speculative Ethics in More Than Human Worlds

Raworth, Kate: [So you want to downscale the Doughnut ? Here's how](#). PDF: [Creating City Portraits](#)

Speak, Andrew, Stefan Zerbe (2020): Zum Einfluss von Bäumen und Oberflächenbelag auf das Mikroklima innerstädtischer Freiflächen. Das Beispiel der Stadt Bozen (Südtirol, Italien) [PDF](#)

Welzer, Harald, and Sommer, Bernd, [Transformation Design: A Social-Ecological Perspective](#) in Jonas, Wolfgang / Zerwas, Sarah / von Anshelm, Kristof (Ed.) Transformation Design – Perspectives on a New Design Attitude, BIRKHÄUSER, November 2015, ISBN: 978-3-0356-0653-9

## Web

[arki lab](#) “is an interdisciplinary urban design studio – defined by our strong focus on democratic processes. We uncover local knowledge through our engaging tools and turn dreams into urban interventions, design and strategies. We’re securing people’s right to co-create the city and thereby developing vibrant and sustainable communities.”

[Assemble Studio](#), develop “a democratic and co-operative working method that enables built, social and research-based work at a variety of scales, both making things and making things happen.”

[Atlas of Utopias: 2019 Transformative Cities Featured Initiatives](#)

[C40 cities. Around the world, C40 cities are taking bold climate action, leading the way towards a healthier and more sustainable future.](#)

[Civic Infrastructures](#) “investigates social, material and technological means for addressing ongoing change processes in current societies”

[ethicsofcare.org](#)

[La Foresta](#), Accademia di Comunità, Rovereto

[Öffentlich Gestaltungsberatung Hamburg](#)

[Pirate Care, a syllabus](#)

[raumlabor](#)’s “spacial proposals are small scale and deeply rooted in the local condition”, but inspired on “great ideas”.

[The Human Scale](#), documentary on the work of the Danish architect and urbanist Jan Gehl. He has studied human behavior in cities through 40 years, and consultant several cities regarding the use and design of public spaces, so the serve human and social needs. A particular focus is on how people move.

Zandt, Deanna: [InstaStory narrating commoning and care](#); +- the same story [told on medium.com](#)