

SYLLABUS

course description

The course belongs to the class “caratterizzante” (alternativa) in the MA in Eco-Social Design (LM-12). This course is a compulsory optional subject in the area “**Observe, analyse & apply**”

Course title	Social Studies of Design Area: Observe, analyse & apply
Course code	96112
Scientific sector	SPS/08
Degree	Master in Eco-Social Design (LM-12)
Semester	I
Year	1st and 2nd
Credits	6
Modular	No
Lecturer	Ingrid Kofler office F4.05, e-mail: Ingrid.Kofler2@unibz.it , Webpage https://www.unibz.it/en/faculties/design-art/academic-staff/person/18815-ingrid-kofler
Scientific sector of the lecturer	SPS/08
Teaching language	English
Teaching assistant (if any)	-
Office hours	
Teaching language	English
Total lecturing hours	30
Total hours of self-study and/or other individual educational activities	about 120
Attendance	recommended
Prerequisites	-
Course page	

Course description

The course intends to introduce the students to the various relations existing between social sciences and design. The course will provide students with knowledge about how social sciences and sociology have been tackling and are tackling design intended as a variegated set of practices and as artifacts. On the other hand, however, the course also intends to introduce the students to the ways design has been tackling, is tackling and is challenging social sciences and sociology.

The course will start by introducing students to questioning “the social” as it has been traditionally used within social sciences, sociology and within design, while also integrating the annual theme “*Staying with the trouble*” (Haraway, 2016) The rest of the course will address different approaches and theories as well as practical examples addressing different issues, such as: how conflicts and controversies and their mapping at global and local level can be an example of integration of social sciences and design; how social sciences can provide notions, concepts and methodological tools to describe and analyze artifacts and objects and their relation to the social. By addressing these issues the course will introduce sociological notions and categories - as well as research methods, techniques and tools.

Part of the course will be offered in cooperation with the course in Political Ecology (Andreas Metzner-Szigeth) and with Design Research on ethnographic methods. The course program is adaptive and foresees support of the student’s main projects.

Educational objectives

Students will be able to:

- *collaborate with other designers and experts in order to develop and implement an integrated project;*
- *take into account the social relevance of their interventions occurring within the tension between global and local dimensions;*
- *take into account the social aspects that characterize a territory, a community and a group of people;*
- *integrate social aspects in project design while considering the tension, which occurs between the local and the global dimensions;*
- *develop an individual and critical way of thinking, leading to critical judgements and self-assessments;*
- *communicate, multilingually in a convincing way, through a variety of modalities (written, oral, visual);*
- *talk to experts about the project;*
- *read experts’ and academic articles, studies and reports related to one’s own project issues and integrate those analyses with one’s own project design;*
- *organize a research project while identifying relevant studies and researches, experts to collaborate with, methods and instruments to adopt;*
- *outline the cultural and social territorial framework where the students will intervene;*
- *set up a field work or an inquiry in order to define the socioeconomic framework, by exchanging ideas with researchers and experts’ students will collaborate with;*
- *understand specialist literature so as to integrate it within their own research project;*

Knowledge will be acquired in the following fields:

- the relations between social sciences and design and the main methods, techniques and tools through which such relations can be carried out, developed and transformed.

List of topics covered

- Action
- Social change
- Artifacts
- Social Networks
- Micro/Macro
- Practice
- Social Capital
- Structure

Teaching format

Most of the classes will consist in frontal lectures and discussions. In few cases, the discussion will be based on class exercises, most of the times on home assignments, usually readings and experiments. Some classes will be tackled through an interdisciplinary co-presence with other teachers.

Learning outcomes

Knowledge and understanding

Students will learn how social sciences and design can productively dialogue.

At the end of the course students should be able to understand their interventions in relation to the broader coordinates of the social sciences' debates and to position their intervention in relation to such debates, also in order to choose the most appropriate research methods and collaborators.

Applying knowledge and understanding

At the end of the course students should be able to find, understand and integrate social research into their design projects, as ground for their project's choices and features.

At the end of the course students should be able to dialogue with social scientists in order to discuss the sociological aspects of their projects.

At the end of the project students should be able to discuss and choose the appropriate method to gather data about their design projects.

Making judgments

At the end of the course students should be able to assess the relevance and value of a social sciences and their methods for design and vice-versa.

Communication skills

At the end of the course students should be able to communicate with social scientists about their design projects.

Learning skills

At the end of the course students should be able to get deeper into the social sciences' debates and to learn about specific social research related to the specificities of their design projects.

Assessment

Written and oral.

Students will be assessed considering:

- the results of the home assignments assigned during the course
- participation in class activities
- the ability to integrate course topics and issues into the final presentation of the design project

Assessment language: English

Evaluation criteria and criteria for awarding marks

Evaluation criteria will consider the ability to compare essays among them or with empirical findings and/or observations and/or critical reflections about social phenomena. More in general evaluation criteria consider not only the way in which the assignment brief has been fulfilled, but also the capacity to take into account other parts of the course and to make connections among them, as well as with possible personal experiences as design student.

Required readings

- Lupton, D. Towards design sociology. *Sociology Compass*. 2018; 12:e12546.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/soc4.12546>
- Pieterse, J. N., *Globalization and Culture*, Global Mélange, 2019. Chapter 3 - Globalization and Culture: Three Paradigms
- Yaneva, Albena; Heaphy, Liam (2012): Urban Controversies and the Making of the Social. *Architectural Research Quarterly*. vol. 16, issue 1, pp. 29-36.

Further readings will be communicated the first day of class.