

Syllabus Course description

Course title	Project Visual Communication 2c "What's the assignment?"
Course code	97158
Scientific sector	Module 1: CEAR-08/D (ex ICAR/13) Module 2: CEAR-08/D (ex ICAR/13) Module 3: PHIL-04/B (ex M-FIL/05)
Degree	Bachelor in Design and Art (L-4)
Semester	Summer semester 2024/25
Year	2 nd
Credits	19 (Module 1: 8 CP, Module 2: 6 CP, Module 3: 5 CP)
Modular	Yes

Total lecturing hours	180 (Module 1: 90, Module 2: 60, Module 3: 30)
Total hours of self-study and/ or other individual educational activities	295 (Module 1: about 110, Module 2: about 90, Module 3: about 95)
Attendance	not compulsory but recommended
Prerequisites	To have passed the Project Visual Communication 1; to have certified the language level proficiency B1 in the course language in years following the first.
Maximum number of students per class	20

Course description	<p>The course belongs to the class "caratterizzante" (module 1), "di base" (module 2) and "affine integrativa" (module 3) in the major in Design.</p> <p>Description Module 1 – Visual Communication: An assignment is a structured task or project, designed to engage participants in creative exploration of designerly or artistic practice. Rooted in the traditions of modern and contemporary art, these assignments introduce expertise in a nonverbal way. They also intend to encourage personal expression, critical thinking, and experimentation.</p> <p>This course centers around a series of these "Design Assignments". Through assignments, students will explore diverse fields of graphic design, editorial design, typography / type design, and digital creation, while delving into personal creativity, self-expression, and the exploration of their creative voice. After working on prepared assignments deeply rooted in contemporary design practice (taken or inspired by existing art assignments, art and design history, and also by masters</p>
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of the design field), students will develop their own assignments and carry them out with the whole group. Most work will be created and collected within Figma, a collaboration and design software. The resulting publication will document the projects and include reflections on the experience of doing, creating and discussing Design Assignments.

Course Structure:

1. Design Assignments

- **Technical Assignments:** Encourage exploration of students' creativity while introducing or improving technical skills.
- **Mental Assignments:** Are designed to foster personal creative growth and a broader perspective on design, art and personal expression within graphic design.

2. **Weekly Retrospection:** Each week will include a half-day retrospective session where students and lecturers engage in open discussions about the assignments. Surveys could provide additional feedback, ensuring a constructive and supportive environment for evaluation and learning.

3. **Practical Input:** Important topics will be introduced and explored through lessons, covering areas such as

- Practical foundations of design
- Creative strategies for personal and professional projects
- Techniques for effective critique and collaborative work

4. **Student-Created Assignments:** Through the course, students will form small groups to conceptualize and create their own Design Assignments, rooted in pre-defined categories within contemporary design practice. This exercise fosters collaboration, creativity, and the ability to design meaningful experiences for others. The assignments will be performed by the whole group, including lecturers whenever possible.

5. **Publication:** The course will include the creation of a publication documenting the students' work and experiences. This publication will document the journey of the Design Assignments, featuring

- Descriptions and outcomes of the assignments

- Student-written texts reflecting on their experiences and learnings
- Excerpts from discussions between students and lecturers.

Objectives:

- To build intellectual capabilities and technical proficiency across various visual design disciplines
- To encourage self-expression and the discovery of individual creative voice
- To foster collaborative and critical thinking skills through group work and feedback sessions
- To equip students with the ability to create, evaluate, and document meaningful design experiences

This course offers an opportunity to engage with design as both a personal and technical practice, combining skill development with deep exploration of creativity. Through the Design Assignments, students can discover specific areas of interest in design and gain valuable tools to shape their future projects and practices. The topic allows also for an introspective into how design and creativity is taught today, adding to the critical design discourse.

Description Module 2 – Digital media

EN

This course module provides students with a comprehensive understanding of Digital Media through a blend of practical and theoretical units that support the main project topic and individual students' work. The practical modules aim to expand students' visual skill sets by introducing unconventional and open-source design tools, exploring digital publishing, and encouraging experimental approaches. Students will learn to apply tools and technologies such as animation, 3D scanning, 360° media, photogrammetry, and AR through small exercises and personal projects. One workshop adopts a collaborative approach, culminating in a joint design proposal.

The theoretical modules critically examine the power dynamics in the production and distribution of digital media. Lectures encourage reflection on the graphic designer's role in creating visual artifacts, with occasional guest talks by internationally recognized designers contributing to the discussions.

IT

Questo modulo offre agli studenti una conoscenza approfondita dei Media Digitali attraverso una combinazione di unità pratiche e teoriche che supportano il tema principale del progetto e il lavoro individuale degli studenti. I moduli pratici mirano ad ampliare le competenze visive degli studenti introducendo strumenti di design non convenzionali e open-source, esplorando la pubblicazione digitale e incoraggiando approcci sperimentali. Gli studenti impareranno ad applicare strumenti e tecnologie come l'animazione, la scansione 3D, i media a 360°, la fotogrammetria e la realtà aumentata (AR) attraverso piccoli esercizi e progetti personali. Un workshop adotta un approccio collaborativo, culminando in una proposta progettuale condivisa. I moduli teorici esaminano criticamente le dinamiche di potere nella produzione e distribuzione dei media digitali. Le lezioni incoraggiano una riflessione sul ruolo del graphic designer nella creazione di artefatti visivi, con occasionali interventi di ospiti internazionalmente riconosciuti che contribuiscono alle discussioni.

Description Module 3 – Theories and Languages of Visual Communication

Theoretical framing

The module in its first part delivers an analysis of assignments: the intended but hidden learning output, the communicative structure between teacher and student, processuality, correction, success and failure. A short history will support the understanding of a central tool of aesthetic teaching. Assignments will be restaged to discuss effects. The 'writing of...' will be a topic in the way it supports or boycotts understanding and practice.

Contextualizing

In a second step, while production in the studio starts, the module will open the horizon to the specificities of an aesthetic practice that make assignments in teaching necessary. How do we acquire expertise in a field that cannot be 'explained'? We will follow Donald Schön closely observing the work of an architect in dialogue with a colleague. Schön's theory of the 'Reflective Practitioner' may be supplemented by a discussion of 'embodied knowledge' (Polanyi) and 'situated learning' (Lave, Wenger). This part aims at a better understanding of creative production and its 'useful' contradictions and should sensitize students for the character of their own doing.

	<p>Support In his last part the module supports production, elaborating on concepts, supporting text-work and the 'staging' of the different projects. When 'production takes command' the theory-modul gets into an role of assistance and is depending on the topics formulated by the students.</p>
<p>Specific educational objectives</p>	<p>Knowledge and understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - have acquired one's own project methodology in the field of visual communication. This methodology includes the ability to oversee all phases of design, from the generation of ideas to the realisation of the finished project. Through the integrated teaching of project subjects of practical and theoretical nature, graduates will be able to simultaneously address all these aspects and consider them as synonymous with the development of a project that is successful on a formal, technical, scientific and cultural level. The objective of the course is to ensure that students acquire adequate knowledge of general scientific methods and contents. <p>Disciplinary objectives - with reference to the indicated topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the acquisition of essential theoretical knowledge (related to visual culture) so as to be able to carry out a project in the field of visual communication - the acquisition of basic knowledge so as to be able to look critically at their own work and to deal with the complexities of contemporary society - the acquisition of basic knowledge concerning purposeful theoretical subjects in the field of the overarching project topic (related to fictivity) - the acquisition of basic knowledge concerning the culture of design with specific reference to visual culture - the ability to capture and analyse contemporary cultural and social phenomena that characterize design and art; - a theoretical and socio-cultural education that aims to acquire a solid cultural background where technical media skills are combined with a theoretical reflection

<p>Lecturer</p>	<p>Module 1 – Visual Communication: Thomas Kronbichler e-mail Thomas.Kronbichler@unibz.it webpage - Thomas Kronbichler / Free University of Bozen-Bolzano (unibz.it)</p> <p>Module 2 – Digital media:</p>
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	<p>Andreas Trenker e-mail andreas.trenker@unibz.it webpage - Andreas Trenker / Free University of Bozen-Bolzano (unibz.it)</p> <p>Module 3 – Theories and languages of visual communication Stephan Schmidt-Wulffen E-mail: stephan.schmidtwulffen@unibz.it Webpage: Stephan August Schmidt-Wulffen / Free University of Bozen-Bolzano (unibz.it)</p>
Scientific sector of the lecturer	<p>Module 1: Thomas Kronbichler: CEAR-08/D (ex ICAR/13) Module 2: Andreas Trenker: CEAR-08/D (ex ICAR/13) Module 3: Stephan Schmidt-Wulffen: PHIL-04/B (ex M-FIL/05)</p>
Teaching language	<p>Module 1 – English Module 2 – Italian Module 3 – German</p>
Office hours	<p>Module 1: Mondays 5pm-6pm. Appointments need to be arranged by email. Module 2: Mondays 6pm-7pm. Appointments need to be arranged by email. Module 3: Monday 5pm-6pm. Appointments need to be arranged by email.</p>
List of topics covered	<p>Module 1: Visual image creation, graphic design, typography, art assignments, grid systems, colour palettes, graphic composition, analogue and digital media > See also Course Description Module 2: Digital Media, Typography, Techniques and Modes of Digital Publishing, Animation, Basics of AR, Visual Storytelling > See also Course Description Module 3: Learning graphic design, assignment as tool of instruction, situated learning, reflection-in-action, community of practice, art history (conceptual art, fluxus).</p>
Teaching format	<p>Module 1: Lectures, workshops, guest talks, group discussions, in-class exercises. Module 2: Lectures, workshops, guest talks, group discussions, in-class exercises, experiments, micro-excursions, different review/feedback modalities, mutual learning/teaching Module 3: Seminar (reading, discussion), lecture, re-enactment.</p>
Expected learning outcomes	<p>Disciplinary competence</p> <p><i>Knowledge and understanding</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - have acquired their own project methodology in the field of visual communication, from the phase

of planning to the phase of realisation of the project.

- have acquired the basic practical and theoretical knowledge necessary to realise a project in the field of visual communication.
- have acquired the basic knowledge to be able to turn a critical eye to their own work and to deal with contemporary complexity.
- have acquired the basic knowledge necessary for further Master's studies in all components of project culture as well as in theoretical subjects.

Applying knowledge and understanding

- plan, develop and realise a project in the field of visual communication.
- use the basic knowledge acquired in the technical, scientific and theoretical fields to realise a mature project.
- be able to finalize the creation of an accomplished project in the field of visual communication , thanks to the basic knowledge acquired in the practical and theoretical fields.
- recognise the main phenomena of contemporary society, to observe them critically, also from an ethical and social point of view, and to elaborate appropriate solutions at the level of a design proposal/response.

make use of the skills acquired during the course of study in the event of continuing studies in a Master's degree programme in the field of visual communication and to develop them further.

Transversal competence and soft skills

Making judgements

- Be able to make independent judgements for the purpose of developing their own design skills and in relation to all those decisions that are necessary to bring a project to completion.
- Be able to make independent judgements, both in the critical evaluation of their own work and in their ability to use the right interpretative tools in those design contexts in which they will work and/or continue their studies, also considering ethical and social aspects.

Communication skills

- Present an independently realised project in the field of visual communication in the form of an installation, orally as well as in writing in a professional manner.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to professionally communicate and substantiate one's own decisions and justify them from a formal and theoretical point of view. <p><i>Learning skills</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - have learned a work methodology at a professional level - in the sense of being able to identify, develop and realise solutions to complex problems by applying the knowledge acquired in the practical and theoretical fields - in order to start a professional activity and/or continue their studies with a master's degree programme. - have developed a creative attitude and learned how to enhance it and develop it according to their own inclinations. - have acquired basic knowledge in theoretical and practical subjects as well as a study methodology suitable for continuing studies with a master's degree programme.
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<p>Assessment</p>	<p>Module 1: Students' work will be assessed based on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Active participation in assignments and discussions ● Progress in technical and creative skills ● Contribution to group activities and the final publication ● Ability to reflect on and articulate their design processes and outcomes <p>Module 2: Throughout the module, students will participate in hands-on workshops to design and produce a range of visual works. Adherence to assignment deadlines, as outlined during the semester, is crucial to ensure consistent progress. Assessments will be conducted through presentations, where students will explain their conceptual, formal, and technical choices for their final projects. Additionally, students are required to submit one physical copy of each artifact created during the course.</p> <p>Module 3: Active participation, quality of contributions and individual development. Students will be asked to support the course of the seminar through smaller contributions: Preparing a re-enactment of an assignment, commenting on a small text to be discussed, introducing the work of an artist or designer.</p>
<p>Assessment language</p>	<p>The same as the teaching language.</p>

<p>Evaluation criteria and criteria for awarding marks</p>	<p>Module 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality of design and graphic presentations - Independence and critical ability of developing and arguing the design work in accordance with the given themes - Knowledge, understanding and ability of discussing the references proposed during the semester - Presence and engagement during the semester <p>Module 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - conclusiveness of the design concept - conclusiveness of the formal aspects of the design work - quality of the technical execution - clarity of the presentation - quality and thoroughness of the project documentation <p>Module 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Active participation, quality of contributions and individual development. - Ability to work individually and in group.
<p>Required readings</p>	<p>Module 1:</p> <p>Readings related to the topic of the project will be communicated during the course.</p> <p>Module 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pater, Ruben. Caps Lock. Valiz, 2021. • Pater, Ruben. Politics of Design. BIS Publisher, 2016. • Goldstein, Mitch. How to Be a Design Student. Princeton Architectural Press, 2023. • Alliance Graphique Internationale. Homework: Design Education, Practice & Process. 2019. • Shaughnessy, Adrian. How to be a graphic designer, without losing your soul. Princeton Architectural Press, 2005. <p>Module 3:</p> <p>Bremmer, Melissa and Emiel Heijnen, Bridging Contradictions: The Design of Wicked Arts Assignments, in: Dies. (eds.) Wicked Arts Assignments. Practising Creativity in Contemporary Arts Education, Amsterdam 2020, 23-31 Schön, Donald A., The Reflective Practitioner. How Professionals Think in Action, 1982, chapt. 3</p>
<p>Supplementary readings</p>	<p>Module 1:</p> <p>/</p>

Module 2:

- Drucker, Johanna. *Graphesis – Visual Forms of Knowledge Production*. Harvard Press, 2014.
- Lupton, Ellen. *Extra Bold: A Feminist, Inclusive, Anti-racist, Nonbinary Field Guide for Graphic Designers*. Princeton Architectural Press, 2021.
- Dunne, Anthony, and Fiona Raby. *Speculative Everything: Design, Fiction, and Social Dreaming*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2013.
- Berger, John. *Ways of Seeing*. London: British Broadcasting Corporation, 1972.

Further readings will be provided during the course. Students are expected to participate and debate about the topics presented during the lectures.

Module 3:

Lave, Jean and Etienne Wenger, *Situated learning. Legitimate peripheral participation*, Cambridge 1991
Haraway, Donna J., *Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective*, in: *Haraway, Simians, Cyborgs, and Women. The Reinvention of Nature*, London 1991, pp. 184-201.