

Syllabus

Course Description

Course Title	Service and Policy Design
Course Code	96126
Course Title Additional	Caring 15-Minute Cities
Scientific-Disciplinary Sector	CEAR-08/D
Language	English
Degree Course	Master in Eco-Social Design
Other Degree Courses (Loaned)	
Lecturers	dr. Teresa Palmieri, Teresa.Palmieri@unibz.it https://www.unibz.it/en/faculties/design-art/academic-staff/person/47597
Teaching Assistant	
Semester	Second semester
Course Year/s	1st and 2nd year
CP	6
Teaching Hours	60
Lab Hours	0
Individual Study Hours	0
Planned Office Hours	18
Contents Summary	<p>Based on their interests and focus, students select courses in areas Observe, Analyse & Apply and of Make & Intervene, to which the course in Service and Policy Design belongs.</p> <p>Service and Policy Design course offers a critical and creative approach to the design and development of services and policies aimed at fostering social-ecological transformation, inclusion and care. A particular focus is on the interplay between grassroots initiatives (commoning) and the public sector (institutioning). Students will learn to analyze services and policies through the lens of eco-social design. The course combines theory, strategy and practice, for developing service-oriented solutions.</p>

	<p>A wide spectrum of concepts and issues will be covered, for example: Policy design and governance for social-ecological transformation, multi-level governance and subsidiarity, common-public partnerships, democratisation and participation, system thinking and theory of change, transformative resilience.</p>
Course Topics	<p>In the course students will learn about and engage in hands-on experimentation with the emerging field of policy design and the more established field of service design. Particular attention will be given to how policy and service design can interact and together contribute to socio-ecological transformations by creating synergies between institutional visions and ambitions and people's everyday life –including transformative grassroots initiatives. On one hand we will explore "policy making as designing" focusing on what kind of design tools and approaches can support opening policy making to creative inquiry, co-creation and effective communication. On the other hand, we will experiment with how service design can contribute to social innovation and innovation in the public sector. To do so, the course will focus on the topic of the 15-minute city which has recently emerged as a possible pathway towards socio-ecological transformation (e.g. reduction of CO2 emissions, inclusiveness, solidarity). The concept brings attention to spatial-temporal proximity of people to essential urban services as well as to relational proximity i.e. more caring relationships between people and between people and the environment. In the course, we will critically analyse policy visions and documents which focus on or relate to the 15-min. city, learn from case studies and empirically –individually and collectively– explore the status of the 15-min. city in the Bolzano area and beyond. Hence, we will experiment with service design approaches and methods (e.g. system and actors mapping, journey maps and user stories, scenario building, co-design and role playing) to design proposals for collaborative and proximity services which can support caring urban communities. To have real-life insights and experiences in policymaking and in the use of service design for public sector and social innovation, we will collaborate with the Municipality of Bolzano. Working in this way, the course will provide students with the conceptual and methodological knowledge and the practical skills to use design as an instrument for addressing strategic challenges of eco-social transformation.</p>

Keywords	Service Design, Policy-Making, Public sector and Social Innovation, Eco-social Transformation, Co-design
Recommended Prerequisites	
Propaedeutic Courses	
Teaching Format	Lectures, fieldwork, workshops, in-class exercises, inputs from invited guests.
Mandatory Attendance	highly recommended
Specific Educational Objectives and Learning Outcomes	<p>Knowledge and understanding</p> <p>Students of the Master in Eco-social Design will have developed their own individual project practice and will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - develop creative solutions and processes - making complex problems tangible through design, visualization and storytelling - developing prototypes or delegating their development <p>Applying knowledge and understanding</p> <p>Students will be able to make tangible ideas, reports and projects, such as sketches, visualisations, mock-ups, models, prototypes, interventions and prototype events.</p> <p>Making judgements</p> <p>Students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - take responsibility for the development and management of projects and activities - compare and evaluate concepts, practices and projects in their various contexts - judging independently and critically requirements, needs and potential of an environment, and of a group or community, as well as the contribution of a project to local and regional economic cycles and to increasing solidarity relations <p>Communication skills</p> <p>Students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - communicate convincingly in different ways and with different audiences - present projects convincingly <p>Learning skills</p> <p>Students will be able to working independently to learn according</p>

	to different situations and in a personal way through the development of prototypes, models, mock-ups and the feedback they provide.
Specific Educational Objectives and Learning Outcomes (additional info.)	
Assessment	<p>The assessment will be based on: Final design proposal in the form of a service storyboard. Documentation of the design process with attention for problematisation and contextualisation of the proposed service at different levels (i.e. institutional and grassroots level). Oral presentation of the project during the exam.</p> <p>Assessment for NON-ATTENDING STUDENTS will be based on the service storyboard, documentation and oral presentation of the project during the exam. Non-attending students need to be able to thoroughly present the research and design process that lead to the service proposal, including the contextualisation of the service at different scale levels (policy/institutional – everyday/grassroots). Also non attending students need to produce and file the documents mentioned above.</p>
Evaluation Criteria	<p>The final evaluation will be based on: - Analysis of the topic, policy and local context, - Application of acquired knowledge and methodologies to the conceptualisation of the "design space" and service concept, - Contextualisation of the design process and outcomes at different scale levels (i.e. policy/institutional – everyday/grassroots), - Quality and originality of the service concept and project artefacts (workshop materials, service storyboard and documentation), - Project communication and storytelling, - Active participation to the course and progress made during the course as demonstrated in class and by the project documentation and outcomes.</p>
Required Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Richardson, L., Durose, C., Kimbell, L., & Mazé, R. (2026). How do policy and design intersect? Three relationships. <i>Policy & Politics</i>, 54(1), 70-90. Retrieved Feb 3, 2026 • Manzini, E. (2022). <i>Livable Proximity: Ideas for the City that Cares</i>. Milan: Bocconi University Press. • Bason, C. (2016). <i>Design for Policy</i>. Oxon & New York: Routledge.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meroni, A. & Sangiorgi, D. (2016) Design for Services. Oxon & New York: Routledge. • Penin, L., Prendiville, A., & Sangiorgi, D. (2026). The Bloomsbury Handbook of Service Design: Plural perspectives and a critical contemporary agenda. London, New York & Dublin: Bloomsbury Visual Arts. <p><i>For each book specific chapters to read will be indicated by the lecturer in the course.</i></p>
Supplementary Readings	
Further Information	
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Gender equality, Sustainable cities and communities, Reduced inequalities