Syllabus

Course Description

Course Title	Social Studies of Design and Culture
Course Code	47210
Course Title Additional	
Scientific-Disciplinary Sector	GSPS-06/A
Language	English
Degree Course	Master in Critical Creative Practices
Other Degree Courses (Loaned)	
Lecturers	Prof. Dr. Ingrid Kofler, Ingrid.Kofler2@unibz.it https://www.unibz.it/en/faculties/design-art/academic-staff/person/18815
Teaching Assistant	
Semester	First semester
Course Year/s	2025/26
CP	6
Teaching Hours	30
Lab Hours	0
Individual Study Hours	0
Planned Office Hours	18
Contents Summary	In Social Studies of Design and Culture students are introduced to the dialogue between social sciences and design. More specifically students are introduced to the ways in which social sciences have tackled design, design practices and designed artifacts, but also, and through it, students are also introduced to the ways designers and design researchers have appropriated social research methods, approaches and theories in order to integrate, support and enhance their practices. Contents Summary Through this two-sided introduction to the dialogue between social sciences and design, students are then led to reflect, explore and

	describe the ways in which what they do as designers, as well as the artifacts they design, have a social relevance. Therefore, the course should be intended as an introduction to social research about design, as well as to how design, and specially design research, can be considered a form of social research.
Course Topics	- Mapping - Borders - Action - Social change - Artifacts - Social Networks - Micro/Macro - Practice - Social Capital - Structure - Future studies
Keywords	Sociology, Social Imaginaries, Future Studies, Qualitative Methods, Critical Studies
Recommended Prerequisites	none
Propaedeutic Courses	none
Teaching Format	Most of the classes will consist in frontal lectures, exercises and discussions. The discussion will be based on class exercises, on home assignments, usually readings and experiments. Some classes will be tackled through an interdisciplinary co-presence with other teachers.
Mandatory Attendance	recommended
Specific Educational Objectives and Learning Outcomes	Knowledge and understanding Know the history of spatial practices in art and design, and their main techniques and methodologies; Possess specific knowledge on the interactions between space and culture and on the sociopolitical implications of spatial practices; Understand the processes of transformation of space in the contemporary context, analyzing them considering the connections with other fields of knowledge, such as sociology, anthropology and urban sciences.

	Applying knowledge and understanding
	Design and implement spatial interventions, exhibitions, artistic installations and design projects that explore and reinterpret public and private spaces.
	Use reading, analysis, mapping and visualization tools to analyze and communicate complex ideas relating to space.
	Create spatial interventions that respond to the needs of communities, promoting inclusiveness and social participation.
	Making judgements
	Collect and interpret cultural and material data from the fields of art, design, technology and spatial and curatorial practices, demonstrating the ability to place events, works and production operations in the historical context and current trends.
	Grasp the authority and evaluate the reliability of the various available sources.
	reflect and express an independent judgement, including on social, ethical and political-cultural issues.
	Interpret specific facts and events, within subject of their field of study.
	Communication skills
	Writing scientific and technical articles and reports with clarity and effectiveness.
	Presenting projects and ideas verbally in a professional and convincing manner.
	Learning skills
	The strengthening of the critical and operational autonomy of students.
	The development of their ability to choose, compare and adapt to new knowledge and technologies.
Specific Educational Objectives and Learning Outcomes (additional info.)	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.
Assessment	Written and oral. Students will be assessed considering: - the results of the assignments assigned during the course - participation in class activities and exercises - the ability to integrate course topics and issues into the final presentation and essay of the applied project Guidelines for Non-Attending Students Students who do not regularly attend classes or fail to submit all required assignments during the course period will be considered non-attending. To complete the course, they must independently study a selection of essential readings provided by the instructor. Their final grade will be determined based on a comprehensive written examination. Non-attending students are responsible for

	managing their studies effectively to ensure thorough preparation Assessment for the final exam. N.B. – ALL STUDENTS TAKING THE EXAM AS NON-ATTENDING STUDENTS MUST AGREE UPON THE CONTENT WITH THE LECTURER.
Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation criteria will consider the ability to compare theories among them or with empirical findings and/or observations and/or critical reflections about social phenomena. More in general evaluation criteria consider not only how 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	Berger, P. L. (1999). Invitation to sociology. New York: Anchor Books. Gidley, J. M. (2017). The future: A very short introduction. Oxford University Press. Kofler, I. (2023). Beyond Disciplinary Constraints: Designing Transdisciplinary Research and Collaboration in Real-World Laboratories. Societies, 13(9), 205. Lupton, D. (2018). Towards design sociology. Sociology Compass, 12(1). Mills, C. Wright (1959). The sociological imagination. New York: Oxford University Press. V. Houtum, H. (2024). Free the map. From Atlas to Hermes a new cartography of borders and migration. Further readings will be communicated during the course.
Supplementary Readings	
Further Information	
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Reduced inequalities, Peace, justice and strong institutions, Sustainable cities and communities