Eina Centre Universitari
Fundació Eina
Disseny Art Barcelona

Passeig Santa Eulàlia 25
08017 Barcelona T+34 932 030 923
info@eina.cat www.eina.cat

Recerca a traves de la Practica del Disseny

Lara Garcia Diaz

Supervising Teacher: Lara Garcia Diaz

Group: 1
Code: 108064
Credits: 6 ECTS
Course:
Semester: 2
Typology: Optative
Subject:
Schedules:

Group	Schedules	Teacher
1	Dimarts 12:00 - 15:30	Lara Garcia Diaz

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Teaching Guide Index

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Subject Presentation

Brief Description:

This course offers a critical introduction to research through design practice, understood as a form of knowledge production that arises from doing. Unlike other approaches, design-based research involves using one's own practice as a driver of exploration, reflection, and validation, in dialogue with a specific context.

During the course, we will explore how design research is constructed, the relationship between theory and practice, and how to articulate design processes with research intent. We will work from a situated and reflexive practice, integrating aspects such as critical thinking, iteration, autoethnography, material exploration, and constant attention to the ethical, epistemological, and political implications of research through design.

The course incorporates decolonial, critical, and speculative perspectives, and integrates contemporary methodologies such as programmatic design, research-oriented design, practice-based research, and speculative and collaborative methods.

Training Objectives:

- Understand the different ways of conducting research related to design, and their methodological and epistemological implications.

- Identify the particularities of research through design and its role as a generator of practical and situated knowledge.

- Explore different contemporary practice-based research approaches: iterative, speculative, autoethnographic, participatory, material, critical, decolonial.

- Learn to formulate relevant research questions within a given social, cultural, or material context.

- Develop a critical view of traditional and current methods of generating knowledge in design.

- Develop a personal line of research applying combined methods.

- Reflect on the role of the designer as a producer of knowledge, both in academic and professional or community contexts.

- Promote an analytical, critical, and open attitude toward creative processes and their investigative potential.

Recommendations

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Contents and Methodology

Brief Description:

This course offers a critical introduction to research through design practice, understood as a form of knowledge production that arises from doing. Unlike other approaches, design-based research involves using one's own practice as a driver of exploration, reflection, and validation, in dialogue with a specific context.

During the course, we will explore how design research is constructed, the relationship between theory and practice, and how to articulate design processes with research intent. We will analyze different methodologies, types of research, and real-life cases, and students will have the opportunity to develop their own line of research based on their interests and context.

Research through design practice seeks not only to generate solutions, but also to understand complex phenomena from a situated, creative, and critical perspective. Design thus becomes a methodological tool that allows us to address relevant questions and generate transformative knowledge.

Teaching methodology:

The course combines lectures, case studies, practical workshops, and discussion sessions. An active and participatory approach will be encouraged, with students taking a proactive and critical role in their practice.

We will work on three levels:

- Conceptual and contextual exploration of the frameworks that define research through design practice.

- Participation in ongoing research, in workshop or collective project format.

- Development of an individual line of research, connected with personal interests and supported by the teacher.

Activities will focus on the direct application of concepts through design, using graphic, narrative, material, and speculative tools as means of inquiry.

Training activities:

The course combines theoretical, practical, collaborative, and independent activities that allow students to understand and apply the fundamentals of research through design practice. The in-person sessions, lasting three hours per week, are structured into blocks alternating between

conceptual presentation, collaborative analysis, and applied exercises.

Throughout the course, participatory classes will be held to present and discuss the main approaches to design research, its methodologies, theoretical frameworks, and representative examples. These sessions will be supported by the reading and discussion of key texts, as well as the critical analysis of real-life projects, allowing students to become familiar with the languages and formats specific to this field.

In parallel, guided practical workshops will be held in which students will put specific tools into practice: formulating research questions, defining topics, using and developing specific methodologies, defining objectives, constructing a state-of-the-art framework, and validation strategies. These practical activities are not only educational in nature but are also directly linked to the development of the individual research project that each student will construct throughout the semester.

Independent work will be essential. Students are expected to dedicate time outside of class to researching sources, reading theoretical materials, documenting references, producing visual and/or written material, and gradually structuring their personal project. This work will be accompanied by individual or small-group tutoring sessions, in which the instructor will offer personalized support, methodological guidance, and critical feedback.

Finally, some sessions will be reserved for oral presentations of each project's progress and results, encouraging collective reflection and peer-to-peer exchange. These sessions will allow for the development of the research process's capacity for synthesis, argumentation, and communication, both in its conceptual and formal aspects.

Together, the activities are designed to foster a critical, experimental, and reflective attitude toward the practice of design as a means of knowledge production.

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Evaluation

General evaluation regulations

A student will be considered "Not Assessable" (NA) if they have not submitted all the learning evidences or have not attended 80% of the classes without justifying their absences. In case of a justified absence, the student must contact the teacher at the time of rejoining to determine the recovery of the activities they missed.

If the student commits any irregularity that may lead to a significant variation in the grade of an evaluation act, that evaluation act will be graded with 0, regardless of the disciplinary process that may be initiated. If several irregularities occur in the evaluation acts of the same subject, the final grade for that subject will be 0.

Continuous evaluation system

The evaluation system of EINA and UAB is a continuous assessment system, the objective of which is for the student to know their academic progress throughout their educational process to allow them to improve it.
The continuous assessment process must include a minimum of three evaluative activities, of two different types, distributed throughout the course, none of which can represent more than 50% of the final grade.

Evaluation will be ongoing, based on active participation, process monitoring, and the reflective quality of the results. The specific criteria will be:

Active participation and critical attitude in class: 20%

Practical exercises and partial deliveries (individual and collective): 40%

Final research project through design practice (documented and presented): 40%

Particular emphasis will be placed on the ability to articulate theory and practice, clarity in formulating the research problem, relevant use of methodologies, and the originality and solidity of the personal approach.

Review process

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Learning outcomes of the subject

Skills

Apply basic concepts of design history and theory by critically analyzing objects, discourses, and practices using bibliographic sources. (ST10)

Knowledge

Detail the common features and specificities of design disciplines through critical analysis of historical styles and current trends. (KT01)

Competencies

Write an essay based on a well-founded research question related to design culture, integrating argumentative skills, structured content, and appropriate use of references. (CT06)

Learning outcomes of the degree program

Knowledge

Respond to global issues related to the fields of design and art, cultural industries, their institutional environments, and the agents involved.

Correctly reference documentary sources, the necessary bibliography and knowledge of the heritage environment both for the projection and for the analysis and reasoned criticism of design and/or art.

Catalogue materials, their properties and physical principles in relation to the conceptualisation and formalisation of design projects, taking into account environmental and sustainability criteria.

Skills

Identify design problems through the analysis of objects, graphic communication elements, and spaces, from a perspective rooted in contemporaneity, universal accessibility, and equal opportunities.

Apply ethical and aesthetic criteria and values to design practice, taking into account the formal dimensions of environments and their diversity.

Make value judgments about design projects by interpreting data and justifying critical analysis using knowledge of graphic communication, space, objects, and reference texts.

Conduct research with a critical spirit in the field of design and related disciplines, considering innovation, experimentation, and the ongoing renewal of the cultural industries, while promoting equality and democratic values.

Synthesize knowledge from diverse sources—studies, fieldwork, literature, direct observation, or practical experience—in the field of design and related disciplines within the cultural industries.

Competencies

Manage design-related tasks autonomously, planning and organising time and processes in professional and/or academic settings.

Produce academic and professional reports related to design, the arts, and their supporting disciplines.

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Bibliography and Resources

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