

Design Analysis and Criticism

Lara García Díaz, Ona Harster Prats, Genís Senén Gilabert,
Jeffrey Swartz

Course coordinator: Lara García Díaz

Content: 1,2,3,4,5

Code: 108063

Credits: 3 ECTS

Year: 4

Semester: 1

Type: Compulsory

Subject area:

Timetable:

Content	Timetable	Lecturer
1	Monday 08:30 - 10:00	Lara García Díaz Ona Harster Prats
2	Monday 08:30 - 10:00	Lara García Díaz Genís Senén Gilabert
3	10:00 - 11:30	Lara García Díaz
4	Monday 10:15 - 11:45	Lara García Díaz Jeffrey Swartz
5	Monday 10:15 - 11:45	Ona Harster Prats Lara García Díaz



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

Course presentation

Design analysis and criticism deepens students' critical and analytical abilities through the reflective examination of contemporary design projects, discourses and practices. The course seeks to consolidate an independent, reasoned and engaged perspective, capable of interpreting design not only as a project-based practice but also as a cultural, social and political phenomenon. Tools of critical analysis are explored from different perspectives, and dialogue with other disciplines such as philosophy, sociology, aesthetics and cultural studies is encouraged. Through case studies, specialist readings and critical essays, students develop their own position on current challenges in design and acquire the skills needed to construct rigorous arguments in academic and professional contexts. This course is especially intended to strengthen students' ability to evaluate, contextualise and argue for their own projects, as well as to intervene in contemporary debates about the role of design in transforming the world.

Degree learning outcomes

Skills

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

Make value judgements about design projects, interpreting data and justifying critical analysis on the basis of acquired knowledge of graphic communication, spaces and objects, as well as reference texts.

Conduct critical research in design and related disciplines, taking into account innovation, experimentation and the continuous renewal of cultural industries, as well as fundamental rights and democratic values and equality.

Synthesise knowledge from different sources and origins (studies, fieldwork, bibliography, direct observations or practical experiences), whether from design or other related or supporting fields and disciplines associated with the cultural industries.

Competences

Prepare professional and academic reports in the fields of design, the arts and their supporting disciplines.

Knowledge

Respond to broad questions concerning the fields of design and art, the cultural industries, their institutional environment and the agents involved.

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

Demonstrate sufficient command of English, equivalent to CEFR level B1, both in communication and in accessing knowledge and cultural contexts of design and related fields.

Subject-area learning outcomes

Knowledge

Describe the shared features and distinctive characteristics of design disciplines in the critical analysis of different historical styles or current trends. (KT01)

Distinguish the characteristics and functions of the different institutions operating in design culture and the cultural industries. (KT06)

Content: 1

Brief description:

Design Analysis and Criticism is an advanced course in the final year of EINA's Bachelor's Degree in Design. It develops students' critical and analytical skills through the reflective examination of contemporary design projects, discourses and practices. The course seeks to foster an independent, reasoned and engaged perspective, capable of interpreting design not only as a project-based practice but also as a cultural, social and political phenomenon.

Students work with critical analysis tools from different perspectives, and dialogue with other disciplinary approaches such as philosophy, sociology, aesthetics and cultural studies is encouraged. Through seminars, case studies, specialist readings and critical essays, students develop their own position on current challenges in design and acquire the skills needed to construct rigorous arguments in academic and professional contexts.

This course is particularly designed to strengthen students' capacity to evaluate, contextualise and justify their projects, as well as to participate in contemporary debate about the role of design in transforming the world.

Educational objectives:

Strengthen an independent critical capacity to analyse design projects, discourses and practices from an informed, reflective and reasoned perspective.

Contextualise design practices historically, culturally and politically, understanding their relationships with social, economic, ecological and technological systems.

Master tools and methods of analysis and criticism drawn from various fields of knowledge, such as philosophy, aesthetics, sociology and cultural studies.

Develop an ethical and engaged perspective on the designer's role as a cultural and social agent capable of helping to transform their environment.

Encourage written and oral expression through the production of critical texts, argumentative essays and rigorous presentations in academic and professional contexts.

Connect theory and practice, strengthening students' ability to interpret, justify and situate their projects within contemporary thinking about design.

Encourage debate and active participation as a means of comparing viewpoints, enriching critical thinking and building a learning community committed to reflection on design.

Recommendations

Adopt an open and reflective attitude towards the ideas, discourses and viewpoints discussed in class. The aim of this course is not to provide definitive answers but to encourage critical thinking and constructive questioning.

Read the assigned materials regularly and actively. Theoretical texts are essential for understanding current debates about design and developing an informed perspective.

Participate actively in debates, seminars and presentations, since the collective construction of knowledge and exchange of arguments are central to critical learning.

Take care over the content and form of your written texts and essays. Writing is an essential tool for analysis and the development of ideas.

Connect theoretical content with your own projects, seeking ways to apply critical thinking to design practice.

Be rigorous in your use of sources: cite accurately, cross-check information and build sound, well-supported arguments.

Organise your time effectively: the course requires regular work, particularly in reading and preparing written assignments.

Content and methodology

Brief description:

The course addresses the theoretical and methodological foundations of contemporary design analysis and criticism, placing particular emphasis on developing an independent, well-reasoned perspective. Conceptual frameworks from philosophy, aesthetics, sociology and cultural studies are studied and applied to particular case studies, projects and design discourses. The content includes reflection on the designer's role as a cultural agent, the ethical and political dimensions of design, processes through which objects acquire legitimate symbolic value, and the construction of critical narratives. Emphasis is also placed on written and oral expression techniques for developing argumentative texts and participating in specialist debates.

Teaching methodology:

1. Short content sessions delivered by the lecturer

The lecturer provides short, focused sessions introducing theoretical frameworks, schools of thought, key references and specific methodological tools. They help contextualise debates, guide reading and support critical analysis and writing. They may be offered in person or as online resources for asynchronous consultation.

2. Reading seminars and collective debate

Theoretical and critical readings are explored actively in class through participatory seminars. The aim is to foster deep understanding of texts, stimulate critical thinking and create spaces for dialogue among students. Sessions may be facilitated by students acting as moderators or presenters.

3. Case analysis and critical writing practice

Drawing on contemporary design projects, objects and situations, students undertake written analyses incorporating the theoretical frameworks explored in class. These activities encourage application of acquired knowledge and strengthen students' argumentative and communication skills.

Learning activities:

Reading and analysis of theoretical and critical texts

Students read selected texts each week and prepare analysis sheets or short critical commentaries for seminars. This helps them understand key concepts and become familiar with different voices in contemporary thought.

Guided debates and seminars

Course content is discussed collectively through debates and seminars, often moderated by students themselves. This fosters active participation, the ability to construct arguments and exchange ideas.

Case analysis and written assignments

Students are assigned critical analyses of cases in contemporary design, connecting them with the theoretical frameworks addressed in class. These may be short or extended exercises and may be completed individually or in groups.

Writing and presenting an essay

Each student writes a critical essay on a topic agreed with the lecturer. The activity includes bibliographic research, defining the structure, writing successive drafts and presenting the results orally.

Follow-up tutorials

Individual or small-group tutorials are scheduled throughout the course to guide students in reading, writing assignments and preparing the final essay, supporting personalised and progressive learning.

Assessment

General assessment regulations

To pass a course, students must obtain a minimum grade of 5.0. Once the course has been passed, it cannot be assessed again.

Honours may be awarded to students with a grade of 9.0 or higher. The number of honours awarded may not exceed five per cent of the students enrolled on a course in the relevant academic period, except when fewer than twenty students are enrolled, in which case one honours grade may be awarded.

A student will be considered 'Not Assessable' (NA) if they have not submitted all evidence of learning or have failed to attend 80% of classes without justifying their absences. In the event of a justified absence, the student must contact the lecturer upon returning to determine how to make up the missed activities.

If a student commits any irregularity that could significantly affect the grade awarded for an assessment activity, that activity will receive a grade of 0, regardless of any disciplinary proceedings that may be initiated. If several irregularities occur in the assessment activities of the same course, the final course grade will be 0.

Each course shall define the use of generative AI tools in assessed activities at one of three levels: not permitted; restricted to specific tasks indicated by the teaching staff; or permitted as part of the working process, provided its use is declared and justified.

When AI has played a significant role in an assessed activity, students must declare which tool they used, for what purpose, at what stage of the work, and what subsequent review, selection or transformation they carried out.

Continuous assessment system

The assessment system of EINA and the UAB is based on continuous assessment. Its aim is to enable students to track their academic progress throughout their studies and thereby improve it.

Continuous assessment must include at least three assessment activities, of two different types, distributed throughout the course, none of which may account for more than 50% of the final grade.

The course cannot be passed unless all assignments have been passed.

Assessment is based on continuous monitoring of the student's learning process, taking into account both active participation in class and the quality of the written work submitted.

Regular attendance and involvement in debates and seminars are fundamental to developing a critical, well-reasoned perspective. Written assignments must demonstrate interpretive ability, conceptual rigour and an independent critical position towards contemporary design discourses and practices. Particular importance will be attached to coherent arguments, clarity of expression and rigorous use of bibliographic sources.

The assessment system is therefore as follows:

Class attendance and participation: 10%

Reading analysis and collective debate: 30%

Case analysis and written assignments: 30%

Writing and presenting an essay: 30%

Review procedure

Students may request a review from the lecturer, which will take place in accordance with the academic calendar.

Bibliography and resources

Alexander, C.; Ishikawa, S; Silverstein, M, 1977, A pattern language: towns, buildings, construcció, Oxford University Press.

Alexander, C., A, 1979, Timeless way of building, Oxford University Press.

Certeau, M. de, (1945), 2007. La invenció del quotidià. 1 Arts del fer, col. L'ofici de la història, Mèxic DC: Universitat Iberoamericana.

Certeau, M. D'et al. (1945) 2011, La Invention Du Quotidien. 2. Habiter, Cusiner, col. Foli Essais, París: Gallimard.

Dols, José A., 1974. Funció de l'arquitectura moderna, Barcelona: Salvat.

Basombrío, MA, (2008), De la filosofia del jo a l'hermenèutica del si mateix. Un recorregut per l'obra de Paul Ricoeur, col. Estudis i Assajos núm. 115, Universitat de Màlaga.

Frampton, K. (1980) 2009, Modern Architecture: A Critical History (World of Art), Londres: Thames &

Hudson (4a ed, rev. i ampl.).

Frampton, K., 1983 "Towards a Critical Regionalisme: Six Points per Architecture of Resistance", Foster H., (ed.), The Anti-Aesthetic. Essays on postmodern culture. Seattle: Bay Press.

Heidegger, M., (1923) 2008, Introducció a la investigació fenomenològica, Madrid: Editorial Síntesi.

Heidegger, M., (1947) 2000, Carta sobre l'humanisme, Madrid: Aliança Editorial.

Heidegger, M., (1950) 1968, What is a thing?, Xicago: Henry Regnery, Co.

Heidegger, M., (1951) "Construir, habitar, pensar". A De Barañano, KM, 1990, Chillida-Heidegger- Husserl. El concepte despai en la filosofia i plàstica del segle XX. IX Cursos d'Estiu, II Cursos

Europeus, Universitat del País Basc.

Heidegger, M., (1969) 1999, Temps i Ser, Madrid: Editorial Tecnos.

Heidegger, M., (1975) 2000. Els problemes fonamentals de la fenomenologia. Madrid: Ed. Trotta.

Homans, G., 1958, "Social behavior as exchange", a The American Journal of Sociology, 63, The University of Chicago.

Jacobs, J., (1961), 2011, Mort i vida de les grans ciutats (americanes), Madrid: Capità Swing.

Mumford, L., (1924), 1955, Sticks & Stones, en estudi d'American architecture and civilization, Nova York: Dover Publications, Inc., (2a ed. rev.). Norberg-Schulz, C., (1965) 1998, Intencions en arquitectura, Barcelona: Gustavo Gili. Norberg-Schulz, C., (1971) 1975, Existència, espai i arquitectura, Madrid: Blume. Norberg-Schulz, C., (1974) 1999, Arquitectura occidental, Barcelona: Gustavo Gili. Norberg-Schulz, C., (1979) 1980, Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture, Milà: Rizzoli

Relph, E., (1976), 2022, Place and Placelessness (Research in Planning and Design), Nova York: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Ricoeur, P., (1969) Li conflit des interpretations. Essais d'herméneutique, París: Seuil.

Rogers, EN, (1954) "Continuità", a Casabella-Continuità, núm. 199, Milà: gener

Rogers, EN, (1954) "Li va responsabilitzar vers la tradizione", a Casabella-Continuità, núm. 202, Milà: agost.

Rogers, EN, (1955) "Li preesistenze ambientali el tema pratici contemporanei", a Casabella-Continuità, núm. 204, Milà: febrer 1955.

- Rogers, EN, 1957, "Continuïta o crisi?", a Casabella-Continuïta, núm. 215, Milà: abril-maig.
- Rogers, EN, (1958) 2002, Esperiença de l'architettura, Milà: Skira.
- Rogers, EN, (1968) 2009, Editorial d'architettura, Terni: Zandonai.
- Rogers, EN, (1981) Gli elementi del fenomen architettonico, Milà: Guia.
- Rudofsky, B., (1964) 1987, Architecture without architects, a short introduction to non-pedigreed architecture, University of New Mexico Press.
- Ponty, M., (1945), 1975, Fenomenologia de la percepció. Barcelona: Península.
- Sharr, A., (2022) Heidegger sobre l'arquitectura (Pensadores sobre l'arquitectura), Barcelona: Reverte.
- Tuan, YF, (1996), 2005, Cosmos i llar: un punt de vista cosmopolita, Santa Creu de Tenerife: Melusina.
- Tuan, YF, (1977) Space and Place: Perspective of Experience, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Tuan, YF, (1974), 1990, Topophilia: a study of enviromental perception, attituds, and values, New York: Columbia University Press.
- Unwin, S., (1997) 2003, Anaylysing architecture, Londres: Routledge.
- Zumthor, P., (2004) 2014, Pensar l'arquitectura, Barcelona: Gustavo Gili.

Content: 2

Brief description:

Analysis and Criticism is conceived as a workshop on contemporary thinking in art and design. Rather than being strictly theoretical, the course is experimental: it introduces aspects of contemporary thought and philosophy and experiments with applying them to practice and research in art and design. At the same time, it approaches art and design as vehicles for developing complex thought.

Educational objectives:

1. Develop close-reading skills, focusing particularly on understanding concepts and theoretical frameworks of a certain complexity.
2. Acquire presentation and discussion habits appropriate to academic debate, which therefore differ from those used to present commercially oriented design projects.
3. Establish connections between contemporary critical approaches to design and those emerging from other academic contexts in the humanities and social sciences.

Recommendations

Students are advised to take this course in connection with Final Degree Project courses relating to the Design Culture and Visual Creation specialisations.

Content and methodology

Brief description:

The course takes the form of a seminar programme: sessions generally focus on analysing and discussing texts.

The first part of the programme will be led by the lecturer, based on a reading that is compulsory for the whole group. The core book for this part of the course is selected for the contemporary relevance of its contribution to current thought and the importance of its arguments in developing discussions from the perspective of contemporary art and design.

The second part consists of student-led seminars. Readings will be sought that respond to each student's areas of interest as defined in relation to their own research. Each student will select a reading and lead a seminar session devoted to it; the reading will become compulsory and will be analysed collectively by the whole group.

Teaching methodology:

Some sessions will take the form of seminars led by the lecturer. Based on compulsory reading, related exercises will establish links between the ideas developed in the text and processes involved in contemporary creation and design.

Other sessions will form part of a student-led seminar programme. Exercises will address the selection and analysis of readings and the preparation of class presentations, drawing on creative methodologies where appropriate.

Learning activities:

1. Creative exercises relating to the course's compulsory reading, undertaken in connection with the different seminar sessions.
2. Leading a seminar session based on a reading proposed by the student.
3. Final written assessment: an essay-style approach relating aspects of contemporary thought to reflections on art and design.

Assessment

General assessment regulations

To pass a course, students must obtain a minimum grade of 5.0. Once the course has been passed, it cannot be assessed again.

Honours may be awarded to students with a grade of 9.0 or higher. The number of honours awarded may not exceed five per cent of the students enrolled on a course in the relevant academic period, except when fewer than twenty students are enrolled, in which case one honours grade may be awarded.

A student will be considered 'Not Assessable' (NA) if they have not submitted all evidence of learning or have failed to attend 80% of classes without justifying their absences. In the event of a justified absence, the student must contact the lecturer upon returning to determine how to make up the missed activities.

If a student commits any irregularity that could significantly affect the grade awarded for an assessment activity, that activity will receive a grade of 0, regardless of any disciplinary proceedings that may be initiated. If several irregularities occur in the assessment activities of the same course, the final course grade will be 0.

Each course shall define the use of generative AI tools in assessed activities at one of three levels: not permitted; restricted to specific tasks indicated by the teaching staff; or permitted as part of the working process, provided its use is declared and justified.

When AI has played a significant role in an assessed activity, students must declare which tool they used, for what purpose, at what stage of the work, and what subsequent review, selection or transformation they carried out.

Continuous assessment system

The assessment system of EINA and the UAB is based on continuous assessment. Its aim is to enable students to track their academic progress throughout their studies and thereby improve it.

Continuous assessment must include at least three assessment activities, of two different types, distributed throughout the course, none of which may account for more than 50% of the final grade.

1. Creative exercises relating to the course's compulsory reading: 20%
2. Leading a seminar session based on a reading proposed by the student: 30%

3. Final written assessment: 30%

4. Attendance and active participation in seminars: 20%.

Review procedure

A date and time for the review will be set after provisional grades have been announced.

Bibliography and resources

Antonelli, Paola (2011). Critical Design, Domus

Bierut, Michael (1989). Why Designers Can't Think. Online en: <https://risd.generic.cx/why.html>

Butler Judith (2001). ¿Qué es la crítica? Un ensayo sobre la virtud de Foucault

Joost, Gesche (2007). Design as Rhetoric McCarthy, Steven (2012). Designer as Author Activist

Pelta, Raquel (2012), Diseño y activismo. Un poco de historia, Monográfica

Prado, Luiza (2014). Questioning the Critical in Critical Design, Medium

Twemlow, Alice (2017). Sifting the Trash History of Design Criticism, Ch 5, pp. 234-252

Design manifestos

Designers Against Monoculture (2001). ENG+CAT

Engenström, Ulla (2005). Draft Craft Manifiesto, On Making and Consuming Things

Jongerius H. y Schouwenberg, L. (2015). Beyond the New A Search for Ideals in Design

Mari, Enzo (1999). Barcelona Manifiesto ENG

Content: 3

Brief description:

Design Analysis and Criticism is conceived as a seminar in critical thinking, image theory and visual culture, focusing on design and contemporary cultural practices. It introduces conceptual frameworks from critical theory, cultural studies, aesthetics and media criticism to analyse how images, objects, spaces, platforms and design discourses produce meanings, values, imaginaries and forms of subjectivity.

Through reading and discussing theoretical texts, viewing and analysing visual and audiovisual materials, and undertaking writing and sound-production exercises, students will learn to use concepts as research tools. Particular emphasis is placed on defining an object of study, formulating a question, selecting and interpreting evidence and developing an independent critical argument.

The process culminates in the progressive creation of a critical audio essay, developed through a student-led seminar, a research dossier, a script and a final piece. The course is particularly connected to design theory and research, while allowing students to work with examples from graphic, spatial and product design, visual creation and other contemporary cultural practices. It also provides conceptual and methodological tools useful for the Final Degree Project.

Educational objectives:

1. Develop close-reading skills and an understanding of theoretical texts, identifying their main concepts, arguments and implications for analysing design and visual culture.
2. Understand and apply conceptual frameworks from critical theory, cultural studies, aesthetics, image theory and media criticism.
3. Analyse images, objects, spaces, interfaces, devices and design discourses in terms of their formal, cultural, social, political, economic and technological dimensions.
4. Distinguish description, contextualisation, interpretation and critical judgement, and connect these operations coherently within an analytical process.
5. Formulate research questions and construct evidence-based arguments through the selection and interpretation of visual, material, textual, sonic or audiovisual evidence.
6. Develop academic written and oral communication skills and explore the possibilities of audio essays as a form of research and critical communication.

7. Compare interpretations and incorporate criticism into the working process through collective discussion, peer review and reformulation of arguments.

8. Transfer the knowledge and methodological tools acquired in the course to students' own design projects and research processes connected with the Final Degree Project.

Recommendations

Students are advised to maintain an open, reflective and participatory attitude towards the texts, cases and discussions addressed during the course. Regular work is required in reading, preparing seminars and progressively developing analytical exercises, scripts and audio pieces.

No specific previous training in philosophy, critical theory or cultural studies is assumed, but students should be willing to work with conceptually complex texts, formulate questions, compare interpretations and review their own arguments. Some readings or supplementary resources may be available in English.

Students are advised to connect course content with their own interests, projects and area of specialisation. The course is relevant to students from any specialisation wishing to deepen their cultural, social and political analysis of images, objects, spaces, platforms and design practices.

When taken alongside the Final Degree Project, students are encouraged to use the readings, analytical tools and writing exercises to strengthen the conceptual and methodological foundations of their own research.

Content and methodology

Brief description:

The course content is organised into five thematic blocks that address contemporary design and visual culture from different traditions of critical thought:

1. Criticism, ideology and the culture industry.

Genealogies and functions of cultural criticism. Images, objects and cultural products as sites where ideologies are produced, circulated and contested. Mass culture, the culture industry, mechanical reproduction, commodification and standardisation.

2. Cultural temporalities and imaginaries of the future.

Connections between culture, memory and temporality. Nostalgia, retromania, hauntology and the cancellation of the future. Repetition, novelty and the persistence of the past in contemporary cultural production.

3. Image, affect and aesthetic judgement.

Contemporary aesthetic categories, ordinary affects and forms of cultural evaluation. Production, circulation and consumption of images under late capitalism. Relationships between aesthetic experience, the market and the construction of taste.

4. Platforms, subjectivity and attention economies.

Digital platforms, interface design, the formation of habits and forms of subjectivation. Digital affects, attention economies and the social and political conditions of connected environments.

5. Representation, otherness and power.

Representation as a cultural and political practice. The construction of identities and otherness through images and discourses. The gaze, coloniality, stereotypes and cultural authority in the production of visual imaginaries.

Teaching methodology:

- Conceptual introductions and theoretical contextualisation.

The lecturer will introduce central theoretical frameworks, concepts and debates through brief presentations, visual and audiovisual materials, and examples from contemporary design and culture.

- Reading seminars and collective discussion.

Students will prepare compulsory readings and participate in sessions aimed at reconstructing arguments, clarifying concepts, formulating questions and comparing interpretations.

- Viewing and analysing case studies.

Concepts will be put to work through films, photographs, campaigns, objects, interfaces, video games, artworks, spaces and other cultural productions. Students will practise distinguishing formal description, contextualisation, evidence, interpretation and critical judgement.

- Seminars with guest speakers.

The programme may include professionals and researchers who help deepen understanding of the course content and show how critical research can be translated into public-facing forms, especially audiovisual and audio essays.

- Student-led seminars.

In the second half of the course, students will work in pairs. Each student will choose a theoretical extract connected to a shared thematic field. The pair will formulate a question, select a corpus and lead a session of analysis and discussion that will serve as a prototype for the future audio essay.

- Progressive development of a critical audio essay.

The final project will be organised into several stages: an initial micro-essay, selection of readings and a case, leading the seminar, a research dossier, outline, script, rehearsal, recording and revision of the final piece.

- Criticism, peer review and tutorials.

Criticism will be understood as a formative and conversational practice. Exercises and scripts will receive lecturer feedback, collective discussion and peer review, followed by reformulation.

Learning activities:

- Readings, exercises and seminar participation: 20%

Preparation of common readings, worksheets and short exercises; reasoned participation in debates; collective viewing and analysis; an individual critical audio micro-essay.

- Leading a seminar session: 25%

Work in pairs. Selection and contextualisation of two theoretical extracts, formulation of a shared question, analysis of a case or corpus, and leading a collective discussion or exercise. Each student's contribution must be identifiable.

- Research dossier and preliminary script: 20%

Definition of the case, research question, theoretical framework, selection of evidence, hypothesis, outline and first version of the audio script. Includes revisions arising from the seminar and tutorials.

- Critical audio essay: 35%

Pairs produce a 10–12-minute audio piece, accompanied by the final script, bibliography and credits for materials used, and a brief critical commentary on conceptual, narrative and sonic decisions.

Note on continuous assessment

Regular attendance is necessary for continuous assessment, especially during seminars, criticism, rehearsal and recording sessions. Participation is graded on preparation, quality of contributions and the ability to listen, compare and revise arguments.

In this course, the use of generative AI tools in assessed activities is defined according to one of three levels: not permitted; restricted to specific tasks indicated by the teaching staff; or permitted as part of the working process, provided its use is declared and justified.

When AI has played a significant role in an assessed activity, students must declare which tool they used, for what purpose, at what stage of the work, and what subsequent review, selection or transformation they carried out.

Assessment

General assessment regulations

To pass a course, students must obtain a minimum grade of 5.0. Once the course has been passed, it cannot be assessed again.

Honours may be awarded to students with a grade of 9.0 or higher. The number of honours awarded may not exceed five per cent of the students enrolled on a course in the relevant academic period, except when fewer than twenty students are enrolled, in which case one honours grade may be awarded.

A student will be considered 'Not Assessable' (NA) if they have not submitted all evidence of learning or have failed to attend 80% of classes without justifying their absences. In the event of a justified absence, the student must contact the lecturer upon returning to determine how to make up the missed activities.

If a student commits any irregularity that could significantly affect the grade awarded for an assessment activity, that activity will receive a grade of 0, regardless of any disciplinary proceedings that may be initiated. If several irregularities occur in the assessment activities of the same course, the final course grade will be 0.

Each course shall define the use of generative AI tools in assessed activities at one of three levels: not permitted; restricted to specific tasks indicated by the teaching staff; or permitted as part of the working process, provided its use is declared and justified.

When AI has played a significant role in an assessed activity, students must declare which tool they used, for what purpose, at what stage of the work, and what subsequent review, selection or transformation they carried out.

Continuous assessment system

The assessment system of EINA and the UAB is based on continuous assessment. Its aim is to enable students to track their academic progress throughout their studies and thereby improve it.

Continuous assessment must include at least three assessment activities, of two different types, distributed throughout the course, none of which may account for more than 50% of the final grade.

Readings, exercises and participation in seminars: 20%

Leading a seminar session: 25%

Research dossier and preliminary script: 20%

Critical audio essay: 35%

Review procedure

The course cannot be passed unless all assignments have been passed.

Bibliography and resources

Core bibliography

Benjamin, W. (2003). La obra de arte en la época de su reproductibilidad técnica. Itaca.

Fisher, M. (2018). Los fantasmas de mi vida: Escritos sobre depresión, hauntología y futuros perdidos. Caja Negra.

Horkheimer, M., & Adorno, T. W. (1998). Dialéctica de la Ilustración: Fragmentos filosóficos. Trotta.

Lovink, G. (2019). Tristes por diseño: Las redes sociales como ideología. Consonni.

Ngai, S. (2012). Our aesthetic categories: Zany, cute, interesting. Harvard University Press.

Reynolds, S. (2012). Retromanía: La adicción del pop a su propio pasado. Caja Negra.

Reynolds, S. (2024). Futuromanía. Caja Negra

Said, E. W. (2003). Orientalismo. Debolsillo.

Supplementary bibliography

Barthes, R. (2021). Lo obvio y lo obtuso: Imágenes, gestos, voces. Paidós.

Hall, S. (Ed.). (1997). Representation: Cultural representations and signifying practices. Sage.

Lorusso, S. (2023). What design can't do: Essays on design and disillusion. Set Margins'.

McHugh, S. (2016). How podcasting is changing the audio storytelling genre. Radio Journal: International Studies in Broadcast & Audio Media, 14(1), 65–82.

Mirzoeff, N. (2015). How to see the world. Pelican.

Audiovisual and audio resources

Fiennes, S. (2012). The Pervert's Guide to Ideology. P Guide Productions. The specific chapters and extracts for compulsory reading will be communicated through the Virtual Campus. The bibliography may be expanded during the course according to the cases analysed, guest seminars and readings selected by students.



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

Content: 4

Brief description:

Analysis and Criticism aims to foster a critical attitude and critical, analytical discourse in general and, more specifically, in relation to design practice. The course is structured as an open seminar involving debate and an exchange of ideas. This approach prepares students for the theoretical component of their final project while establishing a broader context for design practice.

Educational objectives:

Students will read critical texts and produce discourse, through written texts, creative works or activist projects. Academic rigour, careful interpretation and understanding of concepts and discourses, and the promotion of general cultural knowledge are educational objectives. Group work and dialogue are also important components throughout the course.

Recommendations

The required readings will be discussed in class, so students must arrive prepared. An active and committed attitude and conduct are expected, as befits a seminar of this nature.

Content and methodology

Brief description:

Classes take the form of seminar sessions, with the presentation of concepts and debate around the concepts introduced as the main methodological approaches. Active participation by all students and regular attendance are expected, along with punctuality and commitment to the topics and group dynamics.

Teaching methodology:

Presentations by the lecturer.

Supporting materials and documentation: readings, visual documents and library resources (documentaries, magazines).

Practical and theoretical classwork: group work, debates and practical exercises.

Oral presentations to encourage knowledge of topics and collaborative work.

External visits when possible.

Independent work through written and practical assignments.

Learning activities:

Lectures, text commentaries, reflection on how criticism operates and is activated, group oral presentations, short written and oral commentaries, writing both academic and less formal essays (literary, creative), and producing design proposals corresponding to critical approaches, which will be discussed in class.

Assessment

General assessment regulations

To pass a course, students must obtain a minimum grade of 5.0. Once the course has been passed, it cannot be assessed again.

Honours may be awarded to students with a grade of 9.0 or higher. The number of honours awarded may not exceed five per cent of the students enrolled on a course in the relevant academic period, except when fewer than twenty students are enrolled, in which case one honours grade may be awarded.

A student will be considered 'Not Assessable' (NA) if they have not submitted all evidence of learning or have failed to attend 80% of classes without justifying their absences. In the event of a justified absence, the student must contact the lecturer upon returning to determine how to make up the missed activities.

If a student commits any irregularity that could significantly affect the grade awarded for an assessment activity, that activity will receive a grade of 0, regardless of any disciplinary proceedings that may be initiated. If several irregularities occur in the assessment activities of the same course, the final course grade will be 0.

Each course shall define the use of generative AI tools in assessed activities at one of three levels: not permitted; restricted to specific tasks indicated by the teaching staff; or permitted as part of the working process, provided its use is declared and justified.

When AI has played a significant role in an assessed activity, students must declare which tool they used, for what purpose, at what stage of the work, and what subsequent review, selection or transformation they carried out.

Continuous assessment system

The assessment system of EINA and the UAB is based on continuous assessment. Its aim is to enable students to track their academic progress throughout their studies and thereby improve it.

Continuous assessment must include at least three assessment activities, of two different types, distributed throughout the course, none of which may account for more than 50% of the final grade.

The course focuses on written and practical assignments. Students will undertake written work and critically oriented projects leading towards a final project. A final test will assess engagement with the readings and the central course content.

- Practical work and exercises, in written and visual formats (40%).
- One critical genre (20%); one critical text (20%).
- Oral presentation (20%). Group presentation on an aspect of the course.
- Critical/speculative design project or graphic activism project (25%).
- Final test (15%).

Class attendance and participation (a variation of up to $\pm 3\%$ of the final grade is permitted).

Review procedure

Reviews will take place during the designated period at the end of the course.

As a general rule, all four course assignments must be submitted within the assessment period of the first sitting.

Students who have not met attendance or active participation requirements must complete additional assignments as part of the review opportunity.

Failure to attend 80% of classes may result in the loss of the right to a full review and/or the benefits of second sittings.

Bibliography and resources

Antonelli, Paola (2011). Critical Design, Domus

Bierut, Michael (1989). Why Designers Can't Think. Online a: <https://risd.generic.cx/why.html>

Butler Judith (2001). ¿Qué es la crítica?. Un ensayo sobre la virtud de Foucault

Joost, Gesche (2007). Design as Rhetoric McCarthy, Steven (2012). Designer as Author Activist

Pelta, Raquel (2012), Diseño y activismo. Un poco de historia, Monográfica

Prado, Luiza (2014). Questioning the Critical in Critical Design, Medium

Twemlow, Alice (2017). Sifting the Trash History of Design Criticism, Ch 5, pp. 234-252

Design manifestos

Designers Against Monoculture (2001). ENG+CAT

Engenström, Ulla (2005). Draft Craft Manifesto, On Making and Consuming Things

Jongerius H. y Schouwenberg, L. (2015). Beyond the New A Search for Ideals in Design

Mari, Enzo (1999). Barcelona Manifesto ENG

Pettis B. y Stark, K.. The Cult of Done Manifesto, ENG + ESP



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

Content: 5

Brief description:

Educational objectives:

Recommendations



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

Content and methodology

Brief description:

Teaching methodology:

Learning activities:

Assessment

General assessment regulations

To pass a course, students must obtain a minimum grade of 5.0. Once the course has been passed, it cannot be assessed again.

Honours may be awarded to students with a grade of 9.0 or higher. The number of honours awarded may not exceed five per cent of the students enrolled on a course in the relevant academic period, except when fewer than twenty students are enrolled, in which case one honours grade may be awarded.

A student will be considered 'Not Assessable' (NA) if they have not submitted all evidence of learning or have failed to attend 80% of classes without justifying their absences. In the event of a justified absence, the student must contact the lecturer upon returning to determine how to make up the missed activities.

If a student commits any irregularity that could significantly affect the grade awarded for an assessment activity, that activity will receive a grade of 0, regardless of any disciplinary proceedings that may be initiated. If several irregularities occur in the assessment activities of the same course, the final course grade will be 0.

Each course shall define the use of generative AI tools in assessed activities at one of three levels: not permitted; restricted to specific tasks indicated by the teaching staff; or permitted as part of the working process, provided its use is declared and justified.

When AI has played a significant role in an assessed activity, students must declare which tool they used, for what purpose, at what stage of the work, and what subsequent review, selection or transformation they carried out.

Continuous assessment system

The assessment system of EINA and the UAB is based on continuous assessment. Its aim is to enable students to track their academic progress throughout their studies and thereby improve it.

Continuous assessment must include at least three assessment activities, of two different types, distributed throughout the course, none of which may account for more than 50% of the final grade.

Review procedure



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

Bibliography and resources