

# DES 581 Graduate Seminar / Autumn 2020

Assistant Professor Audrey Desjardins (adesjard@uw.edu)

CLASS: Tuesdays 8:30-11:20am, Zoom: <https://washington.zoom.us/j/92728235355>

FACULTY OFFICE HOURS: By appointment

## **TO START, A NOTE**

Welcome. I am so happy you are here and we get to do design research together this quarter. Even if we are living in a pandemic. Even if most of our meetings will be on zoom.

Below are some principles for us to remember to practice self care, respect, and appreciation for each other during this unprecedented time.

### ***We are all still learning how to do this***

- \_ We are still learning how to live in a pandemic
- \_ We are still learning how to communicate, be with each other and work online

### ***The humane option is the best option.***

- \_ We are going to prioritize supporting each other as humans
- \_ We are going to prioritize sharing resources and communicating clearly

### ***We can be creative about the online / in person divide***

- \_ We will use online resources when we can
- \_ When it feels safe and reasonable, we can have the option to meet in person
- \_ Because things are different, we will exercise our creative muscles to get through this

### ***We will foster intellectual nourishment, social connection, and personal accommodation.***

- \_ We will continue to discuss online to learn and work together and combat isolation
- \_ We will remain intellectually curious and creative
- \_ We will respect how we each work differently during these times

### ***We will remain flexible and adjust to the situation.***

- \_ Nobody knows where this is going and what we'll need to adapt
- \_ We will be open to everyone's ideas for how to be flexible

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## COURSE OVERVIEW

In this seminar we will read and discuss a sampling of texts that articulate contemporary discourses in design: we will reflect and argument about what design and design research are, what they could be, and perhaps what they should be. We will look at design not only as a professional practice but also as a way of producing new knowledge about how humans, artifacts and systems are entangled in and with the world.

In addition to the discussions in class, you will write short papers and sketch design responses that enter into a dialogue with the readings. As a class, we will also assemble a short zine based on the reading list.

The final project in the course will be to write an academic essay that engages two or more peer-reviewed articles, using them as a point of departure for investigating a research question and making a claim or argument of your own.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the course is for you to:

1. Become familiar with a sampling of writings about design written for professional and scholarly audiences.
2. Grow more adept at careful and critical reading of a wide range of texts of different subject matter and styles.
3. Increase your ability to translate what you learn from your reading into pointed inquiry and discussion.
4. Become more discerning about your sources of information (books, journals, articles); be able to qualify sources for their likely reliability.
5. Expand your capacity to write by engaging what others have written and learn how to better articulate your own point of view.

## LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Consider this class an open forum for ideation and discussion. Debate and dis-agreement are a natural part of design discourse. Sharing ideas and work in progress will benefit everyone. You are expected to produce all work with consistent effort, rigor, and creativity.

Be respectful of your colleagues. Cell phones should be off during class. Do not surf, email, twitter or facebook during class. Follow Zoom etiquette by muting your mic if you have a lot of background noise. If you can, turn your cameras on during class time on Zoom.

## EXPECTATIONS

Please arrive at course meetings on time. Be prepared with the assigned work at every class session. At the graduate level, you are expected to pursue interests independently and to formulate your own research directions. After exploring a series of readings and discussions, you will select and research your own topic for a final paper.

## **COURSE PLATFORMS**

### **Canvas**

<https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1319302>

Readings and references will be posted weekly. Assignment details and deadlines will be posted on Canvas as well. You will be required to upload all your assignments directly to Canvas.

### **Zoom**

<https://washington.zoom.us/j/92728235355>

We will meet weekly from 8:30am to 11:20am on Zoom.

### **Miro**

<https://miro.com/welcome/>

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We will use Miro boards as a platform to share quotes, design examples, and sketches.

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

### **6 responses to readings**

In response to the assigned readings each week, you will either (1) write a brief paper, in which you do two things: First, summarize in your own words (preferably with a minimal number of direct quotations) what the reading is about. Second, formulate a response to the readings that either agrees, disagrees, or responds with some mixture of agreement and disagreement. (See the readings in *They Say, I Say* for guidance.) Be sure to back up your opinions with evidence and reasons. Or (2) sketch a design response that enters in dialogue with the weekly readings. This response can explore, exemplify, contradict, or expand the readings' arguments. Each sketch will be accompanied by a very short text and a series of questions.

Responses are due no later than 8:30am each Monday before our Tuesday class discussion. Please submit documents in pdf format only in the Canvas assignment for that week. Please also post your responses to our Miro Board for everyone to read or look at.

### **Lead a discussion**

Once during the quarter, you will lead the discussion. You should plan to begin the class discussion with a brief (5-minute) introduction that places the readings in context, before using prompts, examples, and questions to lead the discussion. You will also prepare a zine spread, including one quote per reading and one design example related to the reading.

### **Final paper: an academic essay (3,000-5,000 words)**

During your studies as a graduate student in design, you will be moving toward formulating a particular question or topic you want to investigate in depth in your final thesis for the Master's degree. Before that, you should be exploring a variety of ideas, domains and questions you might be interested in. Writing this paper is one such opportunity.

For your essay, use ONE of the following approaches:

- Select at least two articles you find in one or more peer-reviewed design journals. Your task is to question or challenge assumptions in the articles and possibly offer alternative readings and interpretations. Feel free to introduce your own examples of existing designed work and other articles to support your arguments.
- Choose an issue in design about which there is question, controversy, or debate. Articulate your point of view (or mixed reactions) to the controversy, and support your view(s) and claims with a minimum of two substantial articles.

- Choose a design project or area of design that you have worked on or a domain of design in which you would like to work. Using concrete examples of work from that domain, discuss one major issue or problem in that domain, using a minimum of two substantial articles to support your claims.

\* In your essay, you are required to use at least one reading from our course list to further articulate your ideas. That reading can serve to support your claims or as a starting point to 'disagree' and offer alternative points of view.

Avoid questions that are overly broad. You will need to research some of what is already known about your subject, then determine what you think about it. The summary of what you discover and your response (evaluation and analysis) should form the heart of your paper.

### **FINAL EXAM**

There will not be a final exam. The final deliverable is your final essay, due on December 15th, at 5pm on Canvas.

### **GRADING**

Grading is based on:

- The depth and extent of your engagement with the research of the topic of your final paper.
- The quality of the writing of the final paper.
- The quality of your written and sketched responses to the readings.
- The energy and thoughtfulness of your participation in class discussions and leading of one discussion.

Grade breakdown:

[25% of total grade]

#### **6 responses to readings**

4 papers and 3 design sketches: 10 points each

\* For the class during which you lead the discussion, you are excused of writing a reading response.

[25% of total grade]

#### **Discussion and engagement**

Lead a discussion and prepare a zine spread: 25 points

In class engagement: 25 points

[50% of total grade]

#### **Final paper**

Research question: 5 points

Working hypothesis and substantive outline: 10 points

First draft: 10 points

Second draft: 10 points

In class presentation: 10 points

Final paper: 50 points

The following criteria is used when determining grades:

- **A 3.8-4.0** is given to a student who has exhibited the highest possible performance in all aspects of the course—final projects, the design process and participation are excellent. This student independently seeks out additional information on design and is highly committed/passionate about their work.
- **A 3.4-3.7** is given to a student who exhibits superior performance in all aspects of the course—the final projects, design process, and participation are uniformly of high quality. This student has a thorough understanding of all concepts presented, and is motivated to improve and succeed.

- **A 2.9-3.3** is given to a student who has good performance in most aspects of the course. This student follows a thorough design process, has good design work, and consistent participation that reflects a clear understanding of almost all concepts being presented.
- **A 2.5-2.8** is given to a student who has fair performance in the course. The final work is adequate, with a design process that reflects the minimum needed to complete assignments. Participation and motivation are moderate.
- **A 0.0-2.4** is given to a student with poor performance in the course. Projects are incorrectly prepared, incomplete or missing. This student does not understand the majority of concepts presented and rarely participates in class. This student is not prepared for subsequent courses in design.

## **COURSE READINGS**

\* Note that more optional readings, additional media, and resources will be added weekly to Canvas.

### **Required reading:**

- Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein, *They Say, I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing*, Second Edition, New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2010.

### **Recommended readings:**

- Klinkenborg, Verlyn, *Several Short Sentences about Writing*. 2012.
- Kate L. Turabian; revised by Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, Eighth Edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013.
- Booth et al., *The Craft of Research*, Third edition, 2008.

## **WEEKLY READINGS**

### **Week 2: Design as framing**

- Gram, Maggie. "On Design Thinking." N+1 (blog), September 24, 2019.
- Rittel, Horst W. J., and Melvin M. Webber. "Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning." *Policy Sciences* 4, no. 2 (June 1, 1973): 155-69.

### **Week 3: Design as participation**

- Bennett, Cynthia L., Burren Peil, and Daniela K. Rosner. "Biographical Prototypes: Reimagining Recognition and Disability in Design." *DIS '19*. New York, NY, USA: ACM, 2019.
- Sanders, Elizabeth B.-N., and Pieter Jan Stappers. "Co-Creation and the New Landscapes of Design ." *CoDesign* 4, no. 1 (March 1, 2008): 5-18.

### **Week 4: Design as provocation**

- Tharp, Bruce, and Tharp Stephanie. "Discursive design: critical, speculative, and alternative things", MIT Press, 2018. Chapters 1, 4, and 6.
- Oliveira, Pedro J. S. Vieira de, and Luiza Prado de O. Martins. "Futuristic Gizmos, Conservative Ideals: On Anachronistic Design."

### **Week 5: Design justice**

- Costanza-Chock, Sasha. *Design Justice: Community-Led Practices to Build the Worlds We Need*. The MIT Press, 2020. (Chapter 'Design Values: Hard-Coding Liberation?').
- Where are the Black Designers. "Design to Divest from white supremacist practices". <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zWBAqR-0h-g>

**Week 6: Design and the Antropocene**

- Light, Ann, Alison Powell, and Irina Shklovski. "Design for Existential Crisis in the Anthropocene Age ." C&T '17, 270–79. Troyes, France: ACM Press, 2017.
- Biggs, Heidi R., and Audrey Desjardins. "High Water Pants: Designing Embodied Environmental Speculation." CHI '20. Honolulu, HI, USA: ACM Press, 2020.

**Week 7: Artifact Agency**

- Bennett, Jane. Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things. Duke University Press, 2009. Chapter 2.
- Latour, Bruno. "Where Are the Missing Masses? The Sociology of a Few Mundane Artifacts." In Shaping Technology/Building Society: Studies in Sociotechnical Change., Edited by Wiebe E. Bijker and John Law., 225–58. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1992.

**Week 8: Design as inquiry–Design Research**

- Stolterman, Erik, and Mikael Wiberg. "Concept-Driven Interaction Design Research." Human–Computer Interaction 25, no. 2 (2010): 95–118.
- Fallman, Daniel. "The Interaction Design Research Triangle of Design Practice, Design Studies, and Design Exploration." Design Issues 24, no. 3 (June 25, 2008): 4–18.

**COURSE POLICIES****LAPTOPS/FILE STORAGE**

It is strongly recommended to regularly backup your work – use a jump drive, buy a portable hard drive, subscribe to a backup service (Crash Plan), use UW server space or iCloud.

**EMAIL + CORRESPONDENCE**

Class announcements are sent to registered students via the course email list. Check your UW email daily. For all e-mail communication, please observe normal business etiquette with formal salutations to instructors and colleagues, written in proper English without acronyms or abbreviations. *Please note that emails will not be answered on weekends, evenings, or holidays.*

*As a matter of policy, no assignments will be critiqued through email. Use your colleagues, class time, or office hours for feedback on papers. Note: office hours are a not a substitute for missing class.*

**PERMISSIONS**

Unless you notify me otherwise, I assume that you are willing to allow me to use samples from your work in this course in future instructional settings (e.g., excerpts or examples in presentations).

## **SOAAHD POLICIES**

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY**

In concurrence with the University of Washington's core values, and in compliance with State and federal regulations, the School of Art + Art History + Design reaffirms its commitment to equal opportunity. The commitment extends to the recruitment of faculty, staff, and students who exhibit a dedication to creative and academic excellence and who demonstrate the ability to work with a diverse spectrum of populations.

### **DIVERSITY**

The School of Art + Art History + Design fosters a respectful, inclusive community that supports creative and critical expression and scholarship amidst a culture that accepts the value of every individual. The School encourages students, faculty, and staff to engage in healthy dialogue and respect the values and global perspectives of a diverse population. The School promotes and encourages a culture of compassion, understanding, and an obligation to respectful discourse in classrooms, meeting rooms, studio spaces, and beyond. The School's philosophy is reflected in our engagement with community partners and research endeavors locally, nationally, and globally.

### **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

The University of Washington has established rules regarding student conduct. Through the Student Conduct Code, UW students hold themselves to the highest standards of ethics, integrity and accountability. More information at UW Community Standards & Student Conduct (CSSC).

### **VIOLENCE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION**

- Preventing violence, discrimination, harassment, and retaliation is everyone's responsibility
- Call 911 for emergency help
- Call (206) 685-SAFE to report non-urgent threats or concerns
- Safe Campus
- Concerns about sexual harassment
- NightRide provides a fare-free safe way for U-Pass members to get home at night:  
[www.washington.edu/facilities/transportation/uwshuttles/NightRide](http://www.washington.edu/facilities/transportation/uwshuttles/NightRide)
- Connect to UW Alert. Register your mobile device to receive instant notification of campus emergencies via text and voice messaging. Sign up for UW Alert [here](#).

### **STUDENT HEALTH + WELLNESS**

Student health and well-being are important. UW Seattle offers a wide range of health and wellness services, from exceptional medical care and counseling services to recreation classes, safety resources, peer health advocacy, trainings and more. These can be found at [wellbeing.uw.edu](http://wellbeing.uw.edu)

### **FIRST DAY ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Instructors assume that if you are not present for roll call on the first day of a Design course you have decided not to remain enrolled. Therefore you will be required to drop the class. This policy applies to all students: in-state, out-of-state and international. Note that U.S. Visas for international students may be revoked if students are not on time for the beginning of the academic quarter.

Also note that a delayed return from Summer, Winter or Spring Break is not considered a valid excuse. The starting times and dates of UW instruction are published well in advance each year, enabling all UW students to plan their schedules accordingly. For more information on why this policy exists please read this [page](#).

### **PARTICIPATION IN CLASS**

Participation is essential to learning and success in all classes. In design classes participation is figured as part of your grade. If you miss class due to illness or emergency, notify your instructor, provide documentation, and set up a timeline to complete missed assignments and exams.

### **DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION**

–To request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact Student Disability Services, 448 Schmitz, (206) 543-8924 (V/TTY) or [uwdss@u.washington.edu](mailto:uwdss@u.washington.edu).

–Your instructor will receive an email outlining your academic accommodations prior to the first day of class. It is a good idea to discuss these accommodations directly with your instructor to ensure that your instructor can help you with your needs.

### **EXAMINATION SCHEDULE + ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Final exams are scheduled by the University and cannot be changed. Students are required to turn in assignments and take exams based on the timeline provided in the class syllabus. If the instructor has scheduled an in-person final critique/project turn-in, all students in the class are required to be present. An individual student will not be permitted to submit work early and skip the in-person final unless there are exceptional personal circumstances. Note that the desire to leave early for holiday travel or personal reasons does not qualify as an exceptional circumstance. More information can be found [here](#).

### **CONCERNS ABOUT A COURSE, AN INDIVIDUAL, OR AN ISSUE**

–If you have concerns about a course, an individual, or an issue concerning the School of Art + Art History + Design, talk with the instructor in charge of the class as soon as possible.

–If this is not possible or productive, make an appointment with the Director of Academic Advising, 104 Art, (206) 543-0646 or the Director of the School of Art, 102 Art, (206) 685-2442.

### **PLAGIARISM**

–Plagiarism is using the creations, ideas, words, inventions, or images of someone else in your own work without formal acknowledgement or permission. This applies to written papers and research as well as to art, design and architectural images.

–Please check with your instructor if you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism.

–Instances of plagiarism will be referred for disciplinary action to the Vice Provost for Academic & Student Affairs. More information about reporting academic misconduct.

### **COPYRIGHT**

–The School regularly displays student art and design in a variety of ways to highlight the quality of our students and their learning.

–This is traditional among all art schools and we assume that by participating in UW School classes and activities students have no objection.

–If you have concerns about the use of your work, please contact Academic Advising and Student Services (206-543-0646 or [uaskart@uw.edu](mailto:uaskart@uw.edu))

### **INCOMPLETE GRADES**

To request an "incomplete" grade a student must have been in attendance and done satisfactory work through the eighth week of the quarter and satisfactory proof for the instructor that the work cannot be completed because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control. More information from the UW Office of the Registrar.



**GRADE APPEAL PROCEDURE**

- If you think the grade you received is incorrect, contact the instructor to discuss your concern.
- If not resolved, make an appointment with the Director of Academic Advising, 104 Art, (206) 543-0646.

**MATERIAL FEES**

- All art, design and art history classes have materials fees billed with tuition.
- Fee amounts and justifications are listed by class in the quarterly Time Schedule.
- These fees cover the purchase of materials, academic support, and equipment provided for students in each class.

**SERVICE ANIMALS**

- The University has a general “no pets” policy in all of its buildings. However, Service Animals are allowed to accompany their handlers while on campus
- UW Disability Resources for Students outlines the policies around Service and Emotional Support Animals.

**RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION**

- Washington state law requires that UW develop a policy for accommodation of student absences or significant hardship due to reasons of faith or conscience, or for organized religious activities.
- The UW's policy, including more information about how to request an accommodation, is available at Religious Accommodations Policy.
- Accommodations must be requested within the first two weeks of this course using the Religious Accommodations Request form

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## **Week 1 - Perspectives in design**

10.06

Class introduction

In class exercise

## **Week 2 - Design as framing**

10.13

Discuss readings (Gram / Rittel

& Webber)

## **Week 3 - Design as participation**

10.20

Discuss readings (Bennett et al. / Sanders & Stappers) with guest Cynthia Bennett

*Submit list of preliminary topics*

## **Week 4 - Design as provocation**

10.27

Discuss readings (Tharp & Tharp / Oliveira & Prado)

*Submit topic and research question*

## **Week 5 - Design justice**

11.03

Discuss readings (Costanza-Chock / Where Are The Black Designers)

## **Week 6 - Design and the anthropocene**

11.10

Discuss readings (Light et al. / Biggs & Desjardins) with guest Heidi Biggs

*Submit substantive outline*

## **Week 7 - Artifact agency**

11.17

Discuss readings (Bennett / Latour)

## **Week 8 - Design as inquiry**

11.24

Discuss readings (Stolterman & Wiberg / Fallman)

*Submit first draft of final paper*

## **Week 9 - Writing workshop**

12.01

*Submit second draft of final paper (including abstract)*

*12.01: Exchange peer review*

## **Week 10 - Final paper presentations**

12.08

*Final paper presentations*

Guided group reflection

## **Finals Week**

Final paper is due on: 12.15 at 5pm.

Submit to Canvas. Attendance is not required.

*\* Schedule subject to change.*