

Room: W661
NJIT Spring 2025

Monday 1:00 PM - 5:20 PM
Thursday: 1:00 PM - 5:20 PM

“All too often designers who try to operate within the entire triangle (problem, country or world) find themselves accused of designing for the minority. This charge is completely false and reflects misconceptions and misperceptions under which the profession operates. The nature of these faulty perceptions must be examined.”

- Victor Papanek, *Design for the Real World: Human Ecology and Social Change*, 1971

“Design everything on the assumption that people are not heartless or stupid but marvelously capable, given the chance.”

– John Chris Jones

Course Description

This studio takes a critical look at the role and responsibility of the designer as entrepreneur, educator, altruist and environmentalist. In this, the “proactive studio”, we shall explore how small things can make a big impact. Each student will focus on himself or herself and how they fit within the context of design. The student will be their own design catalyst by initiating the projects and exploring unique design processes based on personal priorities, needs, criteria and developing technologies. This will be done through self-exploration, scholarly inquiry and integration of developing technologies, underpinned by social responsibility and personal accountability. Students will discover new ways of seeing and thinking, interdisciplinary research, implement the skills that give concrete form to their ideas and explore new and effective ways of communicating those ideas.

Course Objectives

- Develop awareness and understanding of humanitarian, ecological and global trends
- Hone research, critical thinking and presentation skills
- Assume the role of initiator, educator, and producer
- Appreciate cultural, economic and social differences
- Gather and synthesize information from a variety of sources
- Research and integrate developing technologies
- Identify the parts, materials, and production methods of a product / system
- Develop a business plan to implement design objectives
- Produce a presentation and printed document that demonstrate these acquired skills

Course Objectives

- Develop a depth and understanding of three-dimensional design

- Introduce you to lateral thinking and brainstorming techniques
- Develop 2D and 3D ideation skills
- Introduce you to prototyping methods, techniques and tools
- Hone research, critical thinking and presentation skills
- Produce a presentation and product that demonstrates these acquired skills

Your Responsibility

- Everyone will play the role of instigator, facilitator, agitator and objective observer. You will be required to present your research and experiments as well as discuss methodology and process throughout the semester and the rest of the class will be responsible to provide feedback and discussion. Your grade is heavily weighted on class participation, so come prepared to talk.
- You are responsible for **documenting your work** in the form of digital images uploaded to a Google Drive created by the professor. All work must also be posted on Kepler4 at the end of the semester. **This is mandatory – failure to do so may result in a failing grade for the class.**
- **Ask questions**...there is no dumb/bad question.
- **Respect** others opinions, and their social, cultural, political, moral and religious point of view.
- **Cell phones** shall be turned off / silenced during any presentations, demonstrations or class discussions unless you are emergency personnel on-call. Use of a cell phone during these times will not be tolerated unless it is an emergency call. In this case please excuse yourself from the class.
- **Headphone / ear buds** shall be removed during presentations, demonstrations, class discussions or desk crits.
- Take **individual responsibility** for completing and submitting assignments on time.
- **Participate in all team-related** activities, homework assignments, presentations and exercises.
- **Check e-mail and Canvas** frequently. Everyone must have an active e-mail address. You can receive a free e-mail address and access to the Internet from NJIT.
- **Regular attendance** is expected. When possible, please give advance notice of your absence. NJIT requires attendance for **ALL** students. After 3 recorded absences, your grade will be lowered by one-half ($\frac{1}{2}$) grade point for each additional absence, if you are not carrying a medical, school or religious related excuse. No excuses will be accepted without a written note from the Dean or a doctor. Students with particular needs and foreseen absences should present them to their instructor within the first week of class.
Attendance for student athletes: No student athlete may miss any regularly scheduled classes for any practice activities. This means students can neither miss nor leave class early (or arrive late) to attend a practice. While student athletes may miss class when participating in intercollegiate competition, it is the responsibility of the student athlete to proactively inform the instructor well in advance to make appropriate arrangements to complete or make up any assignments or exams in a timely fashion.
- **Lateness** is inconsiderate and disruptive - and will not be tolerated. Five lates will lower your grade by one-half ($\frac{1}{2}$) grade point.

- **Academic Integrity** is the cornerstone of higher education and is central to the ideals of this course and the university. Cheating is strictly prohibited and devalues the degree that you are working on. As a member of the NJIT community, it is your responsibility to protect your educational investment by knowing and following the academic code of integrity policy that is found at: [NJIT Academic Integrity Code](#). *Please note that it is my professional obligation and responsibility to report any academic misconduct to the Dean of Students Office. Any student found in violation of the code by cheating, plagiarizing or using any online software inappropriately will result in disciplinary action. This may include a failing grade of F, and/or suspension or dismissal from the university. If you have any questions about the code of Academic Integrity, please contact the Dean of Students Office at dos@njit.edu*
- **Generative AI** may be used as a tool this semester for research and / or creative brainstorming, however, it is only to be used under the permission and guidance of the professor and under specific circumstances.

You must have the following available to you in the studio at all times:

- a box of push pins
- an 18" x 24" newsprint sketch pad and drawing implements
- a bound journal / sketchbook of your thoughts, sketches, and research throughout the semester
- Non-hardening modeling clay
- cameras, video cameras, voice recorders, etc. (optional)
- a sense of humor (not optional)

You will be asked throughout the semester to bring in project-specific supplies, materials and tools.

Grading

Final grade will be based on the following criteria: Level of effort and commitment, quality of work, reading assignment comprehension, class participation, project progress, timely submissions, personal growth, and courage.

Grade distribution:

- Participation in Class Discussions: 20%
- Reading Assignments: 20%
- Research: 20%
- Project: 30%
- Documentation of Work: 10%

All homework assignments must be completed and submitted on time in order to meet the requirements of the course. ALL assignments shall be uploaded to Kepler 4. High Resolution digital images of ALL your work for the semester must be submitted to me in a Google Drive.

Suggested Reading

- *Design for a Better World: Meaningful, Sustainable, Humanity Centered*, Don Norman, MIT Press; 2024
- *Design for the Real World: Human Ecology and Social Change*, Victor Papanek, Thames Hudson; 3rd edition, 2019
- *Design for Global Challenges and Goals (Design for Social Responsibility)*, Emmanuel Tseklevs (Editor), Rachel Cooper (Editor), Jak Spencer (Editor); 1st Edition, 2023

Contact Information

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Office Hours: Mondays and Thursdays 12:00 PM – 12:55 PM. Please make an appointment.