

DI208-30 Future Labs

24/25

Department

Design Studies

Level

Undergraduate Level 2

Module leader

Adela Glyn-Davies

Credit value

30

Module duration

20 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

This module is a deep dive into world building and a holistic practice-led enquiry into how society and its systems are designed. In this 20-week journey students will be researching, analysing and designing their own future city. From culture to political systems, to policies and regulation, to services and infrastructure, students will be developing their understanding of how the world around us is designed and constructed and how much of a role design plays in the totality of life in the social, natural and built environments. This module is underpinned by complexity science, systems thinking and systemic design theories and practices and will enable students to develop their skills in systems analysis, analysis of pain points and areas of leverage in a systems as well as discover anthropological and eco-centric links to the design of everyday life. These explorations will be captured through designerly methods and will involve students being inducted on wood workshop and fabrication equipment to produce physical designs of future city scapes, artefacts, products and maquettes.

Module aims

Aims of this modules are to develop students sense-making capabilities through design methods and practices by fostering their design mindset and skillset in contexts of designing for a sustainable and regenerative future. By challenging them to research and think about to which extent the systems around them are designed or emerging, student will develop an understanding

of how design interventions can produce systems change and which factors need to be mapped and addressed to enable such shifts.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

First 15CATS:

Introduction to the brief. The Future City. Group allocation and introduction to system analysis.

Design research stages, induction to fabrication labs and workshops.

CRIT and group tutorials - focus on systems, services and artefacts.

Narrative building - from the Present City to the City of the Future - where lies desirability?

Final Pitch and CRIT with Live Assessment - Showcase of Cities.

Second 15 CATS:

Introduction to future thinking. Group allocation. Briefing on sectors of enquiry. / Design for Education, Design for Health, Design for Mental Wellbeing.

Design research stages, (re) induction to fabrication labs and workshops.

CRIT and group tutorials - focus on systems, services and artefacts.

Narratives and Proposals - Proposals for Future Systems.

Final Pitch and CRIT with Live Assessment - Showcase of Design concepts and artefacts.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- To demonstrate an understanding of how systems are constructed.
- Document system analysis through visual methods.
- To demonstrate an understanding of societal structures and connections between the social, natural and built environments.
- To creatively and narratively express future thinking of sustainable future systems through artefact and design concept.
- To work collaboratively on an interdisciplinary basis to form a holistic understanding of pain points and leverage areas in a system.
- To demonstrate fluency in building and telling of systems narratives.
- To demonstrate versatility in Design research methods.

Indicative reading list

<https://rl.talis.com/3/warwick/lists/355D16BF-F6E3-B5F2-C861-771BBB68F39A.html?lang=en&login=1>

[View reading list on Talis Aspire](#)

Research element

As mentioned in the section above, this module will be brief based and will therefore require students undertaking research as part of their design process. this will entail an ethical

consideration as part of the design commitment which will be addressed in the introduction of the brief.

Interdisciplinary

DSI is an interdisciplinary programme which engages systemic levels of interdisciplinary practice in its research and design process. Students will be exploring and working with other students, practitioners and community members from diverse backgrounds and endeavours.

International

Contributors, authors and partners in this module will be international to ensure a holistic and pluralist approach to complex designing. This is also a vital part of our EDIAB strategy as a course.

Subject specific skills

As part of this 30CATS module, students will be undertaking a deep dive into system complexity and discovering how society is constructed, which role culture, ideology, politics and tradition play in the development and emergence of new system dynamics. In this research students will be discovering why and how mismatches in subsystems such as education or healthcare occur in order to develop strategies and interventions for social and environmental impact.

In the first part of the module students will be briefed to research their current city of residence as a case study in order to propose a Future City concept, including systems structure narratives and infrastructure. Students will be learning design methods of research such as visual ethnography, site study and psychogeography. These skills will culminate in the ability to analyse and synthesise systems and their narratives as well as propose multi-solving concepts in forms of design solutions and interventions.

The second part of the module student will be introduced to concepts of future thinking, speculative practice and future fiction. Students will be briefed in groups to develop a design intervention in one of the following areas: Design for Education, Design for Health or Design for Belonging. These will be complex briefs developed by industry partners and regional communities which will challenge students to develop in depth, inventive qualitative and quantitative research methods to apply to their design skillset and mindset. This module will prepare students for advanced research and practice on L6 and offer streamlining into interdisciplinary subjects related to the themes covered. Both parts of the module will challenge students to develop enactivist learning approaches - making and prototyping practices will be part of the design process and will entail fabrication and cardboard manipulation, woodwork, acrylic design and maquette building. Alongside this - students who undertake the second part of the module will develop a full design pitch with portfolio and artefacts of their choice and part of the submission.

Transferable skills

Design Ethnography.

Story Telling.

Site study research.

Psychogeography.

Group work and co-design.
Systems Thinking
Systems Mapping.
Multi-Solving.
Fabrication with diverse materials (cardboard, wood, acrylic or metal)
Woodwork and prototyping.

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	5 sessions of 2 hours (3%)
Seminars	10 sessions of 2 hours 15 minutes (7%)
Tutorials	10 sessions of 3 hours (10%)
Practical classes	6 sessions of 3 hours (6%)
Fieldwork	8 sessions of 5 hours (13%)
Private study	59 hours 30 minutes (20%)
Assessment	120 hours (40%)
Total	300 hours

Private study description

Students will be working in groups asynchronously on their group brief as well as individually in their own time towards a presentation and critical research analysis, and design proposal portfolio.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A

	Weighting	Study time
Future City - Portfolio and Presentation.	30%	40 hours
This coursework will be a live brief response to imagining a desirable and sustainable future city. The work will contain research, analysis, design problem statement, design process and		

Weighting

Study time

prototyping as well as a full design pitch with a maquette and artefacts to complement the proposal.

Critical Research Analysis

20%

20 hours

This coursework will be a critical reflective piece about the learning journey of designing the Future City brief. It will be templated and divided between critical review and reflective writing.

Design Intervention Brief - Portfolio and Presentation.

30%

40 hours

This coursework will be a design brief which students will undertake in groups. Student will be allocated a themed area of enquiry which will challenge them to undertake a full design study and design proposal including artefacts and professional pitch with a showcase.

Critical Research Analysis (pt 2)

20%

20 hours

This coursework will be a critical reflective piece about the learning journey of designing the Future City brief. It will be templated and divided between critical review and reflective writing.

Feedback on assessment

Live assessment and written rubric.

Availability

There is currently no information about the courses for which this module is core or optional.