DI208-30 Future Labs

26/27

Department
Design Studies
Level
Undergraduate Level 2
Module leader
Adela Glyn-Davies
Credit value
30
Module duration
18 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 system 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

The aims of this modules are to develop student's 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, students 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.

Overview of term 2 and 3 will entail the following:
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?
Introduction to future thinking. Thesme 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

Reading lists can be found in Talis

Specific reading list for the module

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

Design Studies 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 an 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 30 CATS 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, students 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
Supervised practical classes	18 sessions of 3 hours (20%)
Private study	116 hours (43%)
Assessment	100 hours (37%)
Total	270 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

Category	Description	Funded by	Cost to student
Equipment and project costs	Materials will be supplied for workshop inductions and course-based teaching sessions. While there will be some provision of basic materials, students will drive their own practice and therefore may require a broader set of materials and/or tools than can be provided. This will be very individual and will be at the student's cost.	Student	£0.00
Printing and photocopying	On this module, students will be provided with printing credit to the value of £10.00 per student.	Department	£10.00

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Students can register for this module without taking any assessment.

Assessment group A2

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Assessment component			
Forecasting Vision	40%	50 hours	No

Students will be imagining a desirable and sustainable future city. The work will contain research, analysis, design problem statement, design process and prototyping as well as a full design pitch with a maquette and artefacts to complement the proposal.

Reassessment component is the same

Assessment component

Presentation	20%	30 hours	No

This coursework will be a presentation about student's responses to the learning journey of designing the future city brief.

Reassessment component

Resit - Presentation			Yes (extension)

You are required to submit an individual 10-minute recorded presentation that pitches your response to the module assignment brief. You can use the maximum of 10 slides to communicate your design process (this includes your references). The video should be uploaded to Tabula.

Assessment component

Portfolio	40%	50 hours	Yes (extension)

This coursework will be a design portfolio. Students will be exploring themed areas of enquiry which will challenge them to undertake personal reflections on the learning journey of designing the future city.

Reassessment component is the same

Feedback on assessment

Formal and informal, class-based, live assessments and written feedback in line with rubric.

Availability

Courses

This module is Core optional for:

- Year 2 of UIPA-W201 BASc Design for Sustainable Innovation
- Year 2 of UDIA-H1L8 Undergraduate Design and Global Sustainable Development

This module is Core option list A for:

- Year 2 of UIPA-W201 BASc Design for Sustainable Innovation