



TEACHING SYLLABUS

Department of Visual Arts First Level Academic Diploma in Decoration-Applied Arts

Design Culture (Cultura del Progetto) ABPR17 – 75 hours, 6 CFA (ECTS) Academic Year 2025–2026

Professor: Mariafrancesca "Agnese" Giglia

Chair of Interior Design AFAM088 (formerly ABPR 17) Institutional Email: mariafrancesca.giglia@abapa.education

Office Hours: * Location: Cantieri Culturali Ducrot

Classroom - Meet: ufju6h7c

Time: Mondays, Slot B (10:00 AM to 5:00 PM) via Classroom/Meet, by email appointment.

Definition of Design Culture

To describe what is meant by "Design Culture," we can generally say it is a series of values, sensibilities, skills, and design principles developed and transmitted over time in various ways. It is transmitted implicitly by the cultural and social fabric in which one lives, the territory one inhabits, and cultural institutions; and explicitly by institutions dedicated to design education. Inspired particularly by the writings, projects, and initiatives of Adriano Olivetti, Bruno Munari, Tomás Maldonado, Ezio Manzini, and Paolo Deganello, we can define Design Culture through several characterizing specificities: Design Methods; Interdisciplinarity and Soft Skills; Creativity.

Human Integration Regarding the latter—taking the user into account (user-centered design)—although historically one of the reasons for the birth of design, in recent years this aspect has materialized through social design and co-design, where "people are seen not only as carriers of needs but also of capabilities (not just as part of the problems they face, but as actors in their solution)" (Manzini 2018: 75).

In addition to these specificities, there are fundamental values pertaining to the origin and establishment of Design Culture: a) Ethics; b) Sustainability; c) Quality of Life (practicality, aesthetics, identity). As we will see in the conclusion, these values have naturally evolved over time.

Design as a Planning Method

Educational Objectives

Starting from the concept of Design—in its evolution from its origins to today and its various areas of application—the course aims to ensure adequate mastery of design methods and techniques. Particular attention is paid to Design both as a discipline oriented towards defining "living conditions" (through the selection, use, and distribution of material or immaterial goods) and as a communicative tool in its conceptual and objectual dimensions.

Furthermore, the course addresses the relationship between **space, object, and individual**, aiming to provide students with a method to approach a project in detail, following an ethical, social, and environmental/economic sustainability focus. This includes a deep reflection on the concept of "living in proximity" and the application of the **Product Service System Design (PSSD)** method.

Sustainability is not just economic and ecological, but social. Therefore, the transition to a sustainable lifestyle requires social learning and a change in behavior and consumption habits. The course provides theoretical and practical tools to rethink the environmental quality of new products, services, strategies, and "ephemeral" architectures that, by respecting the entire life cycle, are capable of regenerating and creating a new social vision.

Course Goals

Students will acquire a design method that hypothesizes a process of social innovation through a product/service related to the world of food and/or the world of artistic, artisanal, and landscape culture. Objects/services must be designed to avoid pollution and support the local economy. Processes, products, and services must be evaluated as a single complex through a PSSD approach.

At the center of every PSSD strategy is the User Experience. In production sites, every element makes a difference! Starting from the concept of "social":

- **Social** as relative to the systems involved as targets;
- **Social** as the mode of intervention;
- **Social** as the values pursued;
- **Social** as the category of problems addressed (innovation and social impact).

Students must recognize the growing importance of the relationship between rituals, objects, and territory, which acts as a non-digital "social media 2.0" that carries and shares relationships.

Course Structure and Methodology

The course includes frontal lectures on environmental sustainability (social and economic), as well as the concept of "living in proximity" (from micro/molecular scale to urban scale) through collaborative governance and the PSSD method.

Lessons will be structured as dialogues supported by commented images and laboratory activities. At the end of the lessons, a project will be developed. The student's work must summarize the concepts learned: an element, object, system, social project, or "ephemeral" architecture that is eco-compatible and enacts social innovation.

Teaching Schedule

I Semester: Week A – Monday 1:30 PM | 7:30 PM and Wednesday 9:00 AM – 2:30 PM.

Educational Path (3 Phases)

Phase 1 - Theoretical/Practical Lessons: History of Design/Sustainability and life cycle management processes.

Phase 2 - Laboratory: Identifying a specific territorial area to map needs for a "city of proximity" related to food, art, or craft.

Phase 3 - Laboratory: Creating a social innovation strategy and building a new narrative within existing city structures (physical and mental).

Final Project Requirements

To pass the exam, the final project must include:

Conceptual Mapping: Concept maps, mood boards, and/or storytelling.

Technical Drawings: Floor plans, elevations, sections, perspectives, and axonometric views.

Schedules: Tables of materials and objects.

Glossary: Technical terms specific to the project.

Model: A scale working model, maquette, or prototype.

Prerequisites: High curiosity.

Bibliography (Core Texts)

- Pasca, V., Dardi, D., *Manual of Design History*.
- Manzini, E., *Living in Proximity: Ideas for the 15-Minute City*.
- Sendra, P., Sennett, R., *Designing Disorder*.
- Vitta, M., *The Design of Beauty: Design between Art and Technique*.
- Kandinsky, W., *Point and Line to Plane*.
- Munari, B., *Da cosa nasce cosa (One thing leads to another)*.
- De Fusco, R., *History of Design*.
- Alastair Fuad-Luke *Eco-Design Progetti per un futuro sostenibile; Logos; Modena 2003*.
- Zygmunt Bauman *Vite di scarto; Editori Laterza; Bari 2005*.
- Andrea Giacchetta Adriano Magliocco *Progettazione sostenibile dalla pianificazione territoriale all'ecodesign; Carocci Editore S.p.A; Roma 2007*.
- Ezio Manzini François Jégou *Quotidiano sostenibile Scenari di vita urbana; Edizioni Ambiente; Milano 2003*
- Bruno Munari *Da cosa nasce cosa appunti per una metodologia progettuale; Editori Laterza; Bari 2007*.
- Donald A. Norman *Il design del futuro; Apogeo s.r.l; Milano 2008*.
- Lucia Pietroni *Eco-materiali ed eco-prodotti "Made in Italy" Casi studio di eco-innovazione nelle imprese italiane; Edizioni Kappa; Roma 2004*.
- John Thackara *In the bubble Design per un futuro sostenibile; Umberto Allemandi & C. ; Torino 2008*.
- Carlo Vezzoli, Ezio Manzini *Design per la sostenibilità ambientale; Zanichelli editore S.p.A; Bologna 2007*.
- Eco.disco. Il design per la sostenibilità ambientale Strumento per l'auto-apprendimento e l'autovalutazione*
- Carlo vezzoli (a cura di) *gratis software: www.polimi.it/rapirete*
- S. Coradeschi, *Come costruire un modello plastico architettonico*, Di Baio Editore, 1987 ([Link](#))
- E. Viceconte, *L'Esperienza del luogo e del tempo* ([Link](#))

Supplementary Material: The core bibliography is an initial orientation. It will be integrated with additional texts, design manuals, and lecture slides provided by the professor according to the specific themes addressed during the year.