UMEÅ UNIVERSITY

Use & Users

Credit points: 7,5 ECTs
Course code:
Responsible department: Umeå Institute of Design
Main field of study: Industrial Design
Level: PhD
Specialisation in relation to degree requirements: Doctoral degree in Industrial Design
Subject area: Social science research and design
Grading scale: Pass / Fail
Any programme affiliation:
Confirmation: This syllabus was approved at the Decision Meeting after consideration at the Local Cooperation Group at Umeå Institute of Design on 2017-05-10 and is valid from the spring term of 2017.

Learning goals

Deepened insights into user studies, user-centred design, participatory and user-driven design processes, including basic insights into methodology from the behavioural and social sciences.

Contents

The focus on the "use" of objects and organizational structures and the "users" of the purposefully designed world varies across disciplines and design orientations. This course explores how a variety of approaches generate, handle and incorporate knowledge about users into design efforts, and critically explores the assumptions behind those approaches. User studies, user-centred design, participatory and user-driven design processes integrate different knowledge traditions and methodologies. Through a combination of literature discussions and practical experiments, the course interrogates the purpose and value of different approaches, and traces the origins of hybrid methodologies.

The course is organized around three lunch to lunch seminars. For each seminar, students are expected to have read the literature, written a précis for each contribution, and submit a 2-page paper with reference to the literature.

Seminar I. Openings & Beginnings focuses on different traditions for approaching people as users; the research instruments, including forms of inquiry; and their purpose.

Seminar II. Meetings & Engagements focuses on different forms of engagement in relation to the field and the meeting of different disciplines and/or practices.

Seminar III. Closings & Conclusions focuses on how research efforts are concluded, the impact on those involved and the different ways results are used.

Expected learning outcomes

- A vocabulary for distinguishing between the origin of an approach and the hybrid versions.
- An understanding of different approaches for studying people and practices, and studying with people and practices.

UMEÅ UNIVERSITY

- An ethical position about a researcher's relationship to the field.

Relation to general study plan
Courses in this thematic area should address the following learning goals in the general study plan:
Primary: 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.2.1, 2.2.3, 2.3.1
Secondary: 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.5, 1.3.1, 1.3.2, 2.2.2,

Required knowledge
Qualifications for admission to the PhD programme in industrial design, or equivalent.

Form of instruction
Lectures, seminars and workshops.

Examination modes
There will be two types of deliverables in the course (besides active participation in all seminars):
- Three 2-page papers (as described above).
- A final 6-page paper reflecting upon own project in relation to use and users.

Grades on the course are awarded when students have passed all examinations and compulsory course elements. After completing the course, one of the grades Fail (U) or Pass (G) is awarded the student. A student who for two consecutive examinations for the same course has not been passed, has the right to have another examiner appointed, if there are no special reasons against this (Higher Education Ordinance chapter 6, 22 §). The request for a new examiner shall be made in writing to the PhD Program Council of Umeå Institute of Design.

Academic credit transfer
Equivalency credits for this course can only be given if it can be shown through transcripts and course plans that a similar course has been passed and after the supervisor and examiner for the PhD education have evaluated and approved the students' individual level of skills and knowledge.

Core course literature
Bødker, Susanne, and Jacob Buur. "The Design Collaboratorium: A Place for Usability Design." *ACM Transactions on Computer-Human Interaction* 9, no. 2 (2002): 152–69.

Cefkin, Melissa. *Ethnography and the Corporate Encounter*. New York & Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2009.

Ehn, Pelle. *Work-Oriented Design of Computer Artifacts*. Stockholm: Arbetslivscentrum, 1988: 103-122.

Geertz, C. *The Interpretation of Cultures (Selected Essays)*. London: Fountain Press, 1973: 412-453.

Goodwin, C., 1994. Professional Vision. *American Anthropologist*, 96(3):606-633.

UMEÅ UNIVERSITY

Gunn, Wendy, Otto, Ton, and Smith, Rachel Charlotte. *Design Anthropology: Theory and Practice*, London & New York: Bloomsbury Publishing , 2013.

Greenbaum, Joan, and Morten Kyng. *Design at Work: Cooperative Design of Computer Systems*. Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1991.

Halse, Joachim, and Brendon Clark. "Design Rituals and Performative Ethnography." *Ethnographic Praxis in Industry Conference Proceedings* 2008, no. 1 (2008): 128–45.

Smith, Rachel Charlotte, Kasper Tang Vangkilde, Mette Gislev Kjaersgaard, Ton Otto, Joachim Halse, and Thomas Binder, eds. *Design Anthropological Futures*. London ; New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016.

Star, Susan Leigh, "The Ethnography of Infrastructure", *American Behavioral Scientist 43*(3):377-391 · November 1999.

Suchman, L. "Located Accountabilities in Technology Production." *Scandinavian Journal of Information Systems* 14, no. 2 (2002): 91–105.

Additional literature will be selected each time the course is given.