

Name	Interaction design basics - Anthropology and Design
Codes	M-ID-101-DESIGN-ANTRO
Host	MA School
Location	<u>Classrom</u>

Course info			Subject info			
Course Type	Contact hours	Home study hours	Comprehensive Subject	Subject type	Semester	Subject credit value
Seminar	24	34	2 ECTS	Seminar	Fall 2026	M-ID-101

Recommendation

No prior knowledge required.

Short description

Design and anthropology have more in common than one might assume. Since most things are designed for and by Homo Sapiens Sapiens, it makes sense to study the human condition to create the most human design. In this series of talks we will address the social responsibilities of designers and their shortcomings.

Later in this course students apply theoretical material on ethnography and other quantitative research techniques in actual group research projects.

Teachers

Name	Contact information	Teaching hours	Short BIO	Open hours
Michael Leube	michael_leube@yahoo.com			

Course scheduling

Course format		Weekly class appointments	
Classroom lectures and discussions. Essay to be written at home.		Blocked Week	
Details of each session’s type and schedule, showing the teacher’s role			
Week	Date	Weekly educational content	Studio/workshop
1		What is Human Nature: Nature, Nurture or both? - Natural/Sexual/Artificial Selection - Design without a Designer? - Cultural Progress	B_106a

2		99% Ape, 1% Bee: Designing for Humans • Individual and Group • Nation and State • Hierarchy and Egalitarianism	B_106a
3		Don't say the "A" word! • Design and Art Why art and design? • Form and Function • Semiotics	B_106a
4		Too much Stuff! The Difference between Need and Want • The Marketing Revolution • Obsolescence and Sustainability • Garbage and Durability	B_106a
5		Distribution: The Fight for Goods • Infinite want and finite resources • War and resources	B_106a
6		Field Research	
7		Field Research	
8		Field Research	
9		Field Research	
10		Field Research	
11		Field Research	
12			
13			
14			
15			

Course completion requirements, prerequisites, and evaluation				
Students' duties				
Requirements, assignments	Form of evaluation	Evaluation criteria	Deadline	% in evaluation
Requirement 1...	Research Essay			50
Requirement 2...	Research Poster			50
General requirements				
e.g. eligibility criteria for the exam, free-form description				

Course materials and literature
Mandatory literature
Course notes and presentations
Recommended literature
Anthes, E. (2020). <i>The great indoors: the surprising science of how buildings shape our behavior, health, and happiness</i> . Scientific American/Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
Boehm, C. (1999). Hierarchy in the forest: Egalitarianism and the evolution of human altruism.
Bollier, D., & Helfrich, S. (2019). <i>Free, fair, and alive: The insurgent power of the commons</i> . New Society Publishers.
Bolten, B., & Barbiero, G. (2020). Biophilic Design: How to enhance physical and psychological health and wellbeing in our built environments. <i>Visions for Sustainability</i> , 13, 11-16.

Brown, T., & Katz, B. (2011). Change by design. *Journal of product innovation management*, 28(3), 381-383.

Chapman, J. (2021). *Meaningful Stuff: Design That Lasts*. MIT Press.

Chapman, J. (2009). Design for (emotional) durability. *Design Issues*, 25(4), 29-35.

Chapman, J. (2017). *Routledge handbook of sustainable product design*. Taylor & Francis.

Diamond, J. M., & Ordunio, D. (1999). *Guns, germs, and steel*(Vol. 521). Books on Tape.

Giphart, R., & Van Vugt, M. (2018). *Mismatch: how our stone age brain deceives us every day (and what we can do about it)*. Robinson.

Hammersley, M., Atkinson, P. (2019). *Ethnography Principles in Practice*. 4. Routledge. ISBN 1138504459 (Digital)

Harris, M. (1989). *Cows, pigs, wars & witches: The riddles of culture*. Vintage.

Henrich, J. (2020). *The WEIRDest people in the world: How the West became psychologically peculiar and particularly prosperous*. Penguin UK.

Heying, H., & Weinstein, B. (2021). *A Hunter-gatherer's Guide to the 21st Century: Evolution and the Challenges of Modern Life*. Penguin.

Kellert, S., & Calabrese, E. (2015). The practice of biophilic design. *London: Terrapin Bright LLC*, 3, 21.

Miller, G. (2009). *Spent: Sex, evolution, and consumer behavior*. Penguin.

Monteiro, M. (2019). *Ruined by design: How designers destroyed the world, and what we can do to fix it*. Mule Design.

Murray, D. (2019). *The madness of crowds: Gender, race and identity*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Norman, D. (2013). *The design of everyday things: Revised and expanded edition*. Basic books.

Papanek, V., & Fuller, R. B. (1972). Design for the real world.

Rabinow, P. (2016). Reflections on fieldwork in Morocco. In *Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco*. University of California Press.

Saad, G. (2007). *The evolutionary bases of consumption*. Psychology Press.

Wilson, D. S. (2020). *This view of life: Completing the Darwinian revolution*. Vintage.

Learnings

Learning outcomes	
Knowledge	Basic theoretical background knowledge of Anthropology
Attitude	Complex thinking, ability to find interdisciplinary connections, increased analytical knowledge
Autonomy and Responsibility	Critical Thinking, Analytical writing

Exemption
<u>No exemption may be granted from participation in or completion of the course.</u> Exemption may be granted from completing certain tasks or attending specific sessions. Certain tasks may be replaced by equivalent activities. Full exemption may be granted

The student must discuss the details of a full or partial exemption with the instructor and the programme lead.

Curricular connections		
Subject	Parallel courses	Course proportion in subject
Anthropology	Ethnography	
Subject prerequisites	Special subject prerequisites	Is it available as an elective?
None	None	No

Guidelines and rules for the use of artificial intelligence in the course
The use of artificial intelligence at the university is subject to the Artificial Intelligence and Plagiarism Policy of the Moholy-Nagy University of Arts.

Materials needed for the course	Who provides the materials?
Material requirement 1: None	Tech Park / Programme / Student / Other
Material requirement 2: None	Tech Park / Programme / Student / Other

Other information, comments
Michael Leube, Ph.D., is a design anthropologist who serves as a university professor, author and consultant. Co-authoring two books on the circular economy and contributing to numerous articles in scientific journals, he specialises in design for social innovation and humanitarian design. His unique approach integrates anthropology, ethics and sustainability to shape a forward-looking design education focused on resilience. This approach has garnered invitations to instruct at prestigious design and architecture schools across Europe and to speak at design consultancies like IDEO and Fjord. Notably, he delivered a TED talk titled “Why designers should urgently listen to anthropologists.” Leube has held positions as professor of anthropology at IE University, University of California, University of Santa Clara, London School of Economics, Syracuse University and Salzburg University of Applied Sciences.
Learnings