

Qualitative Design Research

Name

- Classroom
 Studio or workshop
 External venue
 Online

Codes

M-FR-204-QUALITATIVE-DES-RES

Host

Design Intézet

	Type	ECTS	Contact hours	Student work	Course type	Semester	Unit
Basic info							

Recommendation

Short Description

A top aspiration of design students should be to empathise with people who end up using their products and services. Designers often ask why they should do research when marketers already do it? The answer is that numbers and facts on consumers are important but not sufficient for explaining *why* a person becomes a customer or not. Marketing-driven research is skewed on behalf of the seller, rather than user and in behalf of profit rather than progress.

Ideally, the process of qualitative design research is exploratory and neither *inductive*, nor *deductive* but *abductive*. In this course the student learns to work almost like a detective using different tools in different situation and formulating a hypothesis (design brief) by learning from and with the user of products and services.

This course is linked to the *Ethnography Field Trip* and serves as its theoretical foundation.

Teachers

Name	Contact information	Short bio
Michael Leube	michael_leube@yahoo.com	Leube is an anthropologist working on the complex relationship of people and objects. For him design represents the important link between the theory provided by the human sciences and practical social innovation. He is convinced that only when everyone is involved in the design process and innovation, production and consumption is truly open can society become sustainable. Leube holds a Ph.D. in Anthropology from the University of Zagreb, an M.A. in Anthropology/ Human Biology from the University of Vienna, and a B.A. in Anthropology/ Religious Studies from the University of California at Berkeley.

Semester schedule

Course scheduling	Weekly class appointments
March 3-5	1,5-hour Sessions

#	Date	Weekly educational content
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9:00-13:00	03/03/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to Classical Ethnography (Case Studies)
9:00-18:00	04/03/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to Qualitative vs. Quantitative Design Research • Induction vs. Deduction vs. Abduction • Grounded Theory • Research Techniques (Participant Observation/Interviewing/Shadowing/Cultural Probes)
9:00-16:40	05/03/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empathy Maps • Content Analysis • Modern Design Research (Case Studies)

Requirements and evaluation

Assignments	Evaluation criteria	Deadline	% in evaluation
1.) Students are required to write a short research paper on how qualitative methods and techniques are /have been/could be used in a design context.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5-10 Pages • min. 5 Academic sources • In-Text or Footnotes Citation • Bibliography 	End of Semester	25% of Final Grade
2.) Students will make a poster using design language (illustrations, infographics) to describe the content of the essay.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information is well presented. • Aesthetics 	End of Semester	25% of Final Grade

Compulsory readings

Leube, M., & Walcher, D. (2017). Designing for the next (Circular) Economy. An appeal to renew the Curricula of Design Schools. *The Design Journal*, 20(sup1), S492-S501.

Müller, F. (2021). *Design ethnography: Epistemology and methodology* (p. 93). Springer Nature.

Recommended readings

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

Learnings

Knowledge	To acquire basic notions of the “grounded theory” process of problem solving.
Skills	To gain empathy for end users.
Attitude	Development of a critical standpoint in the design practice
Responsibility	To understand the responsibility of design practices

Exemption

- Exemption from attending and completing the course cannot be granted.
- Exemption may be granted from the acquisition of certain competencies and the fulfilment of tasks.
- Some tasks can be substituted with other activities,
- A full exemption can be granted

Curriculum connections

Unit	Parallel courses	Course proportion in unit
Befoglaló tantárgy címe	[Ez a kurzus]	
	Másik kurzus címe	
	Harmadik kurzus címe	

Course prerequisites	Is it available as an elective?	Prerequisites in case of elective

Misc. information