RESEARCH TECHNIQUES

GRADO EN DISEÑO
Professor: MICHAEL LEUBE
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Academic year: 19-20
Degree course: SECOND
Semester: 1º
Category: COMPULSORY
Number of credits: 3.0
Language: English

PREREQUISITES
Semesters 1 and 2 must be successfully completed.
SUBJECT 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 in 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 course “Ethnography” and serves as the theoretical foundation.
OBJECTIVES AND SKILLS

Objectives
To acquire basic notions of the “grounded theory” process of problem solving
To understand the responsibility of design practices
To understand the necessity of design research as well as designing the research phase

Skills
Development of a critical standpoint in the design practice
The use of basic design-research methods
Improving the empathy between designer and end-user
Improvement of critical thought
METHODOLOGY

This course consists of both lectures and discussions concerned with weekly readings. In the 15 sessions different tools for design research are taught and students will be encouraged to share their thoughts and ideas in relation to issues presented in each class session. The course is designed with the course “Ethnography” in mind; whereas in “Research Techniques” the research tools are learned theoretically, they are practiced in “Ethnography”.

Students are required to critically reflect the material presented in class and the corresponding texts by preparing a 10-12 pages research paper on design research. Additionally they must hold a short oral presentation on a chosen topic in front of the class. This presentation must include a case study of a design process using that specific technique.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching methodology</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Estimated time a student should dedicate to prepare for and participate in</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lectures</td>
<td>13.33 %</td>
<td>10 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussions</td>
<td>20.0 %</td>
<td>15 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercises</td>
<td>20.0 %</td>
<td>15 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group work</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other individual studying</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100.0 %</td>
<td>75 hours</td>
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</table>
SESSION 1

Qualitative vs. Quantitative Research 1
There is a time and place for both qualitative and quantitative research and both have their merit in a design context. In the first two sessions basics of the scientific method are taught as well as differences between the two approaches. Basic tenets of the scientific language and rules of citation are shown.

Relevant Papers:

SESSION 2

Qualitative vs. Quantitative Research 2
There is a time and place for both qualitative and quantitative research and both have their merit in a design context. In the first two sessions basics of the scientific method are taught as well as differences between the two approaches. Basic tenets of the scientific language and rules of citation are shown.

Relevant Papers:

SESSION 3

Design Research
Design research- qualitative, quantitative or otherwise- has become an important part of the design process (Brown, 2008). However, the feedback between scholarly theory and industrial practice could be deepened significantly. While academia is often accused of staying in an exclusive ivory tower, the creative industries are said to disregard evidence. The reason for designers’ resistance and skepticism to scientific fieldwork may be the current emphasis on deductive exploration (Müller, 2011). Students must learn to desktop and library research.

Relevant Papers:

SESSION 4

Research Design
The marketing sciences tend to use such a top-down approach of going from the general to the specific; when a product is accepted, a given strategy is repeated, when not it is dropped. Why, designers ask, should they do such research, when marketers already do it better? Numbers and facts on consumers are important but not sufficient for explaining why a person becomes a customer or not (Madsbjerg & Rasmussen, 2014). Marketing-driven research is skewed in behalf of the seller, rather than user and in behalf of profit rather than progress. Ideally, the design process is exploratory and neither inductive, nor deductive but abductive.

Relevant Papers:

SESSION 5

Ethnography 1
Beyond all the data, ethnology also has validated and rigorous methods for gaining entry, conducting interviews and analysing emic and etic information (Harris, 2001). Recommended by modern firms such as IDEO, obvious to ethnologists, the designer has to be – above all - empathic. In short: the designer has to become an ethnographer.

R.A.: Design ethnography: Taking inspiratn from everyday life. This is service design thinking.

SESSION 6

Ethnography 2
Originally, ethnography is the study and description of an ethnic group. Through observation and research, the designer can truly empathise with the end-user (of products and services) and their issues. Ethnography, being strictly descriptive becomes a portion of design thinking but not vice versa.

Relevant Papers:
Van Dijk, G. (2010). “Design ethnography: Taking inspiration from everyday life. This is service design thinking.” Amsterdam: Bis publishers.

SESSION 7
Ethnography

SESSION 8
Ethnography

SESSION 9
Ethnography

SESSION 10
Ethnography

SESSION 11
Ethnography

SESSION 12
Ethnography

SESSION 13
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Compulsory Textbook:
EVALUATION CRITERIA

Evaluation Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>20 %</td>
<td>Critical Participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Presentation</td>
<td>40 %</td>
<td>Knowledge of Subject and Presentation Style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Work</td>
<td>40 %</td>
<td>Individual Research Paper</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Class Participation: This includes knowledge and critical assessment of the materials covered in class.

Individual Presentations: Students must present one (or more) of the research technique/s covered in front of the class.

Individual Work: Students demonstrate mastery of the scientific method and scientific writing in an individual research paper.

PROFESSOR BIO

17th June 2019
Leube is an anthropologist working on the complex relationship of people and objects. His research for the last ten years has been focused on investigating humanitarian design as well as the circular economy. 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 (Thesis: “Culture and Evolution: Comparison of British Social Anthropology, American Cultural Anthropology and Vienna’s Kulturkreislehre”) 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.
CODE OF CONDUCT IN CLASS

1. **Be on time.** Students arriving more than 5 minutes late will be marked as “Absent”.
   Only students that notify in advance in writing that they will be late for a specific session may be granted an exception (at the discretion of the professor).

2. **If applicable, bring your name card and strictly follow the seating chart.** It helps faculty members and fellow students learn your names.

3. **Do not leave the room during the lecture:** Students are not allowed to leave the room during lectures. If a student leaves the room during lectures, he/she will not be allowed to re-enter and, therefore, will be marked as “Absent”.
   Only students that notify that they have a special reason to leave the session early will be granted an exception (at the discretion of the professor).

4. **Do not engage in side conversation.** As a sign of respect toward the person presenting the lecture (the teacher as well as fellow students), side conversations are not allowed. If you have a question, raise your hand and ask it. If you do not want to ask it during the lecture, feel free to approach your teacher after class.
   If a student is disrupting the flow of the lecture, he/she will be asked to leave the classroom and, consequently, will be marked as “Absent”.

5. **Use your laptop for course-related purposes only.** The use of laptops during lectures must be authorized by the professor. The use of Social Media or accessing any type of content not related to the lecture is penalized. The student will be asked to leave the room and, consequently, will be marked as “Absent”.

6. **No cellular phones:** IE University implements a “Phone-free Classroom” policy and, therefore, the use of phones, tablets, etc. is forbidden inside the classroom. Failing to abide by this rule entails expulsion from the room and will be counted as one absence.

7. **Escalation policy: 1/3/5.** Items 4, 5, and 6 above entail expulsion from the classroom and the consequent marking of the student as “Absent.” IE University implements an “escalation policy”: The first time a student is asked to leave the room for disciplinary reasons (as per items 4, 5, and 6 above), the student will incur one absence, the second time it will count as three absences, and from the third time onward, any expulsion from the classroom due to disciplinary issues will entail 5 absences.

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17th June 2019