INTRODUCTION

Approaching our users, as well as learning from them via User-Centered Design methodologies, offers us a wider perspective with respect to any given project.

Key benefits:

- Increased possibility of success. Design which is based on the User maximizes the opportunities for the success of a product or service by connecting the user needs with the business goals.
- A global vision of the project. The methodology requires close liaison and collaboration between user, client, developers and all the relevant departments of the company involved.
- Flexibility and improved reorientation capabilities. Since this is a process of continuous analysis and iteration, particularly in the project's initial phases, any differences that arise in terms of approach or strategy can be resolved more quickly and effectively.
- Integration/compatibility with agile methodologies. Profiles which are user-focused enjoy the unique advantage of adaptability without compromising any other agile methodologies, commonly used in the development of a project.

OBJECTIVES

- For students to gain knowledge of the general methodology of user centered design and its practical application in terms of the resolution of design problems.
- For the students to gain practical experience in key areas of UCD methodology and in so doing gain practical experience in real life design work.
- For students to acquire design based project management criteria.
• For students to develop idea presentation strategies and to learn to design high-quality deliverables
• To offer students further points of reference for future research so that they can broaden their knowledge after course

PROGRAM

1. Research Phase: Students will learn about the different tools for research in user, market, service and company field.

2. Research Phase (Practicum): Students will present their exercises and some discussions and exercises will be conducted in order to deepen into the contents.

3. Definition Phase: Students will learn techniques and do practical exercises on how to define a product or service in the context of a convergent design process by using collective idea generation techniques.

4. Definition Phase (Practicum): Students will present their exercises and some discussions and exercises will be conducted in order to deepen into the contents.

5. Implementation Phase: Students will focus on the implementation of solutions defined in the two previous phases.

6. Implementation Phase (Practicum): Students will present their exercises and some discussions and exercises will be conducted in order to deepen into the contents.

7. How to present design work: deliverables, presentations and support material.

EVALUATION METHOD

Criteria Score
• Attendance, punctuality and participation in class 25%
• Team working ability 15%
• Group work assessment 30%
• Individual assessment 30%
First criterion is participation in class, in this area we will evaluate things like:

- Being a very practical course, active class participation is a prerequisite if students are to take full advantage of the course.
- Relevant class interventions: Those interventions that make a positive contribution to the class, help the group to move forward or resolve classmate’s doubts with respect to the contents.
- Enriching class discussions: Through meaningful interventions that connect class contents with other disciplines or even to help the group to gain a more in-depth knowledge of the relevant topic.

Most of the exercises will be done in groups, for this reason ability to work in a team is an important component of the evaluation criteria, especially if we bear in mind that it is a fundamental aspect of real design work. The main points are as follows:

- Ability to work with other people towards a common goal.
- Understanding the validity of other points of view, and using this to enrich the overall value of the project.
- Awareness of the “bigger picture”: the ability of students to coordinate team needs to the demands of the global exercise.
- Ability to solve apparently insurmountable problems, refocusing the task in a manner that allows objectives to be achieved in an alternative fashion.
- Ability to allow others to express their ideas freely without trying to impose one’s own opinion.

In both group and individual assessment we will focus on the following points:

- Depth of research and quality of the solutions presented.
- Quality of deliverables and support materials that form part of the presentation.
- Ability to make a relevant summary and presentation of the outcome.

**METHODOLOGY**

The methodology used on the course will be mainly practical, in this way the theoretical contents will be presented thorough practical exercises. All the exercises are based in real work in design companies.

This methodology allows for the students a better assimilation of the course contents, and more importantly, it permits them to learn strategies to further develop their knowledge in an autonomous way.