



湖北工业大学
HUBEI UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Course Title	Integrated Research Seminar for Creative Practice
Course Code	DESN 2312
Semester	Summer 2026
Course Length	4 Weeks, 60 Contact Hours
Credits	4
Instructor	TBA
Office	TBA
Email	TBA
Prerequisite	Completion of first-year foundation studio coursework.

Course Description:

How do artists and designers investigate the world through research, observation, and critical inquiry? Integrated Research Seminar for Creative Practice expands students' abilities to conduct interdisciplinary research through analytical discussion, writing, collaborative inquiry, and project-based investigation connected to integrative creative research. The course introduces a wide range of research methodologies including digital research, visual analysis, interviews, archival exploration, field observation, mapping, and experimental inquiry.

Students will explore how research informs creative thinking across disciplines including communication design, fashion, spatial practice, product design, fine arts, and socially engaged design. Through integrative projects linked to interdisciplinary creative inquiry, students develop research questions, evaluate sources, synthesize information, and communicate findings through written, visual, and verbal forms.

Particular emphasis is placed on connecting research and creative problem-solving through iterative experimentation, reflection, collaboration, and presentation. Students learn to navigate both analog and digital platforms while strengthening critical thinking, cultural awareness, and interdisciplinary communication skills relevant to contemporary art and design practice.

This course also supports multilingual and international students through guided vocabulary development, contextual discussion of cultural references, scaffolded academic reading and writing support, and collaborative learning structures. Students engage with course materials in a supportive environment designed to strengthen confidence within an international and interdisciplinary educational environment.

Course Goals:

Students who successfully complete this course will demonstrate competency in the following general education core goals:

- **Critical Thinking Skills** – Students will engage in analytical thinking, demonstrating the ability to critically evaluate, synthesize, and apply knowledge to complex problems, and construct well-reasoned solutions and arguments.
- **Independent Research and Inquiry** – Students will conduct independent research, utilizing academic resources to explore relevant topics, formulating research questions, analyzing data, and presenting findings in a coherent, scholarly manner.
- **Problem-Solving and Application** – Students will apply theoretical concepts and methodologies learned in the course to real-world problems, demonstrating the ability to develop practical solutions informed by academic inquiry.
- **Global and Cultural Awareness** – Students will gain awareness of the global and cultural contexts relevant to the course, appreciating diverse perspectives and considering the implications of their studies in a broader, international context.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Conduct research using digital, visual, textual, and field-based methodologies;
- Develop focused research questions related to contemporary art and design topics;
- Analyze visual, written, and cultural materials critically and contextually;
- Apply interdisciplinary research methods to support creative development;
- Integrate reading, writing, discussion, and visual inquiry into a cohesive research process;
- Evaluate and synthesize information from multiple primary and secondary sources;
- Present research findings effectively through oral, written, and visual communication;
- Participate constructively in collaborative discussions and critiques;
- Demonstrate increased confidence in academic research and creative inquiry practices;
- Reflect critically on the relationship between research, experimentation, and interdisciplinary creative inquiry.

Textbooks/Supplies/Materials/Equipment/ Technology or Technical Requirements:

Lupton, Ellen. *Graphic Design Thinking: Beyond Brainstorming*.

Berger, John. *Ways of Seeing*.

Hanington, Bruce and Bella Martin. *Universal Methods of Design*.

Selected essays, exhibition catalogs, interviews, podcasts, and multimedia resources will be provided.

Course Requirements:

Research Journal and Reflective Writing (15%)

Students maintain an ongoing journal documenting observations, reading responses, vocabulary development, visual references, field notes, and reflective analysis connected to seminar topics and studio projects.

Reading Responses and Discussion Participation (15%)

Students complete written and verbal responses to assigned readings, participate in seminar discussions, and contribute thoughtfully to collaborative critique and peer feedback activities.

Research Methods Exercises (20%)

Short assignments introduce methodologies such as interviewing, mapping, archival analysis, visual ethnography, digital research, and observational studies.

Collaborative Inquiry Project (15%)

Students work in groups to investigate a shared topic and present findings through visual, written, and oral formats integrating research and creative analysis.

Midterm Research Presentation (15%)

Students develop and present an individual research investigation demonstrating critical analysis, source integration, and conceptual development.

Final Integrative Research Project (15%)

Students complete a final interdisciplinary research project synthesizing course methodologies, critical inquiry, and creative communication strategies.

Attendance and Engagement (5%)

Students are expected to attend all sessions, contribute actively to discussions, presentations, and collaborative activities, and participate respectfully in collaborative learning environments.

Assessments: Activity

Assessments: Activity	Percent Contribution
Research Journal and Reflective Writing	15%
Reading Responses and Discussion Participation	15%
Research Methods Exercises	20%
Collaborative Inquiry Project	15%
Midterm Research Presentation	15%
Final Integrative Research Project	15%
Attendance and Engagement	5%

Grading:

Final grades will be based on the sum of all possible course points as noted above.

Grade	Percentage of available points
A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73
D	64-69

D- 60-63
F 0-59

Course Schedule:

The schedule of activities is subject to change at the reasonable discretion of the instructor. Minor changes will be announced in class, major ones provided in writing.

DESN 2312 Schedule		
Lecture	Topic	Readings
L1	Introduction to Integrative Research Seminar	Course Reader
L2	Research as Creative Inquiry	Lupton, Introduction
L3	Observation, Perception, and Visual Culture	Berger Ch.1
L4	Ways of Seeing and Interpreting Images	Berger Ch.2
L5	Research Journals and Reflective Writing	Supplemental Readings
L6	Research Sources and Visual Archives	Universal Methods of Design
L7	Interviewing, Dialogue, and Oral Histories	Selected Essays
L8	Field Observation and Site-Based Inquiry	Supplemental Readings
L9	Mapping, Systems, and Information Visualization	Lupton Selections
L10	Media, Identity, and Contemporary Culture	Berger Ch.3
L11	Midterm Research Workshop	Independent Research
L12	Midterm Presentations and Discussion	Review
L13	Collaboration and Collective Inquiry	Supplemental Readings
L14	Photography, Documentation, and Visual Narratives	Multimedia Sources
L15	Objects, Materials, and Everyday Experience	Universal Methods of Design
L16	Community, Identity, and Cultural Context	Selected Articles
L17	Ethics, Representation, and Research Responsibility	Supplemental Readings
L18	Storytelling and Narrative Structures in Design	Lupton Selections
L19	Digital Platforms and Online Research Methods	Digital Tutorials
L20	Integrative Thinking and Creative Research	Universal Methods of Design
L21	Experimentation, Ambiguity, and Creative Risk	Supplemental Readings
L22	Developing Final Research Narratives	Independent Research
L23	Final Project Consultations	Review Materials
L24	Final Presentation Preparation	Course Reader
L25	Final Presentations and Course Reflection	Final Review

Accommodation Statement:

Academic accommodations may be made for any student who notifies the instructor of the need for an accommodation. It is imperative that you take the initiative to bring such needs to the instructor's attention, as he/she is not legally permitted to inquire. Students who may require assistance in emergency evacuations should contact the instructor as to the most appropriate procedures to follow.

Academic Integrity Statement

Each student is expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity in academic and professional matters. The University reserves the right to take disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, against any student who is found guilty of academic dishonesty or otherwise fails to meet the standards. Any student

judged to have engaged in academic dishonesty in coursework may receive a reduced or failing grade for the work in question and/or for the course.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, dishonesty in quizzes, tests, or assignments; claiming credit for work not done or done by others; hindering the academic work of other students; misrepresenting academic or professional qualifications within or outside the University; and nondisclosure or misrepresentation in filling out applications or other University records.

Other Items:

Attendance and Expectations

All students are required to attend every class, except in cases of illness, serious family concerns, or other major problems. We expect that students will arrive on time, be prepared to listen and participate as appropriate, and stay for the duration of a meeting rather than drift in or out casually. In short, we anticipate that students will show professors and fellow students maximum consideration by minimizing the disturbances that cause interruptions in the learning process. This means that punctuality is a must, that cellular phones be turned off, and that courtesy is the guiding principle in all exchanges among students and faculty. You will be responsible for the materials and ideas presented in the lecture.

Assignment Due Dates

All written assignments must be turned in at the time specified. Late assignments will not be accepted unless prior information has been obtained from the instructor. If you believe you have extenuating circumstances, please contact the instructor as soon as possible.

Make-Up Work

The instructor will not provide students with class information or make-up assignments/quizzes/exams missed due to an unexcused absence. Absences will be excused and assignments/quizzes/exams may be made up only with written documentation of an authorized absence. Every effort should be made to avoid scheduling appointments during class. An excused student is responsible for requesting any missed information from the instructor and setting up any necessary appointments outside of class.

Access, Special Needs, and Disabilities

Please notify the instructor at the start of the semester if you have any documented disabilities, a medical issue, or any special circumstances that require attention, and the school will be happy to assist.