

Master of Design (MDes)

MDes/MPS Seminar I: Interaction and Service Design Concepts

A survey of the history, present and future of interaction design and its methods, from analogue affordances through skeuomorphic interfaces to tangible interactions. This course locates Interaction Design in a broader history of design, at the nexus of Human Computer Interaction, the Internet and the emergence of Knowledge and Service Economies. It also explores the psychology and philosophy of interaction design, and changing infrastructures, technologies and business models behind the practice.

MDes/MPS Studio I: Designing for Interactions

Multiple introductory projects in interaction design, capitalizing on student diversity of past design experience and utilizing skills being developed in parallel ixd lab and cd studio, targeted at designing for services with a business emphasis, and designing for social innovation with a policy emphasis.

Interaction Design Lab

Fundamentals of interaction design through application of theory and iterative design methods, including specs, wireframes, storyboards, video, and simulations/demonstrations; emphasis on screen based design for mobile, tablet, and web; levels of scale from controls and applications to environments; technical skilling for prototyping, programming/coding, and computational thinking.

Communication Design Studio: Theory and Practice

Learn how the form of communication impacts the way people perceive and process messages by investigating communication theories and applying them to the design of messages; learn how to approach communication challenges—pose questions, observe and capture information through sketching and photographing, develop and iterate concepts, and evaluate their effectiveness.

Colloquium

Exposure to faculty research interests and expertise through a series of short, informal lectures, each faculty member presenting work and inviting class discussion; geared toward both broadened design exposure and selection of possible thesis advisors for MDes students.

Thesis Prep

Short series of activity-based workshops, in the fall focused on how to frame a research project and resourcing thesis advising and expertise; in the spring focused on how to formulate and iterate upon good research questions, scoping an appropriate level of detail for a one-year thesis project.

MDes/MPS/MA Seminar II: Transition Design

A survey of the history, present and future of sustainable design, design for service and social innovation, and an examination of design-enabled mechanisms of social change (whether political or entrepreneurial) and how they interface with social psychology, economics, and technological change.

MDes/MPS Studio II: Research Based Design for Interactions

Client-sponsored team projects taken through intensive, 15-week integrated human-centered research and design process, emphasis on quality of interaction design solutions and how they are communicated, responsive to needs and desires of people in context of service and/or social innovation propositions for business or policy.

Research Methods for Design

Introduction to research methods integrated in the process of design for interactions, sequenced through territory definition, exploratory methods, generative-participatory methods, and evaluative/testing methods; learned in lectures "just in time" for direct application in the Studio II projects.

Thesis Project

One-year thesis projects developed through an intensive human centered research and design process under the guidance of an advisor with appropriate expertise, culminating in the fall in creative design concepts evidently connected to research, and in the spring culminating in a creative design solution evidently addressing research questions.

MDes Seminar III: Advanced Interaction and Service Design Concepts

This seminar is a survey of philosophies and empirical studies on the nature of designing. The course explores the methods and findings of research differentiating novice and expert designing, as well as what is distinctive about different forms of designing (architecture, communication, fashion, product) and the ways design practice is evolving in response to changing economies and technologies of production and consumption. The course focuses on the recent shift in Design Studies from more semiotic readings of design-as-meaning-making to more materialist accounts related to the Thing and Practice turns in cultural theory.

Electives

Opportunities for students to broaden knowledge and skills in interaction or communication design, professional writing, or key areas of design intersecting with business, policy, service, or social innovation, from offerings within and outside the School of Design.