Design is a powerful force in culture and society. It surrounds us, whatever we do and wherever we go. It has an impact on us, whether we are aware of it or not. It is not easy to define all the things the word “design” encompasses. It is even becoming difficult to say where design ends and phenomena like art, architecture and popular media begin. One thing is certain: design is not just about creating “cool-looking” things - it is much more. Whatever form it takes, design affects our understanding of the world. Basically design is a form of communication - by creating and using designs we send messages about ourselves to others (in other words, it is a semiotic affair).

Design Culture - an Introduction (Desma 10) offers a broad overview of the roles of design in the lives of human beings around the globe. It demonstrates that design does not only mean the “high designs” created by famous designers and fashion companies. The most efficient and successful design is often invisible - devices like door knobs and traffic lights help us without drawing attention to themselves. To understand design culture we must also pay attention to invisible things and study the motives that guide and inform their planning, marketing, reception and uses.

Design Culture - an Introduction will discuss design from a cultural and social perspective. The interconnections between design and technology will be emphasized. The relationship between design and art will be explored within various contexts, from the Victorian era and early 20th century modernism to the 1960s pop culture and Postmodernism. A rich array of demonstration material, ranging from classical industrial design to recent postmodern design trends and alternative radical design currents will be introduced. The goal is to promote design awareness by instructing the students to observe everyday things in new critical ways. Understanding design is important for everybody regardless of discipline and profession. It is a tool for life.
WEEKLY SCHEDULE

MEETING 1 (Oct. 3) What is Design? What Is Design Culture?
Keywords: Definitions of design and culture / Design, nature, culture / Can animals design? / Design and Artificial Intelligence

Readings:

MEETING 2 (Oct. 10) Design Culture – The Basics
Keywords: Visible and invisible design / high and low design / design and art / Etymology of the word “design” / The beginnings of design culture / designers and engineers / early design debates

Readings:

MEETING 3 (Oct. 17) Design, Society and Technology
Keywords: Function and ornament / design display / mass production and assembly line / Mechanization and automation

Readings:

MEETING 4 (Oct. 24) Modernism, Streamlining, Urban Design
Keywords: Dreams of Total Design / Art Nouveau / Art Deco / Constructivism / Bauhaus / Streamlining / World’s Fairs

Readings:

MEETING 5 (Oct. 31) Design, Consumers, Corporations, Branding
Keywords: Designing and marketing consumer goods / “built-in obsolescence” / corporate design and branding.
(MIDTERM TO BE HANDED IN FOR GRADING!)

Readings:

MEETING 6 (Nov. 7)
SPECIAL SESSION: The Great UCLA Design Game 7.0
- BRING GOOD WALKING SHOES AND NOT TOO MUCH TO CARRY! If you are unable to walk please contact your TA in advance for an alternative task!

Readings:
Erkki Huhtamo: "Basic Concepts of Semiotics" (flyer) (No 22 in the Course Reader)

MEETING 7 (Nov. 14)
Consumerism, Pop, Alternative Design
Keywords: Design and pop culture / Underground and psychedelia / Punk, Situationism / Design as weapon / Design as Bricolage

Readings:
MEETING 8 (Nov. 21)
Design in the Postmodern Era
Keywords: Postmodernism / Design and art – blurred boundaries / Designer as “Superstar”/ Emotional Design / Device Art

Readings:

-------- Nov. 28 Thanksgiving Holiday, No Class Meeting!  ---------

MEETING 9 (Dec. 5) Design, Technology, Sustainability
Mobile and wearable design / Sustainable design / reinventing the city / design as a strategy for survival

Readings:

MEETING 10 (Dec. 12) Special Session: Peeks into the Design Process!
- A cavalcade of professional designers will be presenting and discussing their work in class. The line-up will be announced later.
(FINAL PROJECTS TO BE HANDED IN!)

Readings: None

FINALS WEEK: No Class Meeting!
ASSIGNMENTS

The final grade will consist of the following elements:

- Midterm assignment. Individual homework (a writing assignment). Topic TBA.

- Final assignment. Can be realized either individually or as groupwork (from three to five people in a group). Topic TBA.

- Three unannounced quizzes based on the previous week’s lecture and the readings for the day when the quiz takes place. (Notes from the previous lectures will be posted on the website to help you). Only TWO of the THREE quizzes will be taken into account.

- The Great UCLA Design Game 7.0 (November 7). A special game played by the entire class around the campus during the class hours. You will get the assignment (instructions) in the classroom on the day of the game at 9am.

- You are required to participate in at least two (1) design-related events taking place on the UCLA campus (such as lectures, exhibitions, performances, round table discussions, etc.). A list of suitable events will be available on the class website. You must write a comment (minimum 200 words) of each of them and submit these with your final project.

ADDITIONAL VOLUNTARY TASKS

- A special evening screening of Japanese Device Art, including the rarely seen Maywa Denki Paris Concert will be organized. Place and time TBA. This screening is voluntary, but it counts as one of the design-related events (see above) if you choose to write a comment (minimum 200 words) about it. Bring your friends too!

- Blog. Five (5) or more blog postings will raise your final grade by one step (+). A prompt will be posted after each lecture. Your blog comment must by posted before 9:00 am the next Friday following the lecture.

GRADING

The overall grade (100 %) consists of:

- Midterm assignment (35 %)
- Final assignment (40 %)
- Quizzes (2 x 5% = 10%)
- The Great UCLA Design Game 7.0 (5%)
- The two mandatory event reports (2 x 5 = 10%)
- Five (5) or more blog postings (if submitted on time) will raise the final grade by one step (+).

- More than two absences (without the instructor's permission) will lower the final grade by one step (-) per absence.

REQUIRED READINGS

All the required readings are included in the Course Reader, edited by Professor Huhtamo. The assigned weekly readings have been numbered in the weekly schedule (above).

The course reader is mandatory. It is available at CopyMat, 10919 Weyburn Avenue (Westwood Village), tel. 310 824 5276. It is NOT available at the UCLA Store!

A copy will be on reserve for consultation at the Arts Library (Public Policy Building).

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL READINGS

The following books are NOT mandatory, but are recommended as additional readings. Whenever possible, copies are on reserve at the Arts Library (Public Policy Building):

TIME AND PLACE OF THE CLASS MEETINGS
Fridays from 9:00 am to 11:50 am at the Broad Auditorium (Broad 2160E).

CONTACTS

Prof. Huhtamo: by email (erhuhta@ucla.edu) or during office hours (Fridays, 12:30 pm – 1:30 pm, Dept. of Design | Media Arts, Broad Art Center, room 3251).

T.A.’s. Each student will be assigned one of the following T.A’s as the primary contact person. For minor issues and questions it is recommended to use e-mail. The email addresses and office hours of the TAs are as follows:

- Jesse R. Fleming (reding.fleming@gmail.com), Wednesdays 3:30-4:30Pm at MARS LAB, Broad Art Center, room 3246
- Camella D. Kim (camellak@ucla.edu), Fridays, 12noon-1pm, room 3211, Broad Art Center (Graduate Studio)
- Hsin-Yu Lin (hsinyulin@ucla.edu), Tuesdays 4-5pm, Café Untitled.
- Neil A. Mendoza (neil@neilmendoza.com), Thursdays, 12-1pm, Café Untitled
- Dustin O’Hara (dustin.ohara@gmail.com), Fridays, 1-2pm, Café Untitled
- Theo Triantafyllidis (theotrian@gmail.com), Wednesdays, 4-5pm, Café Untitled

COURSE WEBSITE  https://ccle.ucla.edu/course/view/14F-DESMA10-1
BLOG  http://desma10fall14.wordpress.com