DESIGN WRITING: INSIGHT AND CRITIQUE

INSTRUCTOR:

Tania Allen

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Office Hours: by appointment

COURSE INFORMATION:

D492/592

TU 1:30 – 4:15

LEAZAR 316

All assignments and course documents will be available via Google Docs.

Course Overview

For design practice to be effective and challenging, it is important for designers to look not just at the artifacts created, but the environments and theories that are contributing to the creative process. The development of a critical voice must include those engaged in the design process and application for it to have merit, authenticity and rigor. If those voices are not put forth, the current and future of the field is dictated by others. *The Student Publication* is an opportunity for such a critical evaluation of design and the design process, as it relates to contemporary ideas, theories, currents and cultures, to be analyzed and articulated by young designers. It is a chance for you to consider new theories or perspective on design process and practice to enhance your own work, as well as how designed experiences contribute to our discipline, our communities, and the world.

This course will have two main outcomes:

1. **Develop a body of individual essays that address personally compelling and critical topics in design**
2. **Contribute to the thematic and content development of Volume 38 of *The Student Publication.***

Learning Objectives

— Gain exposure to a range of people, publications and forums in the field of design theory and criticism;

— Generate a working resource of new journals, books, and other forums for discussion that can be drawn on to support ideas, concepts and topics;

— Develop a critical voice for design within a larger context, culture and environment;

— Articulate strong, relevant, and clear arguments;

— Explore the relationship between designing and writing as simultaneously developmental activities;

— Make careful and diligent connections between the designed artifact and larger theories of practice and process;

— Interpret the rigor of the curation process as crafting a larger, meta narrative;

— Understand the editorial process within and independent of the curation process.

Course Objectives

At the end of the semester, our goal is to have generated:

— A compelling theme for Volume 37 of *The Student Publication*;

— A rigorously selected, evaluated and edited body of content for publication;

— A promotional piece to market Volume 37;

— A body of student work produced throughout the course and as an ONLINE and/or EXHIBITED compendium to the printed publication.

Course Expectations and Organization

STUDENT PUBLICATION
COMMITTEES + ROLES

Editors and Editorial

This committee will be responsible for leading the development of criteria for submissions, defining and leading the call for submissions, leading the review process and delegating responsibilities for editing and responding to submissions.

Documentation and Design

The documentation and design committee will be responsible for leading the initiative to develop the theme and concepts for the prospectus, and any modifications to the online environment. In addition, this committee will be responsible for documenting aspects of the creative and editorial process to create *The Student Publication.*

Marketing and Publication Relations

The marketing and PR committee will be responsible for disseminating all call, follow ups and general promotion of *The Publication.* Working closely with both the design and editorial teams, the Marketing team will also lead the final exhibition/launch party at the end of the semester.

Project Manager

As project manager, this person will work closely with Tania to maintain the schedule and budget of the project. In addition, the project manager will make sure that all teams are communicating with each other when necessary. They will be the "hub" of the project.

The course will be organized in service of two main goals:

1/ Development of a series of individual exploratory design "papers/submissions" that focus on a variety of viewpoints and perspectives on the theme of Volume 36. These submissions will embody the critical evaluation of design as related to theory and practice.

2/ Editing, curating and crafting the content of the *Student Publication* into a Prospectus that will be distributed nationally and internationally as a way to promote the publication through subscriptions and individual orders.

Classwork and Expectations

The central goal of this course is to create a student–led and developed *Publication*. This should embody and explore relevant, timely and compelling topics that will be of equal interest to students and practitioners outside of our institution.

To that end, projects are designed to help students explore these topics as a way to think through the potential of various aspects of design to be explored on a larger scale through the Publication itself. It is expected and necessary that students will be self–driven and develop certain topics without the express direction of the instructor. Whle there are precedents that mgiht be influential, there are no preconceived notions of what the Publication will be about, nor specific outcomes in mind for the individual work. All aspects of this course necessitate students to define for themselves what the content of the projects shall be and the resources that they will want to draw on as evidence of its relevance as a topic.

Individual Work

A series of exploratory projects will be assigned as a way to process idea and theories of importance within the field of design. They will also be used to begin and continue conversations that are relevant to our field and that might be themes for Volume 36 of the *Publication*. In addition, the projects will be used to become exposed to and research topics through various design journals, authors, theorists and critics. In these, you will begin to make various connections between your own work and what is being talked about in the larger field of design; hone your writing; and define arguments and positions in support of, or in contrast to, existing ideas and theories of design.

Collective Work to Create *The Publication*

We will move through the process of creating the journal by discussing, outlining and working through: thematic, participatory and editorial criteria; schedule and budgetting constraints; format, medium, and visual language; distribution and dissemination methods; and exposure and review processes.

It is imperative that students follow through on commitments that they make, take excellent notes on what they are supposed to be responsible for, and engage in timely and consistent communication. Each team will assign a team leader / project manager who will be in charge of recording and following through on these commitments in addition to coordinating with other teams where necessary.

Course Organization and Assessment

BOOKS AND RESOURCES
The following books are on reserve in the library. Also, look through other course reserves to see what they might have.

Antonelli, Paola. *Design and the Elastic Mind.* New York: Museum of Modern Art; London : Thames & Hudson [distributor], 2008.

Crysler, C. Greig. *Writing Spaces Discourses of Architecture, Urbanism and the Built Environment.* New York: Routledge, 2003.

Lees-Maffei, Grace. *Writing Design: Words and Objects.* London: New York : Berg Publishers, 2012

Manaugh, Geoff. *The BLDG BLOG Book.* San Francisco: Chronicle Books, c2009.

Mitchell, William J. *Placing Words: Symbols, Space and the City.* Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2005.

Poggenpohl, Sharon and Keiichi Sato. *Design integrations research and collaboration.* Chicago : Intellect, the University of Chicago Press, 2009.

Verbeek, Peter Paul. *Moralizing technology : understanding and designing the morality of things.* Chicago : University of Chicago Press, 2011.

William Sloane. *The Craft of Writing.* New York : Norton, c1979.

Attendance and Participation

As a colllective effort, class attendance and participation is critical. You will be expected to be on time and in attendance for all classes unless you have alerted me in advance. Absences above 2 will result in 5% deduction in final grade for each class missed. Absences above 4 (25% of the class) will result in automatic failure.

Participation in class includes being prepared in reading, writing and discussion. Working with students outside of class will be necessary throughout the semester as we get closer to completion of the publication and might need to discuss various elements with outside participants and partners.

Policies on Incomplete Grades:

If an extended deadline is not authorized by the Graduate School, an unfinished incomplete grade will automatically change to an F after either (a) the end of the next regular semester in which the student is enrolled (not including summer sessions), or (b) by the end of 12 months if the student is not enrolled, whichever is shorter. Incompletes that change to F will count as an attempted course on transcripts. The burden of fulfilling an incomplete grade is the responsibility of the student. The university policy on incomplete grades is located at http://policies.ncsu.edu/regulation/reg-02-50-3. Additional information relative to incomplete grades for graduate students can be found in the Graduate Administrative Handbook in Section 3.18.F at http://www.fis.ncsu.edu/grad_publicns/handbook/

Late Assignments:

Assignments will be due on the dates listed in the handouts. Assignments must be posted or turned in according to the stated requirements. Failure to turn in your work on time will result in a grade of zero. This includes printed materials for pinups.

Attendance Policy:

Students are expected to be on time and present for the entire class. Three unexcused absences will result in failure of the course. Students arriving over 20 minutes late to a class will be counted absent for that class. For excused absences see: http://policies.ncsu.edu/regulation/reg-02-20-03.

Students are expected to make up any missed course work due to excused absences within a week of their absence. Work missed for unexcused absences is due on the student's first day back in class.

Academic Integrity:

Students are required to comply with the university policy on academic integrity found in the Code of Student Conduct found at http://policies.ncsu.edu/policy/pol-11-35-01

Academic Honesty:

See http://policies.ncsu.edu/policy/pol-11-35-01 for a detailed explanation of academic honesty.

Honor Pledge:

Your signature on any test or assignment indicates "I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this test or assignment."

JOURNALS

Icograda

Design Studies Journal

International Journal of Design

Design Issues

Visible Language

Design Philosophy Papers

BLOGS + PEOPLE

Lined and Unlined

Peter Hall

Design Observer

City of Sound

BldgBlog

Electronically-Hosted Course Components:

This course may involve electronic sharing or posting of personally identifiable student work or other information with persons not taking or administering the course. Students will be asked to sign a consent allowing disclosure of their personally identifiable work. No student is required to sign the consent as a condition of taking the course. If a student does not want to sign the consent, he or she has the right to ask the instructor for an alternative, private means of completing the coursework.

Accommodations for Disabilities:

Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with verifiable disabilities. In order to take advantage of available accommodations, student must register with the Disability Services Office (http://www.ncsu.edu/dso), 919–515–7653. For more information on NC State's policy on working with students with disabilities, please see the Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Regulation at http://policies.ncsu.edu/regulation/reg–02–20–01.

Non-Discrimination Policy:

NC State University provides equality of opportunity in education and employment for all students and employees. Accordingly, NC State affirms its commitment to maintain a work environment for all employees and an academic environment for all students that is free from all forms of discrimination. Discrimination based on race, color, religion, creed, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, or sexual orientation is a violation of state and federal law and/or NC State University policy and will not be tolerated. Harassment of any person (either in the form of quid pro quo or creation of a hostile environment) based on race, color, religion, creed, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, or sexual orientation also is a violation of state and federal law and/or NC State University policy and will not be tolerated. Retaliation against any person who complains about discrimination is also prohibited. NC State's policies and regulations covering discrimination, harassment, and retaliation may be accessed at http://policies.ncsu.edu/policy/pol-04-25-05 or http://www.ncsu.edu/equal_op/. Any person who feels that he or she has been the subject of prohibited discrimination, harassment, or retaliation should contact the Office for Equal Opportunity (OEO) at 919-515-3148.

Grade Distribution

Individual Writing	**45%**
Ex_01. Personal Essay	
Ex_02. Interview / Biography	
Ex_03. Case Study Argument	
Collective work on publication	**45%**
Team Contracts	
Class participation	**10%**

Team Contracts

Once Volume 38 Teams are established, each team will be asked to create a Team Contract with defined goals works towards accomplishing throughout the semester. The contracts may be modified during the semester, but your final evaluation will be based on the contract that each team established. Consideration will be given both to quantity and quality of work in addition to completion and follow-through.

Evaluation Rubric

Evaluation of students contributions to the collective work on Volume 37 of *The Publication* will use the following criteria:

Quantity of Work: Contributed equally to the development process. Helped the team move forward by taking on their fair share.

Quality of Work: Work was well-crafted, and well-executed. Work didn't have to be re-done and showed strong attention to detail. Contributed new, and relevant ideas to the project.

Attendance and Punctuality: Was present and attentive during all group meetings. Was respectful of group time and helped the group make headway on the project.

Communication and Follow-Through: Responded in a timely manner to team members via email or other communication form. Kept Google Doc updated and followed through on commitments. Made sure to keep team members in the loop about their progress, especially when/if getting delayed on agreed upon deadline.

Overall Participation: The contribution of the team member added to the overall quality of the work. The team member's contribution helped the overall design improve.

Advisory Committee

The Development of the *Student Publication* will be advised by a committee made up of Faculty from the College of Design (and any other advisors deemed important by students. This Committee will be identified at the beginning of the Semester. There will be two Advisory Committee meetings throughout the semester. Student Teams will give updates and will be expected to explaing coherently and clearly their progress at these meetings.

General Schedule

Because of the nature of publication development, the class will go through general phases where students will be more focused on Publication work, then focused on individual work (that responds to the Publication theme.) In the very initial development, student work will be driving the publication work, so we will reserve Tuesdays for individual, student writing work and Thursdays for *Publication* progress.

Phase 01: Publication + Student work
Phase 02: Student (+ Publication) Work
Phase 03: Publication (+ Student) Work

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