Summer Semester 2025

course descriptions

compulsory international courses

German Class

teacher: Carol Battista

ECTS: 2

Max. number of participants: /

Course content: German language basics pursuant to A1 level (or A2 for students with prior knowledge) as well as specific university/survival vocabulary (Course may need to be split into 2 groups depending on previous levels)

Learning goals: Orientation to Schwäbisch Gmünd and German culture.
Expansion of previous knowledge of German for intermediate students.
Introduction to basic German (A1) and “survival “ German

International Seminar Week

12. – 16. May 2025

ECTS: 2
Course content: This Lab Week is designed to give students a break from the normal schedule of lectures. The HfG invites workers from inside the university, as well as professors and lecturers from outside the campus to lead workshops for a week. More information will be given after the start of the Semester.

Presentation Skills Workshop

teacher: Tanya Matefi

ECTS: 2

Max. number of participants: /

Course content: The purpose of this workshop is for participants to practice various techniques, as well as develop self-confidence, in order to make successful presentations by practically making several presentations for a “built-in” audience, while receiving feedback and tips from the trainer and the other participants. In a safe and positive environment, participants can overcome their inhibitions and practice making different kinds of presentations. Individual presentations, team presentations, improvised and prepared presentations. The workshop has intense sessions, with many improvised presentations, followed by a break in which participants have time to work on prepared presentations. Students are encouraged to film their presentations for the purpose of self-assessment and reflection. Learning Goals: 1. To learn and practice good communication skills and public speaking techniques in order to confidently make effective and memorable presentations. 2. To develop self-confidence in presenting, overcoming inhibitions and practice and implement relaxation techniques to overcome presentation anxiety. 3. To learn and practice optimal ways to prepare and make individual and group presentations.

---

product design courses

Design in Germany - Past and present

teacher: Matthias Held

ECTS: 2

course content:

In this course, participants are given an overview of the most important historical design schools in Germany, such as the Bauhaus and the HfG Ulm. Furthermore, current practices and discourses on design are conveyed. A central component of the course are several excursions to leading design offices in various design fields such as product design, interaction design, communication and brand design, space and communication.

product design 2A1 / 2A2

teacher: Leif Huff

ECTS: 6

Max. number of participants: 6

Course content:

"Conditions"

On/off, active/passive, flexible/static … products can exist in more than one state. Many products transition between two conditions, controlled by function, use, environmental factors, or mechanical principles. How can the intended use of a product and its relationship with the user become a source of inspiration for design?

The goal of this course is to explore the different states of a product. We examine how human behavior is reflected in product design and interaction. The task is to develop a product concept that embodies more than one condition. The final design of the concepts will be influenced by human behavior and will clarify the intended functionality of
the product.

Students will research and analyze products in their everyday environment, identify transitional states, and formulate a "How Might We" question as the starting point for their product development. The aim is to design a physical product that is inspired by the transition between two states and clearly communicates its intended functionality.

Each project phase will be introduced with a short lecture.

- Introduction and Briefing: Presentation of the project topic, definition of expectations, and project plan.
- Research: Observations in the students' own environment (e.g., at home, in public spaces, during daily activities).
- If applicable, interviews with users to identify recurring usage patterns. Analysis of existing products that function with state transitions.
- Synthesis and Question Framing: Formulation of a "How Might We" question to define a clear design challenge. Reframing the problem statement based on findings.
- Concept Development: Brainstorming, variation development. Sketches and early models to explore solutions. Iterative refinement through feedback rounds (in teams, in class, and individually).
- Final Concept Selection and Product Development: Detailed refinement of the product regarding function, formal expression, mechanics, and material choice.
- Model Building and Presentation Development: Creation of a functional and/or design model. Presentation of the concept through sketches, usage scenarios, renderings, and models.
- Final Presentation and Exhibition: Presentation of the product with a physical model, visualizations, usage scenarios, and design process documentation. Preparation for the semester exhibition and personal portfolio.

- The aim of the course is to develop a well-founded design concept and. product based on research and analysis of existing products and their state transitions. The entire design process will be covered:
- Research and analysis of products with binary states and their impact on usability and functionality.
- Development of a "How Might We" question that defines a clear design challenge.
- Concept development and variation exploration.
- Creation of a product concept that uses a deliberate state transition to enhance function or sustainability.
- Prototyping and iterative refinement, with a focus on mechanics, material selection, and user interaction.
- Presentation and documentation of the process for the semester exhibition and personal portfolio.

Students will develop a physical product that deliberately uses a state transition as a key design element.

Assessment will be based on:

- Quality of research and insights gained.
- Development of the "How Might We" question.
- Development and design of the product.
- Functional and/or design model and or rendering that demonstrates the state transition.
- Documentation of the design process (sketches, model development, reflection).
- Final presentation and preparation for the exhibition (if applicable).

Suggested Reading:

Don Norman - The Design of Everyday Things
A classic in the field, this book introduces students to the importance of user-centered design and how thoughtful design can improve the usability and experience of everyday products.

Jane Fulton Suri - Thoughtless Acts?: Observations on Intuitive Design This book is a visual exploration of how people interact with the world around them,
offering insights into intuitive design based on natural human behaviors.

product design 4B

teacher: Felix Cordes

ECTS: 6

Max. number of participants: 7

Course content:

Living Products – How human should technology be?

CES 2025 clearly demonstrated one thing above all: AI-driven products, robotics and natural interaction are at the heart of innovation. A robot vacuum cleaner with a gripper arm, an AI assistant that moves freely around the home or a children's toy that recognizes people and objects. This seems like something from another world and leaves many people with mixed feelings.
Never before has technology changed our interaction with products so fundamentally.

In a future in which we communicate with objects more and more naturally, key design questions are coming into focus: How can autonomous, proactive products be designed responsibly? To what extent can technology feel “human”? And in which areas of application is there the greatest potential for self-thinking & self-acting products? Digital design is no longer limited to screens - it is increasingly becoming a central element of product design.

In this project course, we will focus in particular on the question: How should products be designed when the inanimate object becomes a partner?

In a joint research phase, the students will determine which use cases can actually be meaningful, responsible and problem solving applications for “living products”. Based on this, we carry out a design process in project teams (2-3 people per team) in which we analyze current products, conduct user research, develop ideas and concepts and finally transform them into a finished product design.

Part of the design process is, for example, the “reverse brainstorming” method, in which we first design the worst-case scenario (how should it be under no circumstances?) in order to derive requirements for the right design.

Fundamental questions of the design process can be:

- What added value can a completely new form of interaction bring?
- How will trends, technology and design change our relationship with products in the future?
- How must AI be designed when it takes on a physical form?
- ...

As part of the course, we will also talk about topics relating to the upcoming practical semester: What makes a good portfolio, how do application processes work, how do I find the right internship?

The course is a project course in which students go through their own design process from research, analysis, ideation, conception, testing and design detailing to the finished product design. In addition, the course is supported with theoretical input and practical examples on the topics: Characterization & Uncanny Valley, Design Futuring Methodology, User Interaction, Speculative Design etc. The aim of the course is to experimentally understand the influence of design on our future and to understand

design as a holistic concept. The connection between social responsibility and the design of technology plays an overriding role here.
The end result of the project should be a product that solves a problem through proactive technology (e.g. AI) and shows how self-thinking technology can be used in a responsible and meaningful way in the future.

Living Products - How human should technology be?
CES 2025 clearly demonstrated one thing above all: AI-driven products, robotics and natural interaction are at the heart of innovation. A robot vacuum cleaner with a gripper arm, an AI assistant that moves freely around the home or a children's toy that recognizes people and objects. This seems like something from another world and leaves many people with mixed feelings.
Never before has technology changed our interaction with products so fundamentally.
In a future in which we communicate with objects more and more naturally, key design questions are coming into focus: How can autonomous, proactive products be designed responsibly? To what extent can technology feel “human”? And in which areas of application is there the greatest potential for self-thinking & self-acting products? Digital design is no longer limited to screens - it is increasingly becoming a central element of product design.
In this project course, we will focus in particular on the question: How should products be designed when the inanimate object becomes a partner?

In a joint research phase, the students will determine which use cases can actually be meaningful, responsible and problem solving applications for “living products”. Based on this, we carry out a design process in project teams (2-3 people per team) in which we analyze current products, conduct user research, develop ideas and concepts and finally transform them into a finished product design.

Part of the design process is, for example, the “reverse brainstorming” method, in which we first design the worst-case scenario (how should it be under no circumstances?) in order to derive requirements for the right design.
Fundamental questions of the design process can be:

- What added value can a completely new form of interaction bring?
- How will trends, technology and design change our relationship with products in the future?
- How must AI be designed when it takes on a physical form?
- ...

As part of the course, we will also talk about topics relating to the upcoming practical semester: What makes a good portfolio, how do application processes work, how do I find the right internship?

The course is a project course in which students go through their own design process from research, analysis, ideation, conception, testing and design detailing to the finished product design. In addition, the course is supported with theoretical input and practical examples on the topics: Characterization & Uncanny Valley, Design Futuring Methodology, User Interaction, Speculative Design etc. The aim of the course is to experimentally understand the influence of design on our future and to understand design as a holistic concept. The connection between social responsibility and the design of technology plays an overriding role here.

The end result of the project should be a product that solves a problem through proactive technology (e.g. AI) and shows how self-thinking technology can be used in a responsible and meaningful way in the future.

3D Design 2

teacher: Jessica Bulling

ECTS: 7

Max. number of participants: 6

Course content:

The curriculum focuses on practice-oriented, non-applied but application-oriented project work. Problems and principles related to the semantic impact of form-material combinations will be studied, and experiments and solutions will be presented, analyzed, discussed, and evaluated. Documentary support through text, images, and graphics will serve as complementary exercises. The students will gain a profound understanding of the significance and effect of form-material combinations. The students will be able to consciously utilize form and material to communicate a clear message of semantic impact. Additionally, they will be capable of employing various design methods and visualization techniques and will understand their possibilities and limitations. The students will enhance their design skills and acquire techniques for generating and developing semantic design concepts. The acquired knowledge of product and material semantics will enable the students to critically reflect on design solutions.

CAD Rhino

teacher: Christian Jagdhuber

ECTS: 2

Max. number of participants: 7

Course content:

Introduction to 3D modeling, animation, visual design, photorealistic rendering, and project preparation for internships and portfolios with Blender.

Basics of the interface, 3D modeling, texturing and materials, lighting techniques, photorealistic rendering with Cycles, working with cameras, rendering optimization, and color grading.

The course provides practical skills in 3D modeling and photorealistic rendering with Blender. Students will learn to create realistic scenes and effectively prepare their projects for portfolios. They will also be able to navigate the interface and utilize various lighting and texturing techniques.

Students are required to create a complete scene using the knowledge acquired during the course. They have the freedom to choose whether to work on a self-initiated project or implement an existing concept. The goal is to present at least one rendering or multiple renderings that clearly reflect the learning objectives. The final submission must include the Blender file, along with the renderings or animations and all post-processing edits.

CAD Blender

teacher: Evripidis Lalissidis

ECTS: 2

Max. number of participants: 7

Introduction to 3D modeling, animation, visual design, photorealistic rendering, and project preparation for internships and portfolios with Blender.

Basics of the interface, 3D modeling, texturing and materials, lighting techniques, photorealistic rendering with Cycles, working with cameras, rendering optimization, and color grading.

The course provides practical skills in 3D modeling and photorealistic rendering with Blender. Students will learn to create realistic scenes and effectively prepare their projects for portfolios. They will also be able to navigate the interface and utilize various lighting and texturing techniques.

Students are required to create a complete scene using the knowledge acquired during the course. They have the freedom to choose whether to work on a self-initiated project or implement an existing concept. The goal is to present at least one rendering or multiple renderings that clearly reflect the learning objectives. The final submission must include the Blender file, along with the renderings or animations and all post-processing edits.

Claymodeling

teacher: Peter Lehkre

ECTS: 2

Max. number of participants: 10

This course is designed specifically for international students. The primary focus is on working with (Staedtler's) „Marsclay", a high-quality professional styling clay (not to be mistaken with clay for ceramics) commonly employed in transportation design. However, its versatility also makes it an excellent tool for industrial design and other creative fields.

Students will receive an introduction to essential clay modeling techniques, learning how to shape, sculpt, and refine forms using this flexible medium. The course emphasizes training the eye to recognize and replicate freeform surfaces, a crucial skill in many areas of design.

At the heart of the course is a project-based assignment, involving hands-on work with the material and developing three-dimensional thinking in the real world. This hands-on course offers a unique opportunity to engage with physical modeling and refine our design instincts in a collaborative, creative environment. No prior experience in clay modeling is required.

Learning Outcomes:

- Master basic clay modeling techniques
- Develop the ability to visualize and create and enhancing the understanding of freeform surfaces, curves, transitions, etc.
- gain practical experience in transportation and industrial design application

Info:

- the course will finish 3 weeks before the lecture free period (5 weeks before exhibition)
- Lecturer: Peter Lehrke-open for all design fields
- 10 people can join the course

Drawing 2

teacher: Eberhard Holder

ECTS: 2

Max. number of participants: 7

Drawing 2

teacher: Eberhard Holder

ECTS: 2

Max. number of participants: 7

Rendering 4

teacher: Benjamin Baumhauer

ECTS: 2

Max. number of participants: 7

Course Content:

The student will learn how to sketch, illustrate and render in photoshop by using the Wacom Board. They will get an introduction in basic sketching skills such as perspectives, proportion, drawing a proper line, light and shadow and surfaces as well as using colours properly. They will learn how to use a wacom board and how to set up a photoshop file, then how to do layer management and use special photophop effects and how to create a brush. Goal is to sharpen the students realistic drawing skills and theach them how to do the perfect drawing process. They will transfer inspirations into an idea and then into digital images.

Ring modeling

teacher: Gerd Schmidt

ECTS: 2

Max. number of participants: 6

Course Content:

Making rings/ Theme Ring course/ aggressive vs peaceful
-You design a ring for your finger which is then cast in sterling silver-

"...before you sign up for this course, you should read this carefully
in order to be able to make a well-informed decision..."

This ring course has several aspects. Firstly, the design of the ring is influenced by the sandcasting manufacturing technique. This technique shapes, but can also limit, the design. The design o he ring must do notice the casting process and will therefore have to have a certain volume. This Rings will be made for the finger, which are therefore a manageable size. You will design a ring that should fit the given theme. Consider the ring in the design like a sculpture on the finger.

We will meet as a group a few days before the course starts. I will discuss the exact content and give you homework that is necessary for the rest of the course. If you do not and this appointment, you will may have difficulty following the course properly over the course. You will learn how to use tools.

You will learn in a practical way by making the ring why undercuts in the model make demolding impossible. You may get dirty. Hopefully you will have a lot of fun and enjoyment making your rings. See below for more information.

Theme
- Ring course/ aggressive vs peaceful
- There should be a maximum of two rings.

Design
- Drawings- visualize ideas
- Oversized clay model to check sizes and proportions o he design.

Master model
- Clay model is filed analogously to a fingersize-appropriate wax model.
- Serves as a master model that is transformed into a silverring.
- Work must be done precisely. (Size, surface, dividing line)

Technology
- Sand casting process, two-part mold, no undercuts, demolding.
- Casting box, sand, separation, pouring.
- This technique shapes the mold!

Casting
- After pouring - remove the casting from the sand, burnt sand is removed.
- Rings that have been cast must be removed.
- Rings are weighed, weights noted.

- There may be casting errors.

Rework

- Casting residues are removed.
- - Surfaces filed, ground, polished.

I accompany the entire process step by step.
The student will pay for the silvermaterial.
Room -1.26, max. 6. people, duration approx. 3.5 days.
Course teacher Gerd Schmidt.

interaction design courses

Design in Germany - Past and present

teacher: Matthias Held

ECTS: 2

course content:

In this course, participants are given an overview of the most important historical design schools in Germany, such as the Bauhaus and the HfG Ulm. Furthermore, current practices and discourses on design are conveyed. A central component of the course are several excursions to leading design offices in various design fields such as product design, interaction design, communication and brand design, space and communication.

Interactive Communication Systems 1

teacher: Kai - Magnus Müller

ECTS: 6

Max. number of participants: 3

Course content:

The course deals with the design and prototyping of an interactive application in the context of exhibition, museum, or trade fair that makes a chosen topic accessible to beginners.

The goal is to learn fundamental relationships within the field of human-computer interaction and information design.

Students engage with basic forms of interaction and media-specific design problems, information architecture, information and data visualization, the relationship between text, image, and animation, and prototypical implementation or simulation.

Interface 2

teacher: Markus Turber

ECTS: 8

Max. number of participants: 3

Course content:

Designing Emerging Human-AI/Machine/X Interaction

AI is changing Human-Machine Interactions as it becomes the interface to interacting, creating, and experiencing a connected world, becoming more intelligent. This course shall be a mental gateway to emerging interaction patterns. Moving beyond traditional screens, we dive into intelligent, multimodal, and anticipatory systems that might redefine how humans and machines collaborate.

You'll explore AI-powered agents, voice and gesture interfaces, augmented intelligence, and generative systems. Through hands-on projects, you'll prototype and test next-generation interfaces that adapt, learn, and respond to human needs in real time.

This course is about curiosity, experimentation, and vision. You will anticipate, tinker, and debate the role of AI in interaction design and prepare for a new era of Human-Computer/AI/X Interaction and ambient intelligence.

In this course, you are expected to move beyond static UI design—toward interfaces that predict, collaborate, and build trust with users. We'll also tackle Human-Centered AI, Explainable AI (XAI), and ethical design, ensuring you create experiences that are not just smart but responsible.

You will tinker, and you'll prototype. We won't focus on perfectly styled and programmed results, but we will try to push the boundaries of interaction design in our demonstrators and, even more, in our imagination.

Photography

teacher: Oliver Jung

ECTS: 1

Max. number of participants: 3

Course content:

-

UX Design / Application Design 2

teacher: Philipp Brucker

ECTS: 8

Max. number of participants: 3

Course content:

In the User Experience Design / Application Design course, students immerse themselves in the world of user experience (UX). The aim is to develop a profound understanding of their own design process, to make design decisions visible and to justify them in a well-founded manner. The course places a special focus on strategic design as a bridge between creative solutions and non-profit aspects and teaches methods from the field of human-centered design for the development of user-centered applications.

Design History

teacher: Michael Burke

ECTS: 2

Max. number of participants: 3

Course content:

The program will consist of a series of weekly Lectures in the aeria of Graphic and Product design.The main focus being the modern or as it often referred to the Modern Movement that is to say dealing with the period 1900-1980 it will include the design establishments such as the Bauhaus and its different phases in Weimar and Dessau during the 1920's also the later Ulm school of design during the 1950's. The legacy of these institutions,there personalities and influence on companies and products which had a like minded philosophy At the end of the semester the student will be asked to submit an essay of 1,000-1,500 words on an aspect or associated area personality or product.

Usability Lab

teacher: Matthias Peissner

ECTS: 2

Max. number of participants: 3

communication design courses

Design in Germany - Past and present

teacher: Matthias Held

ECTS: 2

course content:

In this course, participants are given an overview of the most important historical design schools in Germany, such as the Bauhaus and the HfG Ulm. Furthermore, current practices and discourses on design are conveyed. A central component of the course are several excursions to leading design offices in various design fields such as product design, interaction design, communication and brand design, space and communication.

Digital Maps KG4/6

teacher: Marc Guntow

ECTS: 2

Max. number of participants: 5

Course content:

Students discuss historical map series in the seminar and receive an introduction to the creation of dynamic maps using the Mapbox framework.

Maps as instruments of knowledge transfer and generalization of location information are one of the oldest forms of communication design. On the basis of some important or in individual aspects particularly meaningful historical map works, important parameters of cartography such as scale, symbolism, projection, coloring, etc. are discussed.

In the second part of the course, students use the framework "Mapbox" to create dynamically zoomable maps on self-selected topics and test the styling of maps for the screen depending on the intended purpose and related to respectively reasonable zoom levels.

Furthermore, the creation of own or integration of publicly available data sets into digital maps is introduced, as well as the publication of dynamic maps on the web and their interactive usability using the JavaScript library "Mapbox GL JS".

Course structure

Collaborative discussion of historical cartographic works based on student presentations
Lecture on the history of cartography from Mercator to Google Maps
Lecture on the parameters and functions of cartographic conventions
Lecture on map projections relevant to design professionals

Learning objectives

Processing of location-based content, ability to evaluate and design meaningful static and dynamic maps, basic knowledge of Mapbox and Mapbox GL JS.

Assessment criteria

Paper and presentation of a self-designed dynamic map prototype.

Creative Technology KG4/6

teacher: Andreas Pollok

ECTS: 2

Max. number of participants: 10

Course content:

This course explores the dynamic relationship between design and the emerging technologies enabled by AI, equipping students with the skills to integrate digital tools into contemporary communication design. Through hands-on experimentation, theoretical inquiry, and critical reflection, students will engage with tools applying artificial intelligence to create graphics, illustrations, typography and animations. Students gain technical expertise in tools and workflows while also cultivating conceptual depth, enabling them to create innovative, forward-thinking, and ethically responsible design solutions in their projects.

Course content

AI design tools
Exploring AI-assisted design workflows and prompting techniques.

Ethics and Critical Perspectives
Examining the societal, ethical, and cultural implications of technology in design.

Learning objectives

By the end of the course, students will be able to:
Apply emerging technologies to their communication design projects.
Demonstrate proficiency in AI-driven tools.
Develop conceptually and aesthetically compelling digital experiences.
Critically assess the ethical implications of technology in design.
Create a portfolio of forward-thinking, technology-enhanced projects.

Assessment criteria

Participation in the discussions, explorative mini-projects/experiments.

Let’s Talk Business

teacher: Vera Glahn

ECTS: 2

Max. number of participants: 10

Course content:

A hand-to-heart reality check for your post-graduation plans, with insights, tools, and real money talk – Let’s Talk Business is a course for designers and covers three focus areas:
In a Career Options Reality Check, we will look into a wide range of career choices for designers, both independently and in employment, from freelancing to small studio or big agency employment, product idea to startup, design to advertising. From independent practice to artistic studio, from hands-on creative roles to strategy and management. And how these choices typically inform your role, your creative freedom and your financial independence.
In How to sell an idea we will discuss what makes a good pitch, and workshop around your own ideas.
In How to make money we will look into how dayrates are defined, projects are budgeted, and what designers need to know about budgeting in agencies. Plus a brief foray into the importance of contracts.

Whilst the course revolves around very practical things, those will be affecting your ideas and emotions – regular check-ins and opportunities for one-to-one mentoring leave room for exploring them.

Course leader Vera-Maria Glahn will inform the seminar with reference points from her own experience ranging from studio founder to marketing director, from consultant to employer, and the examples of designers, artists and studios worldwide.

The course will be held in english.

Learning Methods
Lectures, group discussions, short exercises, student presentations, and one-to-one mentoring.

Learning Objectives
The course aims to provide students with a foundational understanding of potential career trajectories, as well as the business dynamics that will affect their work, to equip them with knowledge and tools for protecting their creative freedom as they start their careers after graduation.

Assessment Criteria
Attendance, active participation in discussions, exercises and presentations.

Literature
To be shared during the course for further study.

Design and Media History KG4/6

teacher: Michael Burke

ECTS: 2

Max. number of participants: 10

Course content:
The program will consist of a series of weekly Lectures in the area of Graphic and Product design.The main focus being the modern or as it often referred to the Modern Movement that is to say dealing with the period 1900-1980 it will include the design establishments such as the Bauhaus and its different phases in Weimar and Dessau during the 1920's also the later Ulm school of design during the 1950's.
The legacy of these institutions,there personalities and influence on companies and products which had a like minded philosophy. At the end of the semester the student will be asked to submit an essay of 1,000-1,500 words on an aspect or associated area personality or product.

Sociable Design KG4/6

teacher: Lisa Kern

ECTS: 2

Max. number of participants: 3

Course content:

Learning content

From the first messages on clay tablets to the comment column on Instagram: Media has connected us humans since the beginning of time. Much of our communication today takes place in mass media such as social networks. We use social media to exchange political views, find information, build professional networks and share private moments. Much of this communication takes place within the boundaries of a commercialized internet on a few dominant platforms. The design of these digital environments undoubtedly has an influence on how we communicate with each other online, what we see and how we are perceived. In addition, the media transformation is also changing our society.

In this course, we will critically reflect on these digital environments and their influence on our communication and society. As designers, we can explore dystopian as well as utopian or innovative technological futures! We will ask ourselves the following questions, among others:
What social, technological and political trends can we observe in the field of social media?
What methods from design futuring can we use to explore possible futures of digital media that connect people?
How can I give others tangible and visual access to my design for the future?
How can I use design as a form of (visual) storytelling to open up new perspectives?
The course is ideal for students who enjoy exploring social and technological trends around the “super medium” of our time and want to get to know a new set of methods from the field of design futuring.
The project in this course allows creative freedom through the choice of critical, speculative or innovative design.
The course is called “Sociable Media” in reference to Judith Donath - the concept of “sociable” media is a deliberately chosen counterpart to “social media”, which is often criticized for its lack of ability to be truly “social” by societal standards.
With guest contributions from the AI+D Lab and Valerie Grappendorf (detach - #fighting phone addiction - achieving digital balance!).

Approach

Self-reflection: How do I perceive social media? What do I expect and really want from social media?
Exploration: Collecting and structuring trends, anticipating the consequences of different trends
Development of scenarios of possible futures
Mid-term presentation: three possible drafts for the future
Design of an artifact/prototype that makes the story of a social media future scenario tangible and open to discussion (visualization in project video and project poster)
Final presentation

Learning goals

Basics of the history of the origins of social media
Critical analysis of social media and their social impact
Logics of different social media platforms, business models, ideology, governance, affordance
Development of research skills & trend research
Decoding the AI myth: with the AI+D Lab (e.g. how does a (recommendation) algorithm work?)
Learning methods from the field of design futuring (STEEP, futures wheel, futures cone, scenarios, world hinting, prototypes, etc.)
Developing digital skills and futures literacy
Critical and conceptual thinking
Storytelling and visualization/prototyping of speculative, critical or innovative future scenarios

---

Evaluation

The basis for the evaluation is the active participation, the research work carried out, the successful application of the methods taught, the concept developed (quality of content) and the associated creative quality of the work. The final presentation and the documentation of the project are also evaluated.

Orientation Systems KG4/6

teacher: Jürgen Hoffmann

ECTS: 8

Max. number of participants: 6

Course content:

Left, right, straight ahead, around the corner or maybe up or down?
Signage systems in a 2-or 3-dimensional environment.
We will develop a wayfinding/information system with the goal to simplify multi layered instructions and information, to make it easily understood and projected into a spatial context.

Course content

We analyze and assess the existing signage system and from that develope a new concept and new design parameters. In particular we analyze the specific usage, the special relationship and structure and the specific information context at various key points. Other factors could be distance, indoor/outdoor, light availability, analog or digital, frequency, near or far, barrier free and materials.

Language, pictograms and colors are basic building blocks of an information/signage system, whereby the human being always is the determining factor in the center of a functional wayfaring system. The focus on the user, a logical and systematic approach are dominating factors for understanding and orientation.

To develop a design proposal/direction system using color coding, pictogram typography, maps/diagrams and design a final concept for different materials and media.

Projects to choose from:
A new and additional information and signage system for “Rundwanderweg am Limes” in Schwäbisch Gmünd
A new and additional information and signage system for Schwäbisch Gmünd’s indoor swimming pool
A handicapped accessible signage system for Schwäbisch Gmünd’s main bus terminal

---

Learning objectives

Development of a modular orientation- and information system for the outdoor and inside use
Demonstration of prototypical applications
Documentation and Presentation

Assessment criteria

Conception and design
Collaboration and presentations

Digital Products KG4/6

teacher: Ulf Harr

ECTS: 8

Max. number of participants: 6

Course content:

Digital learning opportunities are ubiquitous these days - from school content to language courses and corporate learning to personal development.

These learning environments are very flexible, as learners can access content from any location and at any time, and content can be personalized and presented in an accessible way. Interactive and multimedia presentation makes learning clearer, while reward systems and collaboration can increase

motivation. Open educational resources (OER) enable free access to high-quality knowledge. Adaptive learning systems can automatically adjust to prior knowledge and learning speed.

We therefore want to deal with digital learning environments. We will ask ourselves the following questions, among others:
How can different levels of detail of information be presented?
Which formats are best suited for the respective content?
What needs to be taken into account for different end devices?
What visual implementation helps to make the content accessible and tangible?
How can interaction options be motivating and at the same time not overwhelming?
How can learning progress and development be presented?
How can we map individual learning paths?

The projects are worked on in groups of 2-3 students. The final result will be presented as an interactive prototype and in a project video.

User Experience KG4/6

teacher: Dominic Witzke

ECTS: 8

Max. number of participants: 6

Course content:

1. Short Description

A great idea alone does not make a great product. In this course, we analyze everyday problems and processes to develop a user- and experience-centered mobile application using various methods, creating solutions that elevate small daily challenges in an extraordinary way.

---

2. Learning Content

Theoretical and practical introduction to design methods of an iterative, user-centered design process, starting from problem definition, user research, and requirements analysis to simulating a potential solution
Basic and advanced knowledge in User Experience Design and User Interface Design
Development of information architectures, interaction models, interaction principles, and graphical user interfaces
Exploration and evaluation of design variants (visual design, information architecture, and interaction design) as well as methods for prototypical implementation
Introduction to design, visualization, and simulation tools and their theoretical and practical application (e.g., Figma, ProtoPie, etc.)

---

3. Approach

User Experience (UX) is the key success factor for a great product, going beyond just User Interface (UI) design. That is why this course follows an iterative and user-centered UX design process using design methods.

Students will choose a topic and analyze existing applications or processes. After a contextual analysis and research phase, ideas for potential solutions will be generated. Using user research methods, requirements for the application will be developed, and user groups will be defined. The User Interface will be designed and prototypically implemented in the final phase using intuitive simulation tools. The type of implementation may vary depending on the concept and medium.

---

4. Learning Objectives

The primary goal is to teach design methods that are fundamental for developing user- and experience-centered software. Additionally, the course focuses on providing theoretical and practical tools for analyzing, developing, and designing user interfaces.

Students will gain knowledge of key factors in User Experience and User Interface Design, incorporating conceptual, technical, and design methods for developing digital products.

---

5. Assessment

The evaluation will be based on:
The developed software concept applying the taught design methods
The design quality of the user interface and prototype
The final presentation and project documentation

Corporate Identity KG4/6

teacher: Daniel Utz

ECTS: 6

Max. number of participants: 8

Course content:

Short Description

What makes the HfG special? Where are we going? What are our central contents and messages? How can we communicate these in a crisp and precise manner? To prospective students … but also to politicians, companies and the general public?

We will be dealing with the identity and visual appearance of our university. From this we will develop communication concepts: anything is possible between social media, campaigns and "branding".

If the topic of HfG is too self-centered for you, you can alternatively choose another non-profit organization as a fictitious client for your project work. This could be a museum, an association, a NGO, a scientific institute, etc.

Learning Content

At the beginning, the status quo is analyzed in order to derive goals for new communication strategies:

Which target groups are addressed?
Which media and formats are used for communication?
Are the available communication channels used efficiently?
Which aspects stand out positively, where are there deficits?
What requirements arise for a new visual identity?

On this basis, different new design approaches are developed. The focus is initially on the design of the basic design elements, later other parameters such as color and imagery are included.

As the project progresses, possible combinations of the individual elements are examined and a modular system of coordinated components is developed. To better assess the designs, the adaptation options in various media and applications are examined. The focus can be on the following areas:

Digital media: Website, animation sequence
Communication in space
Printed matter: leaflets, brochures, advertisements, posters

Procedure

Conception
Research
Creating a briefing from the perspective of the (fictitious) client

Design
Drafting different design approaches: wordmark or logo, key visual, typography
Comparison of adaptations for different formats, media and applications

Elaboration
Development of design parameters: typography, colors, formats, grids, layout principles
Design of different media and applications
Overview of the basic design elements
Presentation of the results

Teaching objectives

The primary teaching objective is to gain experience in dealing with the design elements that make up a visual identity system: in addition to the wordmark or logo, these are primarily typography, color, form and imagery.

During the design process, the interaction of these elements is developed within different applications and media.

Proof of performance

Overview of the visual identity system in the form of a poster series (DIN A1)
Animation sequence / project film
Documentation
Criteria for evaluation
the range of designs and the willingness to seek unusual solutions
the consistent development of different design approaches
typography, layout, precision in detail
the presentation of the results
the documentation: completeness, traceability of the design steps

Interactive Design KG3

teacher: Andreas Pollok

ECTS: 2

Max. number of participants: 6

Course content:

1. Short Description
Fundamental knowledge in designing digital products.

---

2. Learning Content
- Principles of interactive design
- Designing interfaces and creating variations in Figma
- Developing functional prototypes in Figma
- Patterns
- Information architecture / Hierarchy
- Navigation
- Color palettes
- Typography
- Icons
- Use of light, shadow, and perspective
- Animation and transitions
- Design systems
- Libraries in Figma
- Accessibility

---

3. Approach

Through a series of systematically structured exercises of increasing complexity, students will practice applying principles of interactive design. Various solution approaches will be discussed in group settings.

---

4. Learning Objectives

- Proficient use of Figma for designing digital products
- Understanding and applying design principles in digital design
- Creating variations
- Prototyping
- Articulating design decisions and providing constructive critique

---

5. Assessment

Completion of exercises, presentation of results, and active participation in discussions.

Information Design KG3

teacher: Daniel Utz

ECTS: 2

Max. number of participants: 3

Course content:

further explanation on Monday

Learning goals:

further explanation on Monday

Project briefing:

further explanation on Monday

Further reading:

further explanation on Monday

3-dimensional Design KG2

teacher: Franklin Hernandez-Castro

ECTS: 2

Max. number of participants: 4

Course content:

Students test the application of spatial principles and their verification in the model. They train their spatial imagination and understand the basic concepts of spatial effect. Compositional principles are tested and evaluated in models, drawings and simulations. In a series of exercises, they try out the purposeful shaping of spaces and three-dimensional objects on the basis of rule-based design.

Project Topic
In a compact workshop, the students develop a repertoire of repertoire of modularized geometric shapes in methodical methodical working steps. Starting from the analysis of regular polyhedra, two-dimensional surface modules are used to surface modules, complex variations are created, checked and constructed as solids.

Content of the subject
The concept of the design program is discussed. The students learn methods for building up a rule-based based repertoire of forms and the principles of evaluating of variants in generative design approaches.
The use of working models trains the students' spatial spatial imagination and how to deal with gradually increased complexity. In the transfer of digital templates to analog models, students learn requirements and possibilities of computer-aided production. production.