

Parsons MFA Design and Technology: Major Studio 2

Parsons School of Design
PGTE 5201 - D

Spring 2020: 12:10 - 02:50 PM, Room 1208
mattie, mattie@newschool.edu

Course Description

Major Studio 2 provides first year MFA Design & Technology students with a context for further developing their focus as an artist or designer within a technology-driven environment. Students will refine their individual creative practice and working methodology by exploring creative modes of prototyping and research, supported by analytical discussion in a critique-based studio environment. While the aims of Major Studio One were to distinguish concept from form, and to introduce the process of iterative design, Major Studio Two is geared toward designing for engagement. Practical goals include designing for scope and scale. Formal goals involve considering different relationships within a system such people's relation to their environment, objects and interfaces, and one another. Methodological goals involve a deeper understanding of the creative process as research through making, of being able to explain and support the argument behind your work, and paying attention to craft. Emphasis will be placed on concept, intention, and audience regardless of the media employed. The course focuses on a self-initiated final project. The entire cohort presents their final projects in a day-long, student-organized "pop up" style exhibition entitled Major Major.

This is the second in the series of four MFADT Studio courses: Major Studios 1 & 2, and Thesis Studios 1 & 2. These form the core of the curriculum, which is supported by technical and academic electives. Major Studios focus on developing concept and methodologies for making; support electives are for technical development, and academic electives concentrate on discussion of critical context. Students are responsible for establishing intersections across different classes in their course of study.

Learning Outcomes

By the successful completion of this course, students should be able to demonstrate:

1. Incorporate a range of methodologies within iterative design and prototyping processes.
2. Develop insightful research strategies as evidenced through concept presentation & writing.
3. Articulate the context of their work; how their work relates to concepts and other creative works in the fields of art, design and technology;
4. Exhibit professional-level attention to detail, and command of production and craft skills.
5. Utilize various forms of design writing, including but not limited to design criticism, design briefs, self-assessment, and user scenarios.
6. Offer constructive criticism in the discussion of other student works and ideas

Course Components

MS2 Project

Major Studio 2 is anchored by a single long form project in response to a shared, open-ended prompt: Augmentation. This final project will have a research, making, and writing components. Students should consider the relationship between their concept, research method, production method, and use of tools, media and technology. More information and specifications for the final project can be found [here](#).

Paper

The ability to formulate and present a strong argument is essential to all creative work. Students will do a variety of writing, including speculative fictions, automatic writing, blog posts, design briefs, and user scenarios. This material will shape and inform a 2,500 - 3000 words (5-6 pg) paper that outlines the research, concept, and form of their MS2 project. The paper will be written in four stages: annotated bibliography, outline, draft and final. Students will be required to make an appointment with the writing center after writing their rough draft to get feedback on the development of their argument and assistance with citing their sources. More information about the final paper can be found [here](#).

Major Major

Will be a pop-up exhibition on D12 of 1-2 works you've made to date. This will take place on Friday, May 1. Students will develop brief written descriptions for showcased work, as well as an updated statement of intent/bio to introduce themselves. Faculty will be prompted to comment on area and elements they find engaging, as well as areas for improvement.

First Year Reflection

Following Major Major and final reviews, students will write up a 800-1000 word reflection on their experience and work in the program thus far, with images. Guidelines for this reflection are here, and should be posted to their process blog, to be shared with Thesis 1 faculty. More information on the First Year Reflection can be found [here](#).

Weekly Schedule

WEEK	MONDAYS	WEDNESDAYS
WEEK 1 01/20, 22	NO CLASS / MLK Day	Introductions; Syllabus
WEEK 2 01/27, 29	Design as Communication; Observation Practice; DUE: Grading Scales	Design Research; Project Framing; DUE: Design Research Questions
WEEK 3 02/03, 05	Design as Futuring; Fore/Backcasting; DUE: Project Frames	Design/Value Fiction; Ritual Design; DUE: Experience Storyboards
WEEK 4 02/10, 12	Critique Culture; Reflective Design	Critiques; DUE: Value Fiction
WEEK 5 02/17, 19	NO CLASS / President's Day	Critiques; DUE: 7-in-7 Prototypes
WEEK 6 02/24, 26	Testing Ethics; Documentation	Critiques; DUE: Research Artifacts
WEEK 7 03/02, 04	Crafting Proposals	Critiques; DUE: Proposal Drafts
WEEK 8 03/09, 11	Midterm Reviews; DUE: Proposals, Annotated Bibliography, Expert Interviews, Event Write-Ups	Midterm Reviews
WEEK 9 03/16, 19	NO CLASS / Spring Break	NO CLASS / Spring Break
WEEK 10 03/23, 25	Midterm Reflection; Writing Workshop: Outlining; DUE: Critique Analysis	Critiques; DUE: Proposal Iteration, Paper Outline
WEEK 11 03/30, 04/01	Writing Workshop: Literature Reviews; DUE: Background Research	Critiques; DUE: Proof of Concept Prototype
WEEK 12 04/06, 08	Writing Workshop: Methodology & Findings; DUE: Methods	Critiques; DUE: Prototype Iterations
WEEK 13 04/13, 15	1-on-1s; Independent Work; DUE: Final Paper Draft	1-on-1s; Independent Work
WEEK 14 04/20, 22	Critiques; DUE: Test-in-Context Documentation	Critiques
WEEK 15 04/27, 29	1-on-1s; Independent Work; DUE: Grading Assessment; Final Paper	1-on-1s; Independent Work
FRIDAY 05/01	Major Major; DUE: Final Project	
WEEK 16 05/04, 06	Final Reviews	Final Reviews
WEEK 17 05/11, 13	NO CLASS; DUE: First Year Reflection	NO CLASS

Grading

- 10% Class participation
- 20% Project Concepting and Research
- 30% Project Prototyping (3 x 10%)
- 10% First Year Reflection
- 15% Project as presented at MAJOR MAJOR
- 15% Final Paper

Criteria for Evaluation

Students in the course will receive feedback on the following areas:

Communication

How well is the student able to express their ideas, both verbally and with other forms of communication such as: writing, drawing, mapping, modeling, pre-visualizing etc?

Critical Thinking and Reflective Judgment

To what degree has the student demonstrated and developed critical thinking skills over the course of the semester? Reflective judgment not only asks the questions with concrete answers such as evaluative questions about form, methodology, materials, utility, ergonomics, aesthetics, style, cultural, experience, research, and process critique, but also attacks difficult problems of the world that require research and evidence to support conclusions that can then be offered to the fields encompassed by design and technology.

Design Process

How is the student incorporating proper use of problem identification, brainstorming, generating ideas, analysis, research, writing of specifications and constraints, real world costs, feasibility, testing, iterating along a line of thinking and then approaching the problem differently in the next cycle, evaluation of process and evaluation of the form created, integrating and adapting new processes and ideas along the iterative design cycle.

Contextualization, Conclusion and Evaluation

Have the students been able to connect their work and ideas to historical and contemporary precedents, and to situate their work within the larger discourse surrounding ideas of design and technology? Can the student confidently synthesize several different approaches to a design problem and make conclusions of their own? Can the student evaluate their projects' successes and failures?

Integration and Appropriate Use of Technology

Are the students making good choices about the form and type of technology they are using to express their design concepts? Are the students able to integrate technology into the conceptualization of their projects?

Iteration, Production, Time Management

Are students able to scale their projects to the appropriate time frame and technical/design resources at their disposal? Are students recording their thoughts and processes on their website so that their knowledge can be shared with the rest of the class.

Graduate Grading Standards

- A Work of exceptional quality
- A- Work of high quality
- B+ Very good work
- B Good work; satisfies course requirements

Satisfactory completion of a course is considered to be a grade of B or higher.

B-	Below-average work
C+	Less than adequate work
C	Well below average work
C-	Poor work; lowest possible passing grade
F	Failure
GM	Grade missing for an individual

Grades of D are not used in graduate level courses.

Grade of W

The grade of W may be issued by the Office of the Registrar to a student who officially withdraws from a course within the applicable deadline. There is no academic penalty, but the grade will appear on the student transcript. A grade of W may also be issued by an instructor to a graduate student (except at Parsons and Mannes) who has not completed course requirements nor arranged for an Incomplete.

Grade of Z

The grade of Z is issued by an instructor to a student who has not attended or not completed all required work in a course but did not officially withdraw before the withdrawal deadline. It differs from an "F," which would indicate that the student technically completed requirements but that the level of work did not qualify for a passing grade.

Grades of Incomplete

The grade of I, or temporary incomplete, may be granted to a student under unusual and extenuating circumstances, such as when the student's academic life is interrupted by a medical or personal emergency. This mark is not given automatically but only upon the student's request and at the discretion of the instructor. A Request for Incomplete form must be completed and signed by student and instructor. The time allowed for completion of the work and removal of the "I" mark will be set by the instructor with the following limitations:

Graduate students: Work must be completed no later than one year following the end of the class. Grades of "I" not revised in the prescribed time will be recorded as a final grade of "N" by the Registrar's Office.

Resources

The university provides many resources to help students achieve academic and artistic excellence. These resources include:

- [The University \(and associated\) Libraries](#)
- [The University Learning Center](#)
- [University Disabilities Service](#)

In keeping with the university's policy of providing equal access for students with disabilities, any student with a disability who needs academic accommodations is welcome to meet with me privately. All conversations will be kept confidential. Students requesting any accommodations will also need to contact Student Disability Service (SDS). SDS will conduct an intake and, if appropriate, the Director will provide an academic accommodation notification letter for you to bring to me. At that point, I will review the letter with you and discuss these accommodations in relation to this course.

Making Center

The Making Center is a constellation of shops, labs, and open workspaces that are situated across the New School to help students express their ideas in a variety of materials and methods. We have resources to help support woodworking, metalworking, ceramics and pottery work, photography and film, textiles, printmaking, 3D printing, manual and CNC machining, and more. A staff of technicians and student workers provide expertise and maintain the different shops and labs. Safety is a primary concern, so each area has policies for access, training, and etiquette with which students and faculty should be familiar. Many areas require specific orientations or trainings before access is granted. Detailed information about the resources available, as well as schedules, trainings, and policies can be found at resources.parsons.edu.

Divisional, Program and Class Policies

A comprehensive overview of policy may be found under [Policies: A to Z](#). Students are also encouraged to consult the [Academic Catalog for Parsons](#).

Canvas

Use of Canvas may be an important resource for this class. Students should check it for announcements before coming to class each week.

Electronic Devices

The use of electronic devices (phones, tablets, laptops, cameras, etc.) is permitted when the device is being used in relation to the course's work. All other uses are prohibited in the classroom and devices should be turned off before class starts.

Responsibility

Students are responsible for all assignments, even if they are absent. Late assignments, failure to complete the assignments for class discussion and/or critique, and lack of preparedness for in-class discussions, presentations and/or critiques will jeopardize your successful completion of this course.

Active Participation and Attendance

Class participation is an essential part of class and includes: keeping up with reading, assignments, projects, contributing meaningfully to class discussions, active participation in group work, and coming to class regularly and on time.

Parsons' attendance guidelines were developed to encourage students' success in all aspects of their academic programs. Full participation is essential to the successful completion of

coursework and enhances the quality of the educational experience for all, particularly in courses where group work is integral; thus, Parsons promotes high levels of attendance. Students are expected to attend classes regularly and promptly and in compliance with the standards stated in this course syllabus.

While attendance is just one aspect of active participation, absence from a significant portion of class time may prevent the successful attainment of course objectives. A significant portion of class time is generally defined as the equivalent of three weeks, or 20%, of class time. Lateness or early departure from class may be recorded as one full absence. Students may be asked to withdraw from a course if habitual absenteeism or tardiness has a negative impact on the class environment.

I will assess each student's performance against all of the assessment criteria in determining your final grade.

Academic Honesty and Integrity

Compromising your academic integrity may lead to serious consequences, including (but not limited to) one or more of the following: failure of the assignment, failure of the course, academic warning, disciplinary probation, suspension from the university, or dismissal from the university.

Students are responsible for understanding the University's policy on academic honesty and integrity and must make use of proper citations of sources for writing papers, creating, presenting, and performing their work, taking examinations, and doing research. It is the responsibility of students to learn the procedures specific to their discipline for correctly and appropriately differentiating their own work from that of others. The full text of the policy, including adjudication procedures, is found on the university website under [Policies: A to Z](#). Resources regarding what plagiarism is and how to avoid it can be found on the [Learning Center's website](#).

The New School views "academic honesty and integrity" as the duty of every member of an academic community to claim authorship for his or her own work and only for that work, and to recognize the contributions of others accurately and completely. This obligation is fundamental to the integrity of intellectual debate, and creative and academic pursuits. Academic honesty and integrity includes accurate use of quotations, as well as appropriate and explicit citation of sources in instances of paraphrasing and describing ideas, or reporting on research findings or any aspect of the work of others (including that of faculty members and other students). Academic dishonesty results from infractions of this "accurate use". The standards of academic honesty and integrity, and citation of sources, apply to all forms of academic work, including submissions of drafts of final papers or projects. All members of the University community are expected to conduct themselves in accord with the standards of academic honesty and integrity. Please see the complete policy in the Parsons Catalog.

Intellectual Property Rights

The New School (the "university") seeks to encourage creativity and invention among its faculty members and students. In doing so, the University affirms its traditional commitment to the personal ownership by its faculty members and students of Intellectual Property Rights in works they create. The complete policy governing Intellectual Property Rights may be seen on the [university website, on the Provost's page](#).