The seminar UE X - Experience Design challenges students to transcend conventional boundaries and cultivate a holistic understanding of AI-driven experience design as a powerful tool for shaping future urban environments.

Through the lens of climate emergency, students harness experience design to navigate complex challenges, rethink urban apps, services, furniture, typologies and systems, and ultimately reimagine future designs for cities that are not just sustainable but thrive as immersive, human-centered, and resilient habitats.

The course is structured around a series of six independent mini-projects/workshops, each spanning two weeks, addressing each a unique experience design methodology, and a different design brief, at multiple scale. Fueled by the use of generative AI (Midjourney or Stable Diffusion) as a versatile co-design agent, the course aims to equip and empower students with a spectrum of contemporary design strategies to craft experiential narratives that resonate with the future city's evolving landscapes facing an enduring climate crisis.

The projects will use the city of Lausanne, as a case study or living laboratory for addressing a wide range of experience design questions, including: How can we integrate the awareness of the enduring climate crisis into everyday life? What new experiences become possible? How can a digital interface raise awareness of issues such as climate justice, data privacy, and urban health, as well as promote citizen-involvement and quality of life?

The seminar combines students from architecture, computer science, communication science, data science, digital humanities and other areas in a truly interdisciplinary process. Groups are formed and re-grouped for each of the six projects.

The cross-disciplinary groups will brainstorm, critically question, and with the aid of AI, iteratively develop novel designs, interfaces and augmented urban artifacts as possible alternatives to reconfigure the senses of perception, redistribute time, and re-orchestrate the configuration of social, emotional and spatial experiences in the augmented city.

The six projects will provide a fertile training ground for learning about and practicing experience design (with the help of AI), exploring the following methodological nuances:
1. Experience Design by Empathy

This classical experience design approach uses *Empathy* to define the problem and provide the prompts for speculative designs. Possible project brief: Urban Mobility – the augmented bench (to rest).

2. Experience Design by Decomposition

A problem is decomposed into subprojects with specific parameters. Morphological techniques enable to interactively give and remove weights to and from parameters/prompts. Possible project brief: Urban waste– the circular everyday (to trash).

3. Experience Design by Analogy

Analogical reasoning and the art of drawing inspiration from a reference image (precedent) are used to estrange and transcend the ordinary. Metaphors become designs. Possible project brief for Analogy: Architecture office – designing design (to work)

4. Experience Design by Collage

By exploring the methods of Sampling, Blending and Remixing, students develop the ability to transpose and weave together seemingly unrelated concepts into holistic and engaging narratives. Possible project brief: Urban parks facing the danger of heat islands – augmenting the outdoors (to replenish)

5. Experience Design by Context

Systems thinking and contextualization as a cornerstone of experience design. By zooming out and adopting different perspectives, students grapple with designing experiences that resonate with an ecosystem on multiple scales and from multiple angles. Possible project brief: From birdhouse to migration – designing the experience of indigenous birds (to fly)

6. Experience Design by Style

Students engage with the concept of styles as means of imagination and expression in experience design. Possible project brief: Docs on Wheels – future patient experience in the city (to heal)

--- Final Portfolio

In the final stage of the course, students will compile their journey into a portfolio. This culmination will showcase the six projects completed.
Marina Abramovic
*Imponderabilia, 1977*
L. Nummenmaa, E. Gleroeana, R. Harib, and JK. Hietanend
*Bodily maps of emotions, 2014*
O. M. Ungers
*Design by Analogy – Morphologie/City Metaphors*, 1982
Victor Grippo

*Design by Analogy – Analogy IV, 1972*
IDEO
Design by Remixing - The Creativity Mixer, 2018
Kevin Lynch, Donald Appleyard, and John R. Myer

*Design by Context – Space Motion / View Diagram, 1964*
modular japanese housing block connected to gardens through a scaffolds of steel pipes and platforms that can be adapted. Set in a residential area of Tokyo, each side of each module has a different material, one is corrugated steel, the second is polycarbonate translucent panel, the third is cupboard and the fourth is transparent often covered by curtains and opens to garden platforms made by steel pipes. A spiral staircase is strategically integrated into the steel pipe system to allow the garden’s fruit trees to be pruned and harvested at different heights. The external scaffolding also allows the block to be continually expanded and reconfigured, as additional elements such as bannisters or rails for drying clothes can be added simply by clamping or unclamping different pipes.

MxD Lab / Christina Doumpioti
Design by Style – Japanese Style Housing Block, Midjourney, 2023
Harold Cohen

First AI art systems and the Turtle bot, AARON, 1979
Alexandre Sadeghi

Studies for a Chicken Chair, Midjourney, 2023
Antique store
https://www.24heures.ch/beaulieu-en-palais-du-beau-et-de-lancien-735624018601
Still from Malraux's Shoes
Artico Fracassi
Snapshots from a Near Future, Midjourney, 2023
Artico Fracassi
Snapshots from a Near Future, Midjourney, 2023
Leah Wulfram
Midjourney, 2022
Polluted Selfie / LDF
Fragmentin, 2017
A JOURNEY THROUGH
OUR AI-GENERATED COVER ART

For this issue’s cover, we wanted to let AI speak for itself. Alexandre Sadeghi used an iterative co-creation process to get the program to go beyond its initial “robot woman” clichés.
"I REALLY LIKE THAT THERE'S A CHARACTER AND A SCREEN, WHICH IMPLIES A CONVERSATION OR AN INTERACTION BETWEEN THE AI FIGURE AND THE LITTLE GIRL. THIS IMAGE INSPIRED ME TO INTRODUCE MORE HUMANS INTO THE PROMPTS."
Systems Diagram – To Clean (MessHunter)
MxD lab – UE X 21
Screenshots - Urbanimals
MxD lab – UE X 21
Dates are subject to change.
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Some details might vary
Keywords

design thinking, generative artificial intelligence, human-machine interaction, empathy, ethnography, iterative prototyping, convergent thinking, divergent thinking, team collaboration, design genealogy, analogy, style, experience design

Media x Design Laboratory

Prof. Jeffrey Huang, Mikhael Johanes, Mathias Bernhard, Christina Doumpioti, Christoph Holz, Alex Sadeghi, Ga In Sim, Frederick Kim, Marcela Delgado, Gianna Ledermann
Appendix
(Miyagi Exercises)

Empathy – Basic Prompting

Decomposition – Prompt Weighting

Analogy – Reference Images

Style – Style

Collage – Remixing/Blending

Context – Zooming Out

(not necessary in that order)