San José State University

College of Social Sciences

Departments of Anthropology, Geography, & Urban & Regional Planning

ANTH (27045)/GEOG (29177)/URBP (29176) 132 Creating Built Worlds, Spring 2021

Course and Contact Information

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Armando Ayala
Office Location:	None, course will be virtual
Telephone:	(209) 879-3271
Email:	armando.ayala@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	Every wednesday 6:00-7:00 (virtual Zoom call with signup times)
Class Days/Time:	Asynchronous class
Prerequisites:	Upper division standing

Course Description

Cross-cultural exploration of material expressions of culture. Analysis of production and consumption of places, shelters, and goods. Implications for design and policy.

ANTH/GEOG/URBP 132 is designed to give students an overview of the anthropology of design and material expressions of culture. The course will explore ethnographic approaches to understanding the way humans configure and design their worlds, including architecture, physical objects and digital technology. ANTH/GEOG/URBP 132 will provide students with a foundational understanding of how ethnographic thinking and methods, along with anthropological theory, can inform one's understanding of both our relationship to the built world around us and how to apply these tools to

provide design insights and interventions in industry. The course is based on the instructor's work as a design researcher and the previous versions of the course developed by Chuck Darrah

As a practicing design researcher, I strongly encourage students to take the time to ask me questions during the office hours window to learn about paths to industry and application, the culture and world of tech in Silicon Valley (I have experience in startups, agencies, and large tech firms, and even urban planning).

Course Format

This course will be completely online, asynchronous (except for the first week where I will facilitate a 1.5 hour Zoom call to give an introduction of myself, the course, and the learning material - this will be recorded for students who cannot attend live – we will also have a 1.5 hour call the second to last week of class to answer questions about working in industry as a UX researcher). There will also be a 1 hour weekly office hours for students to sign up in 15 minute windows and speak to me one-on-one over Zoom. While much of the work will be self-guided, I will be providing a mix of pre-recorded video lectures and/or written guides that emphasize the core ideas to be grasped week-to-week. Nevertheless, this course WILL NOT HAVE LIVE LECTURES! I will respond to emails within 2 business days. The final will also be asynchronous, but the final must be submitted by the deadline given in the syllabus.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

Students who successfully complete this course will:

1. Be knowledgeable about the diversity of built environments and material artifacts, and the way they are patterned and can be understood. This outcome will be accomplished through course readings, and demonstrated in essay examinations.

2. Be able to analyze the relationships of artifacts and the built environment to social organization and ideology. This learning outcome will be accomplished through lectures and readings during the entire semester, midterm examination essays, and the final exam project.

3. Be able to analyze aesthetic, functional, adaptive and policy implications of artifacts and the built environment using different theoretical perspectives. This outcome will be accomplished though midterm essays, the final exam project, and an individual term project completed by each student.

4. Be able to create alternative scenarios for artifacts and built environments. This outcome will be accomplished by completion of a final exam design scenario project.

Required Texts/Readings (Required - Delete the word "Required" in final draft)

Textbook

Edgerton, David (2007). *The Shock of the Old: Technology and Global History Since 1900*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Murphy, Keith (2015). *Swedish Design: An Ethnography*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University

Zeisel, John (2006). *Inquiry by Design*, 2nd edition. New York: W. W. Norton Publishers.

Other Readings

Fallman, Daniel (2003). *Design-oriented human-computer interaction*. In Proceedings of the SIGCHI conference on Human factors in computing systems (pp. 225-232).

Jupiter, Alex (2017). Jobs To Be Done Framework: Scrapping the persona and approaching product design in a different way. Medium.com

Manzini, Ezio (2015). *Design, When Everybody Designs*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. (pp. 121-202)

Ranadive, Ameet (2015). Jobs to Be Done, Milkshakes, and Online Learning. Medium.com

Resmini, Andrea, and Luca Rosati (2012). A brief history of information architecture. Journal of information architecture, 3(2).

Rohrer, Christian (2014). When to use which UX research method. NNGroup.com

UXBooth (2018). Complete Beginners Guide to Design Research. UXBooth.com

West, Harry. (2014). A Chain of Innovation: The Creation of Swiffer. Research-Technology Management, 57(3), pp 20-23.

Library Liaison

Silke Higgins is our department's library liaison and she can be contacted at silke.higgins@sjsu.edu. She is a graduate of our program and knows the department very well.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Course grades will be based on the following assignments that must be submitted as per the course schedule deadlines. The weighting of assignments follows in parentheses.

1. Conduct a participant **observation** or structured observation per the guidelines that will be provided (20%).
   - In this assignment, you will be asked to write a description of an observation of a physical space and the physical artifacts within it. This project will serve as the basis for projects 2 and 3 as well.

2. **Analyze** the results of the observation using a protocol that will be provided. The analysis must also include two specified "deliverables" that facilitate presentation of the analysis (20%).
   - In this assignment, you will use an analysis framework delivered by the instructor that will allow you to generate an analysis of the observation you engaged in. The insights you generate will give you inspiration to formulate a design intervention which is the substance of project 3.

3. A **proposal for a design intervention** into the social-environmental setting that has been observed and analyzed that takes the form of a modification to the setting or a "new" artifact that can be incorporated into it (20%).
   - Here you will get a chance to put on your designer hat and formulate a design intervention and put into a Google Slides document for you to submit to me.

4. Submit an **essay midterm** that you will have a week to prepare (20%).
   - Written easy midterm

5. Submit an **essay final exam** that you will have a week + to prepare (20%).
   - Written easy midterm

"Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus."

Final Examination or Evaluation

The final exam is take-home and you will have the questions over a week in advance. It must be submitted by the ending time of the final exam period.

Grading Information

The instructor will return materials submitted for grade within 10 days over Canva. The actual grading will also happen on Canva using comments, or comments will be given on assignment 3 over Google Drive. YOU WILL NOT TURN IN PHYSICAL COPIES, NOR RECEIVE PHYSICAL COPIES OF YOUR GRADED WORK. I am happy to discuss student grades during office hours, but I will not do so by phone or email or in class. You will receive detailed feedback on all assignments submitted and you are invited to discuss with the instructor any questions you have about your grade and how we can work together so you learn the most in the class. Along with the feedback you will receive a numerical score on any assignments submitted for grade that corresponds to the following assignment of letter grades. The instructor will assign plus and minus course grades at the end of semester.

Determination of Grades

Course grades will be assigned as follows:

A plus = 98-100%
A = 94-97%
A minus = 90-93%
B plus = 88-89%
B = 84-87%
B minus = 80-83%
C plus = 78-79%
C = 74-77%
C minus = 70-73%
D plus = 68-69%
D = 64-67%
D minus = 60-63%
F = lower than 60%

Late Papers, Missed Exams. All assignments must be completed during the designated period. You may be allowed to make up an assignment only if (1) you first provide a compelling *and documented* excuse for your absence via email (e.g. family emergency, sickness, injury, etc. and (2) you contact me immediately via text message. You CANNOT SUBMIT THE FINAL PAST THE DESIGNATED PERIOD. Please remember that it is unfair to both your classmates and the instructor to request exceptions to the official examination dates or other assignment deadlines.

University Policies (Required)

Per University Policy S16-9 *(http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf)*, relevant information to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. is available on Office of

Course Number / Title, Semester, Course Schedule

ANTH/GEOG/URBP 132 Creating Built Worlds, Spring 2020

Course Schedule

Week (Optional)	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines (If appropriate, add any extra column(s) to meet your needs.)
1	1/27	Meet Wednesday, Jan 27 virtually on Zoom for a 1.5 hour intro, overview, greet 6-7:30 pm (will be recorded for those who cannot attend) An Anthropological Approach Reading: Murphy Ch. 1
2	2/1	Introduction to Built Worlds: Components & Processes Reading: Zeisel Ch. 1 & 2 OBSERVATION ASSIGNMENT DISTRIBUTED
3	2/8	Thinking About Looking: Promises & Pitfalls of Usability Reading Zeisel Chs. 3 & 4 Thinking About Looking: An Ethnographic Approach and its Implications Reading Zeisel Chs. 5 & 6
4	2/15	Getting Started: Observing Reading: Zeisel Ch. 8, 9, & 13
5	2/22	An analysis framework: Jobs To Be Done Reading: Ranadive (2015), Jupiter (2017) OBSERVATION ANALYSIS ASSIGNMENT DISTRIBUTED
6	3/1	Back to the Built World: Artifacts, Products, (Non-)Places, Systems, Infrastructures, etc. Reading: Edgerton Chs. 1-3 Information & Meaning: Agency & Smartness Reading: Edgerton Chs. 6 & 7
7	3/8	Information & Meaning: Patterns/Structures Reading: Edgerton Chs. 4-5 Information & Meaning: Agency & Smartness Reading: Edgerton Chs. 6 & 7
8	3/15	Creating & Constructing: Technological Evolution OBSERVATION ANALYSIS DUE MIDTERM EXAM DISTRIBUTED Creating & Constructing: Innovation & Users Reading: Edgerton Ch. 8

9	3/23	Processing: Ideas to End of Life MIDTERM EXAM DUE
10	3/29	SPRING BREAK - No office hours available
11	4/5	DESIGN INTERVENTION ASSIGNMENT DISTRIBUTED Built Worlds & the People they Create Reading: Murphy Ch. 2
12	4/12	*Homo faber*: A Designing Species Reading: Murphy Ch. 3 Designing & Making as Ambiguous Systems Reading: Murphy Ch. 4 A case study in product design: Harry (2014)
13	4/19	Senses, Proxemics, and Materializing Readings: Murphy Ch. 5 and Zeisel Chs. 7 & 14, Manzini Chs. 6-8
14	4/26	Introduction to building digital worlds and information architecture Reading: Resmini (2012) and Fallman (2003)
15	5/3	Introduction to UX Research in Industry Reading: UXBooth (2018) & Rohrer (2014)
15	5/10	Industry Q&A week: WEDNESDAY, 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm JOIN ZOOM CALL TO TALK INDUSTRY
16	5/17	FINAL EXAM DISTRIBUTED FINAL EXAM DATE AND TIME: FRIDAY MAY 21 1945-2200, FINAL EXAM DUE BY 2200

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