Course syllabus

Communication, Thinking and Ethics - Cognitive and Cultural Perspectives
Kommunikation, tänkande och etik - kognitiva och kulturella perspektiv

EXTF55, 8.0 credits, G2 (First Cycle)

Valid for: 2026/27
Faculty: Faculty of Engineering LTH
Decided by: PLED C/D
Date of Decision: 2026-04-16
Effective: 2026-05-18

General Information

Main field: Industrial Design **Depth of study relative to the degree requirements:** First cycle, in-depth level of the course cannot be classified
Mandatory for: KID3
Language of instruction: The course will be given in Swedish

Aim

An overall aim is that the students should develop their abilities to include communicative, cognitive and ethical perspectives in their own design process and their own design choices. Another overall aim is that the students would develop their abilities to handle these perspectives in discussions and argumentation within the domain of design in broad. Yet another aim is to contribute to a broadening of the students' communicative skills to include text oriented communication as well.

The domain of knowledge in broad concerns ”human beings as information creatures in and with the environment”, with an emphasis on individual and cultural variation.
The course offers a multitude of opportunities to discuss possible

approaches for an industrial designer to what is learnt about human cognition, communication and ethics.

Learning outcomes

Knowledge and understanding
For a passing grade the student must

- be able to give a broad presentation of cognitive phenomena such as attention, learning and communication,
- be able to present central aspects of individual and (sub)cultural differences in human cognition, e.g. in communication and learning,
- be able to discuss some basic models of communication and problematize everyday conceptions about communication,
- be able to discuss and problematize the relation between design, ecology and ethics, and apply cultural perspectives to this.

Competences and skills
For a passing grade the student must

- be able to discuss, in both oral and written form, different approaches to human cognitive variation - individual and cultural - that can influence work on product design,
- show an ability to argue for one’s choices and priorities in connection with a product design, in both oral and written form, with respect to the course material regarding human thinking, communication, ethics and gender.

Judgement and approach
For a passing grade the student must

- be able to cooperate efficiently in group assignments and presentations of course material and literature,
- show awareness of the width of individual and cultural variation with respect to information processing in communication, problem solving and learning,
- show insight into how cultural variation in human beings as information creatures ought to influence product design,
- show insight into how ethical perspectives ought to influence product design.

Contents

Four main topics are treated in the course: i) human information processing, ii) communication, iii) ethics and iv) gender. Furthermore, the course is assignment and practice oriented. It is centred around group assignments and individual assignments. It offers rich opportunities to practice presentation and discussion of the course topics in oral and written forms. It also gives the students opportunities to discuss their ongoing projects from other courses in relation to the topics about human information processing, communication, ethics and gender.

Examination details

Grading scale: TH - (U, 3, 4, 5) - (Fail, Three, Four, Five)
Assessment: Written reports - individual reports as well as group reports; oral presentations, participation in literature seminars, peer review assignments and feedback sessions. For a final grade on the course, examination of all parts must be completed.

The examiner, in consultation with Disability Support Services, may deviate from the regular form of examination in order to provide a permanently disabled student with a form of examination equivalent to that of a student without a disability.

Modules
Code: 0110. **Name:** Communication, Thinking and Ethics....
Credits: 8.0. **Grading scale:** TH - (U, 3, 4, 5).

Admission

The number of participants is limited to: No

Reading list

- Linda Fagerström: Kön, genus och design. ISBN: 9789163370045.
- Ann Heberlein: Det var inte mitt fel! - Om konsten att ta ansvar. 2009, ISBN: 9153433491.
- Papanek, V: The Green Imperative. Thames and Hudson, London, 1995. Alternative: Thorpe.
- Thorpe, A: Design för hållbar utveckling. 2008. Alternative: Papanek.
- Literature compendium: LUCS.

Contact

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Course homepage: https://www.lucs.lu.se

Further information

Compulsory course components: introduction lecture, seminars, oral presentations, feedback sessions and all course components included for assessment.