

Jessica Helfand +
Michael Bierut

T 8:30-11:30 Evans Hall Room 2210

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MGT 653

Twelve Design Ideas that Changed the World

Course Objectives + Description

This introductory survey course will set the stage for understanding design as a catalyst in business by presenting twelve seminal design problems, across a variety of fields and industries, each highlighting the central motives—and methods—that yield successful outcomes. Each week we will invite one client or designer (or client/designer team) to present a project in depth. (In some cases, we may welcome a corporate leader in conversation with a leading scholar here at Yale.) Students will work independently and in teams to research and respond, the following week, with analysis, critique, and alternate solutions. From public health to public space, retail strategy to political positioning, education to journalism to biotechnology, we want to explore how design works within complex organizations to help shape decisions, ideas, products, and more.

Enrollment Process

Non-SOM students are asked to submit, via email, a brief, 150-word explanation of why you believe you should be admitted to this class by August 15. List any relevant design experience (not required for this course, but helpful for us to know). We are capping the class at 25, with preference given to SOM students.

Course Requirements

In this course, you will consider the pivotal role design plays in a variety of industries. Over the course of the semester you will begin to familiarize yourself with the obstacles as well as the opportunities for design as a catalyst for transformative growth and change in business—and you will do this in four fundamental ways, each of which will comprise a quarter of your grade.

Why Practice Matters

Design is a practice that requires keen observation: attendance is key. Counts for 25% of your final grade.

Why Process Matters

In design, process is as valuable and critical as the final product, often more so. Counts for 25% of your final grade.

The 100 Days Project

One action daily, repeated for 100 days, and included in your dossier. Counts for 25% of your final grade.

Weekly Presentations

Design is synonymous with clarity and communication. Counts for 25% of your final grade.

01 | Observing

Each week, guest speakers will present projects in which design has played a significant role. They will share their failures as well as their successes, sharing the evidence of their efforts which is likely to be primarily visual. Your first requirement is to **pay close attention to what they show** as well as say. *Your focus here is observational.*

02 | Collecting

For the duration of the term, you will be asked to **keep a dossier** on all the speakers, their projects, and your own work in the course. This dossier can be analog or digital, as simple as a notebook and as sophisticated as a website: you will choose the format and the organizational structure for your material. *Your focus here is organizational.*

03 | Making

Musicians practice scales, athletes stretch before sports—and designers make things. You can not understand design unless you actually produce something yourself—and while it is not our plan to turn you into designers, we believe that **the recurring act of making something** is a necessary exercise. *Your focus here is operational.*

03 | Presenting

Weekly **“pecha kucha” style presentations** will allow students to respond to the previous week’s guest speaker and allow you to hone your skills as visual and verbal communicators, something critical to every aspect of design. *Your focus here is public.*

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Weekly Class Structure

8:30-9:30	Student Presentations
9:30-9:45	Break
9:45-10:00	Guest Speaker Introductions
10:00-11:00	Guest Presentation
11:00-11:30	Q+A with Speakers
11:30-12:15	Podcast*
12:30-1:30	Lunch with Speakers (student signups)

We will circulate, in our first hour, between individual “pecha kucha” style presentations from students (responding to the previous week’s guest speaker) and occasional lectures from Professors Helfand and Bierut (on topics of relevance to our studies). Students will have the option to sign up for lunches with speakers, pending their availability, following our podcast recordings.

Expectations

Promptness. Kindness. Alertness. Showing up with an open mind and an even more open heart. Design is about looking, really looking, and that takes time, effort, and patience. Come prepared and engaged, and leave your preconceived notions at the door—with your post-it notes.

Books and Readings

One reading per week will be paired to the area of expertise of each speaker. (We are likely to question you about these readings so, as the length and frequency of them is not onerous, we suggest you pay attention to them.) We will occasionally call your attention to other, more timely readings in design culture and theory, and will link to these readings on Canvas.

Confirmed Speakers

John Bielenberg, Co-Founder, Future Partners
Molly Barton and Julian Yap, Partners, Serial Box
Deborah Berke, Dean, Yale School of Architecture
Bruce Cox, Award-Winning Film Producer
Douglas Powell, Distinguished Designer, IBM
Susan Sellers, Creative Director, The Metropolitan Museum of Art
Leslie Koch, President and CEO, The Trust for Governor’s Island
Dr. Jay Parkinson, Director, Sherpaa
Danny Meyer, CEO, Union Square Hospitality Group
Paula Scher, Partner, Pentagram
Steve Duenes, Graphics Editor, The New York Times
Teddy Goff, Digital Director, Obama for America

Office

Room 3560 Evans Hall
Office Hours by Appointment only / Tuesday afternoons 3-5pm

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Twelve Design Ideas that Changed the World Weekly Assignments / Page One

Class 01 / Week of 09.06 Design

In preparation for our first class, please watch Roger Martin's lecture:

[The Design of Business](#)

Design as Business Assignment

Design a Logo for The Design of Business | The Business of Design

Due:

Please upload a landscape format 11 x 8.5 pdf to Canvas by Friday, September 2 at 5pm. We will vote on them next Tuesday during the first hour of class. Logo with the most votes goes on the T-shirts you'll be wearing for the rest of the semester!

Required:

Title of the Podcast must appear in conjunction with your logo or wordmark.

Class 02 / Week of 09.13 Innovation

Reading this week:

JB Interview on [Pandopopulus](#)

[AIGA Medalist bio](#)

From The New Yorker
[The Fifty-Nine Story Crisis](#)

Thinking Wrong Assignment

Failure is an option! Why? Find an example where failure—or even disaster—led to innovation.

Describe it in no more than 100 words (with one image) and upload to Canvas by Friday Sept 9 at 5pm.

Come prepared to present a one-minute Pecha Kucha style presentation of the same material in class on Tuesday.

Class 03 / Week 09.20 Publishing

Reading this week:

Thinking Wrong Assignment

Failure is an option! Why? Find an example where failure—or even disaster—led to innovation.

Describe it in no more than 100 words (with one image) and upload to Canvas by Friday Sept 16 at 5pm.

Come prepared to present a one-minute Pecha Kucha style presentation of the same material in class on Tuesday.

Class 04 / Week 09.27 Architecture

Reading this week:

[Mazes, Mirrors, Deception and Denial](#)

Alain de Botton on [Why We Travel](#)

Planning Spaces Assignment

One Night Stand: Identify a room in which you spent a night away from home—good or bad—and describe why it was memorable.

Describe it in no more than 100 words (with one image) and upload to Canvas by Friday Sept 23 at 5pm. Come prepared to present a one-minute Pecha Kucha (Links to an external site.)-style presentation of the same material in class on Tuesday.

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Twelve Design Ideas that Changed the World Weekly Assignments / Page Two

Class 05 / Week of 10.04 Movies

Reading this week:

From the London School of Economics
[Films and How People View Government](#)

From Slate
[Seven Movies That Changed Peoples' Political Views](#)

From The New York Times
[How Movies Can Change our Minds](#)

Class 06 / Week of 10.11 Technology

Watch:

100 Years of IBM

[Part One](#)
100x100: A Century of Achievements

[Part Two](#)
They Were There: People Who Changed the Way the World Works

Class 07 / Week 10.27 Museums

Reading this week:

From Eye Magazine
[The Steamroller of Branding](#)

From Design Observer
[Not Diving but Swimming](#)

Class 08 / Week 11.01 Urbanism

Reading this week:

From Places Journal
[You \(Still\) Have to Pay for the Public Life](#)

From The New Yorker
[Useless Beauty](#)

Changing Perception Assignment

Pictures sear themselves into our consciousness and don't let go—and they have the capacity to change our behavior as a result. Identify one such picture in your own experience and explain why it mattered.

Describe it in no more than 100 words (with one image) and upload to Canvas by Friday Sept 30 at 5pm. Come prepared to present a one-minute Pecha Kucha-style presentation of the same material in class on Tuesday.

Managing Change Assignment

Describe your first day on the job—any job. When was the moment you realized it was the right place—or the wrong place—for you?

Describe it in no more than 100 words (with one image) and upload to Canvas by Friday October 7 at 5pm. Come prepared to present a one-minute Pecha Kucha style presentation of the same material in class on Tuesday.

Cultural Wayfinding Assignment

Graphic design is, now more than ever, a spectator sport. Identify a logo that changed and surprised you—and tell us why.

Describe it in no more than 100 words (with one image) and upload to Canvas by Friday October 21 at 5pm. Come prepared to present a one-minute Pecha Kucha style presentation of the same material in class on Tuesday.

Making Places Assignment

One Night Stand: Identify a room in which you spent a night away from home—good or bad—and describe why it was memorable.

Describe it in no more than 100 words (with one image) and upload to Canvas by Friday October 28 at 5pm. Come prepared to present a one-minute Pecha Kucha (Links to an external site.)-style presentation of the same material in class on Tuesday.

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Weekly Assignments / Page Three

Class 09 / Week of 11.08 Medicine

Reading this week:

From *Time Magazine*
Steve Brill article on healthcare costs
(pdf)

From the *Commonwealth Fund*
[How the US Healthcare System
Compares Internationally](#)

Rethinking Healthcare Assignment

Identify an imaginary disease that has gone heretofore undetected: name it (with suitably technical nomenclature), diagnose it, and prescribe a program of treatment.

Describe it in no more than 100 words (with one image) and upload to Canvas by Friday November 4 at 5pm. Come prepared to present a one-minute Pecha Kucha-style presentation of the same material in class on Tuesday.

Class 10 / Week of 11.15 Food

Reading this week:

From *Curbed*
[Farewell to The Four Seasons](#)

From *Business Insider*
[The Eight Most Scathing Criticisms of
Olive Garden](#)

Designing Hospitality Assignment

Write a recipe for your favorite dish. Share a photo (or a video) of yourself preparing it.

Describe it in no more than 100 words (with one image) and upload to Canvas by Friday November 11 at 5pm. Come prepared to present a one-minute Pecha Kucha style presentation of the same material in class on Tuesday.

Class 11 / Week of 11.29 Journalism

Reading this week:

TKTK

Activating News Assignment

Interaction design is about transformation. Find a story in The New York Times from the week of November 14 and turn it into a Haiku.

Describe it in no more than 100 words (with one image) and upload to Canvas by Friday November 25 at 5pm. Come prepared to present a one-minute Pecha Kucha style presentation of the same material in class on Tuesday.

Class 12 / Week of 12.06 Politics

Reading this week:

From *Medium*
[Bernie, Hillary, and the Authenticity Gap](#)

From *Politico*
[Design Experts Trash Hillary's New Logo](#)

From *Quartz*
[It's Official: Hillary Clinton's Logo is
Actually Perfect](#)

Branding Candidacy Assignment

Pick an image from the 2016 Presidential election that you think will be used to illustrate it a century from now.

Describe it in no more than 100 words (with one image) and upload to Canvas by Friday December 02 at 5pm. Come prepared to present a one-minute Pecha Kucha (Links to an external site.)-style presentation of the same material in class on Tuesday.