

Theorising Design DHPG6

MODULE DESCRIPTOR

ECTS credits¹	5	Programme	MA Design History and Material Culture
NQF level	9	School	Visual Culture
Stage	1	Module Co-ordinator	Dr Paul Caffrey
Trimester	Spring FT / Spring y1 PT	Module Team	Dr Lisa Godson, Dr Paul Caffrey, Hilary O’Kelly
Contact	Neasa Travers, Secretary School of Visual Culture: visualculture@staff.ncad.ie		
Responsibility	NCAD Academic Council / School of Visual Culture		

Introduction

This module develops critical understandings of theories of design in their historic context. Rather than offer a survey course on the history of design practice, it encourages students to develop a keen understanding of the historical development of key analytical and interpretive tools for making sense of the material world. It approaches ideas as historical objects which are formed in particular material and intellectual conditions and have particular effects. Attention is not only placed on the historical text but also the media and cultural contexts in which it appeared. As such, it also examines the ways in which criticism and discourse shapes design / design practice and vice versa. Through the module, students examine when and how the activity of history writing can be a kind of critical intervention into the field. This affords engagement with both contemporary commentators and key historical texts. For instance a class on changing ideas about ornament in the C19th will involve reading Semper, Riegl and Loos as well as the work of historians like Ivesen. Other key design historiographic themes will include luxury (Veblen), mass production (Giedon), information (McLuhan), etc.

What will I learn?

On successful completion of this module students will be able to:

- i. engage in close critical ANALYSIS of texts to understand how historical positions are consolidated and arguments made;
- ii. CONTEXTUALISE historical arguments, demonstrating how ideas are themselves products of historical circumstances;
- iii. PLAN, STRUCTURE and DELIVER a historiographic essay.

Module content

How will I learn?

Each class will take the form of a 2-hour seminar based on key readings. It will run over 10 weeks. Students will attend lectures and participate in seminars.

Learning tool	Hours
Lectures	20
Specified Learning Activities	30

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Autonomous Student Learning	50
Total Workload	100

What learning supports are provided?

Bibliographic sources and models of writing / research practice will be supplied. Students will prepare for class by reading copies of key historical texts;

Indicative bibliography

Horowitz I. (ed) (2002) *Veblen's Century*

Iversen M (1995) *Alois Riegl: Art History and Theory*

Mowl, T. (2000) *Stylistic Cold Wars, Betjeman versus Pevsner*

Seago, A. (1994) *Burning the box of beautiful things: the development of a postmodern sensibility*

Twemlow, A. (2009) 'I can't talk to you if you say that: An ideological collision at the International Design Conference at Aspen, 1970' in *Design and Culture*, v.1, no.1, March 2009

Vidler, A. (2008) *Histories of the Immediate Present: Inventing Architectural Modernism*

Whiteley, N. (2003) *Reyner Banham: Historian of the Immediate Future*

Am I eligible to take this module?	
Module Requisites and Incompatibles	
Pre-requisites	None
Co-requisites	None
Incompatibles	None
Prior learning	Where a student can demonstrate that they have achieved at least 80% of the learning outcomes of this module, by academic certified achievement, or through quantifiable and documented experience, they can apply to the School for that prior learning to be recognised. Applications must be received prior to the commencement of delivery of the module.
Recommended	None

How will I be assessed?

Assessment tool	% of final grade	Timing
Presentation	100%	TBC
Total	100%	

This module will be assessed by means of a presentation. Students will lead a seminar providing an introduction to a key text and engaging the student group in discussion. Slides/notes will be submitted for assessment.

The presentation will be assessed using NCAD's Grade Assessment criteria.

Feedback, results and grading

The work will be assessed employing the College's Grade Assessment criteria (see the programme handbook).

Written feedback will be given at the end of the module.

What happens if I fail?

Resit Opportunities

Opportunities will be provided to students who do not complete all assessments, but students will not be able to qualify for the award on completion of this programme until the learning outcomes of this module have been met.

Am I eligible to take this module?

Module Requisites and Incompatibles

Pre-Requisite: None

Co-Requisite: None

Incompatibles: n/a

Prior Learning

Requirements: None

Excluded: None

Recommended:

Should be prepared to participate fully in all module activities including visits

When and where is this module offered?

This module is offered to FT and PT in the spring trimester of the first year.

TBC

How will I have the chance to evaluate the module?

It is important to NCAD that students inform the development of teaching and learning at NCAD. We encourage all students to communicate their concerns and their observations about their study to members of staff so that any changes can be made in a timely manner.

About 2/3rds of the way through the trimester, a student forum will be convened to gather students' comments about their study and the delivery of the programme. In addition, at the end of trimester 2, students have the opportunity to complete an online evaluation of their study and experience at NCAD. These evaluation events are important to current and future students, to ensure we can enhance the delivery of programmes at NCAD.

In addition, you are invited to discuss your experience on the module with your lecturers at any point during the year. You can also relay your comments to the class student representative who will communicate your comments to the staff.

For further details on the content of your module and teaching arrangements consult your Programme or Module Handbook