

COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Title	Course Code	Semester	Course Hour/Week		Credit	ECTS
Human Centered Design	VCDE 112	II	Theory	Practice	3	6
Course Type	Compulsory Course	Department Elective	Faculty Elective	University Elective	CoHE (YÖK) Elective	Other
	X					
Level of Course	Associate Degree (Short Cycle)		Undergraduate (First Cycle)		Graduate/ Doctoral (Second /Third Cycle)	
	-		Yes		-	

Language of Instruction	English
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Course Instructor(s)	Batu Gündal	E-mail : batu.gundal@arucad.edu.tr	
		Office :	
Course Objectives	<p>This course introduces students to the principles and practices of Human-Centered Design (HCD) within the context of visual communication. Through an iterative, research-driven approach, students will engage in the full spectrum of the design process—from user research and synthesis to ideation, prototyping, and evaluation—while applying fundamental visual design principles. Emphasis is placed on developing empathetic insights, translating user needs into meaningful design strategies, and crafting visual outcomes that are both aesthetically compelling and contextually relevant. Students will explore key visual communication fundamentals, including personas, mood boards, logos, posters, and web-based prototypes. By the end of the course, students will have cultivated a thoughtful, user-focused design process supported by research, visual literacy, and responsive iteration.</p>		
Course Learning Outcomes	Students will able to:	Teaching Methods	Evaluation Methods
	Demonstrate an understanding of Human-Centered Design principles and their relevance to visual communication.	Lectures with real-world case studies	Mid-Term Project

Course Content	Conduct and synthesize user research to identify needs, behaviors, and preferences.	Field research (interviews, observations) Empathy mapping and affinity diagramming workshops Group collaboration on research synthesis	Mid-Term Project
	Create personas and visual strategies based on user research insights.	Studio-based design practice	Mid-Term Project / Final Project
	Apply visual design principles to create user-centered design solutions across different media formats.	Group critique sessions + Studio-based design practice	Mid-Term Project / Final Project
	Evaluate design concepts using, peer, and user-based feedback methods.	Low- to high-fidelity prototyping + critique	Mid-Term Project / Final Project
	Develop and refine design artifacts through iterative prototyping.	Presentation coaching and pitch preparation sessions	Mid-Term Project / Final Project
	<p>This Course aims to teach students how to create effective, user-focused designs through a hands-on, project-based approach. The course begins with foundational design principles and user research methods, then progresses to problem definition, ideation, and prototyping techniques. Students learn to develop logos, posters, digital interfaces, and branding systems while using HCD principles. Through workshops and real-world projects, they practice usability testing and iterative design, culminating in a final capstone project where they solve a complex design challenge from research to execution. The curriculum blends theory with practical application, preparing students to create meaningful visual design solutions that prioritize user needs.</p>		

COURSE OUTLINE/SCHEDULE

Week	Topic	Implementation	Required Reading, Preliminary preparation
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		(theory/practice)	
1	Introduction to Human-Centered Design: Key Terms, History, and Relevance in Visual Design.	T/P	“Visual Language- the hidden medium of communication. Peter Bonnici – P 93.5.B66 1999
2	Defining the HCD Process (Empathize, Define, Ideate, Prototype, Test)	T/P	“Evolution by Design” – John Alcorn – NC 997.A43 2013
3	Conduct user research through interviews and observations to build empathy and gather insights for persona development.	T/P	“Evolution by Design” – John Alcorn – NC 997.A43 2013
4	Defining User Needs & Problem Statements. Ideation Techniques (Brainstorming, Mind Maps). Develop mood boards to define visual direction and tone that aligns with user needs.	T/P	“Visual Language- the hidden medium of communication. Peter Bonnici – P 93.5.B66 1999
5	Crafting Personas and Problem Statements from Research Data. Creative Problem Solving: Generating Ideas Using Structured Ideation Techniques.	T/P	“Visual Language- the hidden medium of communication. Peter Bonnici – P 93.5.B66 1999
6	Generate and sketch diverse logo concepts by applying ideation techniques and visual research from mood boards. Design and refine a logo using principles of typography, symbolism, and iterative feedback.	T/P	“Visual Language- the hidden medium of communication. Peter Bonnici – P 93.5.B66 1999
7	Analyze user feedback to identify key takeaways and apply improvements to visual designs.	T/P	“Evolution by Design” – John Alcorn – NC 997.A43 2013
8	Midterm Exam		
9	Apply layout, hierarchy, and messaging principles to design an effective and user-centered poster.	T/P	“Visual Language- the hidden medium of communication. Peter Bonnici – P 93.5.B66 1999

10	Constructing a design narrative from research to solution	T/P	“Evolution by Design” – John Alcorn – NC 997.A43 2013
11	Bridging persona insights with design direction	T/P	“Evolution by Design” – John Alcorn – NC 997.A43 2013
12	Contrast (type, color, scale Hierarchy (visual importance, guiding attention)	T/P	“Evolution by Design” – John Alcorn – NC 997.A43 2013
13	Preparing professional presentations, Visual Storytelling & Presentation Techniques	T/P	“Visual Language- the hidden medium of communication. Peter Bonnici – P 93.5.B66 1999
14	Typography & Readability	T/P	“Visual Language- the hidden medium of communication. Peter Bonnici – P 93.5.B66 1999
15	Usability & User Testing Basics. Analyzing User Feedback.	T/P	“Visual Language- the hidden medium of communication. Peter Bonnici – P 93.5.B66 1999
16	Evaluating Design.	T/P	“Visual Language- the hidden medium of communication. Peter Bonnici – P 93.5.B66 1999
17	Final Exam Week		

Required Course Material(s) / Reading(s)/ Text Book(s)	<p>Sketching” – Koos Eissen & Roselien Steur – NC 730 E47 2012</p> <p>“Designing information” Human factors and common sense in information design. – Joel KATZ – P 93.5.K37 2012</p> <p>“Visual Language- the hidden medium of communication. Peter Bonnici – P 93.5.B66 1999</p> <p>“Evolution by Design” – John Alcorn – NC 997.A43 2013</p>
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Recommended Course Material(s)/ Reading(s) /Other	“Sketching” – Koos Eissen & Roselien Steur – NC 730 E47 2012
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ASSESSMENT		
Learning Activities	NUMBER	WEIGHT in %
Mid-Term	1	40
Quiz		
Assignment		
Project		
Field Study		
Presentation / Seminar		
Studio Practice		
Other		
Contribution of Final Examination/Final Project/ Dissertation to the Final Grade	1	60
TOTAL		100

CONTRIBUTION OF COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES TO PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES						
	PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES	Level of Contribution (1- lowest/ 5- highest)				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Knows the historical development of the field of communication, basic concepts, theories and research methods.	X				
2	Knows the principles and elements of basic design.				X	
3	Knows the history, theories and theorists of visual communication.	X				
4	Knows advanced practical skills in various commercial and creative contexts, including graphic and audiovisual multimedia design.				X	

5	Knows national and international ethical rules, standards and legal documents on communication and visual communication design.	X				
6	Able to use the tools, methods and techniques and computer software required for visual communication design applications.				X	
7	Able to produce innovative and original works that reflect abstract and concrete concepts by emphasizing creativity					X
8	Has the knowledge and skills to transform creative and innovative ideas into graphic, photographic, typographic, illustrative, 2 and 3-dimensional, animated and interactive visual expressions.					X
9	Applies visual communication design techniques with design technologies in developing and changing media environments.				X	
10	Has the competence to create visuals with designs that emphasize aesthetics in design processes.				X	
11	Has the competence to define the problem, solve the problem, plan, manage the project and present in the design-based project development process.				X	
12	Has the ability to use research methods and techniques in the field of Visual Communication.			X		
13	Has the competence to research, plan, implement and report during the project phase.				X	
14	Has the competence to establish the connection between design and aesthetic values.			X		
15	Has the competence to interpret universal visual culture and associate the ties of symbols with universal visual culture.			X		
16	Has the competence to analyse, understand and interpret projects in the field of visual communication design with a critical and independent approach.		X			
17	Has the skills and competence to turn their designs into a portfolio document and present them					X
18	Knows how to integrate and use digital technologies and artificial intelligence-based/ supported design tools creatively and innovatively in visual communication design and production stages.					X
19	Evaluates artificial intelligence applications in design studies with a critical approach in terms of aesthetics and originality, and uses them in accordance with ethical rules.			X		










ECTS / STUDENT WORKLOAD				
ACTIVITIES	NUMBER	UNIT	HOUR	TOTAL (WORKLOAD)
Course Teaching Hour (X weeks * total course hours)	14		4	56
Preliminary Preparation and self- study	14		2	28
Mid-Term	1		30	30
Quiz				
Assignment				









Project				
Field Study				
Presentation / Seminar				
Studio Practice				
Final Examination/ Final Project/ Dissertation	1		40	40
Other				
TOTAL WORKLOAD				154
TOTAL WORKLOAD / 25				6.16
ECTS				6

ETHICAL RULES WITH REGARD TO THE COURSE
Plagiarism Disclaimer

Detected and undetected plagiarism is a serious offence at any time and it could have devastating effects on your degree result and future professional life.

Plagiarism is easy to avoid if you make sure you thoroughly identify and recognize your sources and do not copy from visual examples, designs or notes taken directly from your sources word for word. The maximum citation limit cannot exceed 20%. Artificial intelligence citations are also considered within this scope. If proven otherwise, the student will fail the course.

	SDG 1: No Poverty	
	SDG 2: Zero Hunger	
	SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being	X
	SDG 4: Quality Education	X
	SDG 5: Gender Equality	X
	SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation	
	SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy	
	SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth	X
	SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure	

	SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities	X
	SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities	
	SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production	X
	SDG 13: Climate Action	
	SDG 14: Life Below Water	
	SDG 15: Life on Land	
	SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions	
	SDG 17: Partnership for the Goals	

ASSESSMENT DETAILS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA:

Final Grades will be determined according to the Course Learning Activities and Final Examination/ Project/ Dissertation Assessment Details as below, and comply with the Education and Examination Regulation set forth by the University.

Throughout the course, students will learn the theoretical base of the topic and they will be able to equip themselves with the practical know-how skills of Advertisement production. Also, students are expected to design a creative advertisement piece with the knowledge they have gained in the course.

During the class sessions, participation is a very important input for the learning process for the students. It is also vital to understand the effect of creativity input on the production process of advertisement.

70% attendance to courses is compulsory. Health reports belong to 30% absenteeism right.

PREPARED BY	Batu Gündal
UPDATED	24.02.2026
APPROVED	