

Course Syllabus

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Material Things...

This course introduces students to fundamental properties of materials and construction techniques both analog and digital, in the combined format of a seminar and physical workshop. It will provide hands-on experience in individual and cooperative building skills, focusing on the connectivity of analog and digital methods, as well as encouraging a type of engagement with making that is analytical and creative.

The title of the course is literal in that it is a hands-on workshop concerned with the nature and performance of materials, examined and tested through direct experience. The title is also a reference to our necessary attachment to materials and material things as designers, and a nod to the cultural institutions that consequently emerge around the act of making. As such, the course will examine the relationship between materials and methods by engaging (through discussion and workshops) the conceptual and historical themes that establish making as an act of design thought. This will include discussion of the history of making as part of design education, making countercultures, and the reexamination of craft vis-à-vis digital fabrication.

Honoring the DIY ethos culturally entangled with 'making,' seminar discussions and project critiques will be largely student-driven, curated in formats conducive to student participation as productive self-critics. This will emphasize the use of multiple media and formats to present and critique work. Key points in the development of projects will be supported with the help of guest critics--subsequently, final project reviews will engage different audiences, both internal and public.

Course Sequence

Part 1: Frames and Figures

- A) Seminar : Digital v. Analog, instigations toward making, joinery+fastening: a history
- B) Workshop : CNC crash course, connections and equilibrium, hand tools and handiness
- C) Assignment : Small-scale, detailed assembly of two materials, CNC/hand fabricated.

Part 2 : Body Building

- A) Seminar: The body as assembly and figure, form follows fashion, garmenture in the

design academy

B) Workshop : Mock ups and eccentric materials, iteration and adjustment, documentation+analysis

C) Assignment : Garmenture. 1:1 scale wearable architecture. Fashion show as review.

Part 3 : Structure, Skin, Style

A) Seminar: Making countercultures, digital aestheticism, research as design thinking+practice

B) Workshop : rationalization tools and efficiencies of scale/material, soft materials, deployables

C) Assignment : Group project: a built environment, as-big-as-we-can scale