



Course syllabus

Faculty of Arts and Humanities
Department of Design

4DI933 Designforskning och innovation, 7,5 högskolepoäng
Design Research and Innovation, 7.5 credits

Main field of study

Design

Subject

Design

Level

Second cycle

Progression

A1F

Date of Ratification

Approved 2025-09-10.

Revised 2026-03-10. The prerequisite requirement has been supplemented with subjects according to GY25.

The course syllabus is valid from autumn semester 2026.

Prerequisites

At least 60 higher education credits on second-cycle level, or the equivalent.

You also need:

Approved portfolio and English 6

Or:

Approved portfolio and English level 2

Or:

the equivalent.

Objectives

After completing the course, the student should be able to:

Knowledge and Understanding

- demonstrate advanced knowledge of central design research approaches, including practice, studies, and exploration,
- describe and compare quantitative, qualitative, mixed, arts-based, and participatory approaches within design research,
- show familiarity with ontological, epistemological, and methodological foundations in design inquiry.

Skills and abilities

- formulate and delimit design research questions connected to innovation challenges in design,
- develop and present a coherent design research proposal that integrates practice, theory, and method,
- communicate research outcomes clearly and effectively in written academic form and oral presentation.

Values and approach

- critically evaluate one's own and others' research proposals with respect to rigour, ethics, and relevance to innovation,
- reflect on ethical issues, including inclusivity, reflexivity, and the political implications of design research,
- assess the role of design research in driving change and shaping innovative practices.

Content

The course provides an in-depth introduction to design research approaches with a focus on change and innovation. The student engages with central models of design research, explores and compares research designs across different traditions, examines the role of research through design in relation to innovation and future-oriented practices, develops a coherent research proposal that integrates practice, theory, and methodological rigour, and critically reflects on ethics, reflexivity, and the politics of design knowledge production.

The content is structured in three steps that support knowledge transfer and creation: first, seminars with discussions on references such as literature, cases, and projects in design research and innovation; second, the development of a design research proposal where the student defines the research focus; and third, presentations to peers and supervisors, where the relevance of the proposals is reviewed in relation to the course and its objectives. Both explicit and tacit knowledge are addressed through reading, writing, discussion, and the presentation of examples. The course also covers research ethics, exercises in information retrieval, critical source evaluation, and academic writing.

Type of Instruction

Teaching is delivered in the form of seminars, workshops, tutorials and supervision.

Examination

The course is assessed with the grades A, B, C, D, E or F.

The course is assessed with the grades A as the highest grade, and the grade E is the

lowest grade for passing the course. The grade F means that the student's performance is assessed as failed. The course is examined through a presentation of a design research proposal, both orally and in writing. Assessment criteria for the A-F scale are communicated to the students in a separate document.

Assessment of student performance is made through:

- 50% a written research proposal.
- 20% an oral examination on the theoretical and practical knowledge. involved in the research proposal.
- 20% an individual written reflection.
- 10% active participation in the course seminars and workshops.

For a grade of E, the course objectives must be achieved. For grade of A, the student must have achieved a grade of A on at least 80% of the course assignments.

If the university has decided that a student has the right to special educational support due to a disability, the examiner may offer an adapted test or allow the student to conduct the test in an alternative form.

For students who do not pass their first examinations, retake examinations are provided in accordance with Local regulations for courses and examinations at the first and second levels at Linnaeus University.

Course Evaluation

A course evaluation should be conducted during the course or in connection with its conclusion. The results and analysis of the completed course evaluation should be promptly communicated to students who have completed the course. Students participating in the next course instance should be informed of the results of the previous course evaluation and any improvements that have been made, no later than at the start of the course.

Other Information

Any costs for material and printouts are covered by the student.

Required Reading and Additional Study Material

Fallman, Daniel, 2008. *The interaction design research triangle of design practice, design studies, and design exploration*. Design Issues 24, 3 (2008), 4–18. MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, USA. ISSN 0747-9360. <https://doi.org/10.1162/desi.2008.24.3.4>

Godin, David and Zahedi, Mitra, 2014. *Aspects of research through design: a literature review*. Design Research Society, UQAT and Université de Montréal, Canada, 1–15.

Leavy, Patricia, 2017. *Research Design: Quantitative, Qualitative, Mixed Methods, Arts-Based, and Community-Based Participatory Research Approaches*. Guilford Press, New York, NY, USA. ISBN 9781462514380.

Muratovski, Gjoko, 2024. *Research for Designers: A Guide to Methods and Practice*. SAGE Publications Ltd, London, UK. ISBN 978-1-5297-0816-5; ISBN 978-1-5297-0815-8 (pbk).